

Philippians 4:10–15

10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

14 Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress.

15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only.

Be Content
Philippians 4:10–14

INTRO:

Forty years ago, Kathy and I served in a local church while I studied at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. One day as we drove the youth to an event, we began to sing several choruses and hymns. We started singing, “I’m satisfied with a cottage below.” But I was told we must never sing that hymn because a Christian can never be satisfied or contented. Is that true? The Apostle Paul will answer this question in our text.

I. The Occasion (v. 10)

II. Contentment (v. 11-14)

I. The Occasion (v. 10)

Philippians 4:10 *“I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.”*

A. One of the questions we always ask when approaching an epistle or book is why did whoever write this letter? What was its occasion?

B. This book is about joy and the lessons Paul wrote about in chapters 1-4. However, the reason he wrote was to thank the Philippians for their gift.

II. Contentment (v. 11-14)

Philippians 4:11–14 *“Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress.”*

A. When the gift came, Paul rejoiced, but he wanted the Philippians to understand that God was the one he depended on to meet his needs not just them. Too many today look to the people and not to the Lord for supply. God supplies through His people. But God is the supplier. Also, Paul was a good preacher and teacher. To Paul this was too good of an opportunity to pass up to teach the Philippians about Christian contentment.

B. There are two important questions here. First, why was Paul content? Paul was content because He had learned how to be contented. Twice in these verses Paul underlines that contentment is not an automatic thing, it is learned out of our relationship with Jesus Christ.

1. Perhaps the place to begin is to define the contentment or satisfaction Paul is talking about here. The words (the one in verse 11 is a little different than the one in verse 12) mean to be satisfied, content or self-sufficient. He is not talking about being satisfied with our lusts or our carnality. Remember the Paul who wrote this in chapter four also wrote chapter three. **(vs.12–14)**

“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

He was content with being where God wanted Him doing what God wanted Him to do, whatever the cost or discomfort. At the same time he never gave up striving to grow in Christ and to be what Christ wanted Him to be. Paul was spiritually content in a Roman prison.

2. Paul learned to be content with where God put him and how He supplied Paul in every situation. He was content spiritually because Christ had taught him and Paul had learned the lessons well. One such lesson is in **2 Corinthians 12**. I want us to just read **verses 8-10**.

“Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I [am content] in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

B. Paul also was content because he had the resources of Christ to be content in difficult situations. (v.13)

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Being content with where Christ puts us is so important and so impossible for us to do on our own, the Lord makes Himself and His resources available to us to accomplish this.

1 Timothy 6:6-8 ***“Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.”***

Being content with what God supplies and where God puts us is important to God.

C. So, we asked the question, “Why was Paul content?” Now let us ask, “How can we be content?” The answer is found in the same place Paul drew his joy.

1. Paul was content because he had a real relationship with Christ. Do you remember these verses?

Philippians 4:4-5 ***“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.”***

The source of Paul’s rejoicing was his real living growing relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. We can be content because the Christ who saved us, will work in us to make us what He wants us to be all of our lives.

Philippians 1:6 ***“For I am confident of this very thing that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”***

Paul knew the Lord was always with us and in us and working to conform us to Himself.

3. Third, our contentment and Paul’s comes from believing and living God’s promises.

Hebrews 13:5-6 ***“Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’”***