

Contentment

Sermon 21 in the Philippians

Philippians 4:10-13

I. 4:10

Paul is Grateful for their Gift to Him

When Paul uses the word “**flourished**” (revived) it is like saying their joint missionary efforts have been renewed.

Paul uses the root word **concern** twice. *phroneo*
Generally speaking, we would not consider “concern” to be compatible with “content”

The word translated here as “content” is used 10 times in Philippians.
1:7 – 2:2 (twice) – 2:5 – 3:15 (twice) – 3:19 – 4:2 – 4:10 – (twice)

II. 4:11

To the Stoics -- the word translated “**content**” can carry the idea of “satisfied self-sufficiency” or “independence”.

We go verse 13 to prove this is not what Paul meant.
ev (epsilon nu) carries the main idea of “in” but through is also a good translation

It is through Christ and being in Christ that I can accomplish the goal of contentment.
The focus is not on what great works I can accomplish.
The focus is on what Christ in me can cause me to do in regards to being content.

Phillips paraphrase of verse 13 as “I am ready for anything through the strength of the one who lives within me.”

III. V. 12

Does he know how to live with the most meager of resources?
Does he know how to live in prosperity?

Note the progression in verses 11-12

v. 11 – I have learned

v. 12 – I know

v.12 – I know

v. 12 – I have learned (a Greek word different than in v. 11 and found only here in the NT)

The translation “I have learned the secret” (all one word in Greek) goes back to the 1901 ASV and has been used by almost every major translation since.

Another way to say it is “I have been instructed”.

And it can be translated “I have been initiated”.

Youngs Literal Translation – “I have known both to be abased, and I have known to abound; in everything and in all things **I have been initiated**, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want.

And the secret is – he is in Christ – and because he is in Christ – he can take the best and the worst of circumstances and learn from them in the “School of Christ”.

We learn from our circumstances in this school.

Why? Because God is the God of our circumstances.

Verses 11, 12 and 13 need to be read together and kept together.

The Lord strengthened us Paul through every circumstance.

2 Timothy 4:17 -- But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear. Also, I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

The “all things” Paul mentions is another way of alluding to verses 11-12, using himself as an example of contentment in the midst of the ups and downs of life that we all experience.

IV. 4:13

D.A. Carson “The everything (NIV) or “all things” – as most translations – “cannot be completely unqualified. (e.g. jump over the moon, integrate complex mathematical equations in my head, turn sand into gold) so it is commonly expounded as a text that promises Christ’s strength to believers in all that they have to do... The everything in this text is contented living in the midst of food or hunger, plenty or want (4:10-12).

It falls into the category D.A. Carson calls, “unwarranted associative jumps”.

Remember how we started today?

St. Augustine said "Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee, O Lord".

Do you know the only Savior of sinners and do you belong to Him?