

Contentment

Defined

- A. **Contentment.** The fact, condition, or quality of being contented. **Contented.** Satisfied, desiring nothing more or nothing different; limiting one's desires, willing to put up with something.
- B. **Covetousness.** Inordinate and culpable desire of possessing that which belongs to another or to which one has no right.

Commanded

- A. The Christian religion condemns covetousness and commands contentment with life (Hebrews 13:5).
- B. The truly successful man is the one who has added contentment to his godliness (I Timothy 6:6-7).
- C. Ministers, a pattern for believers, are to be content with food and raiment, necessities (I Tim 6:8-11).
- D. The opposite of contentment is covetousness, wanting something else (Ephesians 5:5-7; Col 3:5-7).
- E. Discontentment leads to murmuring, which God hates and judges (I Cor 10:9-11; Phil 2:14-16).
- F. There are four things never satisfied, but they should not be the children of God (Prov 30:15-16).

Explained

- A. Contentment is the satisfied and thankful attitude you hold toward your present circumstances in life.
 - 1. Is the glass half full or half empty? Do you focus on what you have or on what you do not have?
 - 2. It is a choice to be happy and content. You can foolishly sin by choosing to be fretting and sad.
 - 3. Watch children opening presents – you have seen covetousness, greed, and discontent honed!
- B. Discontentment is a horrible sin, because it implies God is not enough for you; it is in this sense that covetousness becomes idolatry, because you crave something for happiness beyond God Himself.
- C. Contentment does not mean there is not a better something or other, but it means you do not think or worry about that better something or other, because God has not given it to you, yet.
- D. Contentment does not complain or murmur against what God has done, which is most of your life.
- E. Even in those areas where you were foolish, our blessed God allowed them for holy and good ends.
- F. Contentment does not covet circumstances given by God to another, which was the Lord's choice
- G. Contentment does not mean satisfaction with less than your best performance in an area of your life.
 - 1. Yet this "best performance" must always be limited to your reasonable effort (Psalm 127:1-2).
 - 2. A godly man is diligent and works with his might to get ahead (Proverbs 22:29; Eccl 9:10).
 - 3. Contentment is not satisfaction with the results of laziness or foolishness (Matthew 25:24-30).
 - 4. Contentment is satisfaction with whatever God gives your best effort (Eccl 11:6; James 4:13-15).
- H. You are a fool, if you prefer the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit (Ecclesiastes 4:6).
- I. The serenity prayer is good: "God grant me the grace to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." Amen!

Destroyed

- A. A discontented person is easy to spot. They are unhappy, fretting, worried, negative, and unthankful.
 - 1. These people love the word "but." No matter what good things they have, there is always "but."
 - 2. These people love to worry. They can overlook 100 important things to fret about 1 dumb thing.
- B. Excessive expectations – that a particular thing will bring happiness – will cause discontentment.
 - 1. If money is looked to for happiness, more will not be enough, for you need yet more (Eccl 5:10).
 - 2. If an event is looked to for happiness, it will always disappoint – dinners, vacations, driving, etc.
 - 3. If you think a new spouse would make you happy, you are wrong. All spouses have many faults.
 - 4. If a thing is looked to for happiness, it will disappoint quickly and become one more problem.

- C. Excessive expectations – beyond what is normal or given by God – will cause discontentment.
 1. Some expect too much financially, when there are good reasons the average income is average.
 2. Some expect too much in details, they can be irritated by minor details not important to anyone.
 3. Some expect too big of a role in life, so they are always disappointed when others neglect them.
- D. If you focus on wisdom, might, or riches, you will be disappointed and disappointing (Jer 9:23-24).
- E. Pride causes men to expect things beyond reality; they think too highly of themselves to fit reality.
- F. What do you want from life? Many say, “I just want to be happy.” But you can choose it right now!

Illustrated

- A. Esau (Gen 33:9), Job (Job 1:20-22; 2:9-10), Israel (Is 58:11), and Paul (Phil 4:11-13) were content.
- B. Israel (Nu 11:1; 14:2; Eze 7:19), Ahab (I Kgs 21:1-4), and Gehazi (II Kgs 5:15-27) were not content.
- C. Solomon tried everything for fulfillment and satisfaction in life, but it was all vanity and vexation!

Applied

- A. Contentment does not mean we do not pray for better circumstances (II Sam 12:15-17; II Cor 12:8).
- B. David showed contentment in the will of God at the death of a beloved child (II Samuel 12:15-23).
- C. If you must be discontent, then be discontent about your spiritual progress (I Cor 12:31; Matt 5:6).
- D. John the Baptist taught it as satisfaction with wages, even when sin could bring more (Luke 3:14).
- E. Accept your position in life without fretting, unless it can be changed easily (I Cor 7:17,20-24).
- F. Wives better accept learning contentment, for it is God’s doctrine to protect their bodies (Prov 5:19).
- G. If you are not content with your husband ... (1) you chose him, (2) your parents approved him, and (3) God gave him to you! Why in the world are you unhappy? He is perfect for you by all means!
- H. More material things will complicate your life more than they will bring contentment to your life.

Obtained

- A. If Jesus Christ is rightly understood and loved, you have more than heart could wish (Heb 13:5-6).
 1. If He is your Portion in life, then nothing in heaven or earth can possibly compete (Ps 73:25-26).
 2. If you are glorying in the right things, all the things of discontentment are nothing (Jer 9:23-24).
 3. True satisfaction is found in the Lord Himself (Ps 22:26; 36:8; 63:5; 65:4; Pr 19:23; Is 66:11).
- B. If the sovereignty of God is rightly understood, then you will have no basis for resenting your life.
 1. The Potter is not to be murmured against, even if He made you without hands (Isaiah 45:9).
 2. It is God that makes you to differ from another, so why would you boast or complain (I Cor 4:7).
 3. Contentment to very much simply your choice of attitude regarding God’s choices in your life.
 4. You will be able to resign yourself to the will of God with calm submission (James 4:13-15).
- C. Contentment is learned by choosing an attitude of satisfaction by Christ’s strength (Phil 4:11-13).
 1. Paul had learned that no matter what his condition, he could be content with those things.
 2. Regardless of his circumstances, he had learned to look at them with disciplined moderation.
 3. And he realized that this great skill could only be done well by the power of Jesus Christ.
- D. Grasping godly and wise priorities can make you contented and happy with far less than you think.
 1. If you measure success by righteousness, anything else is extra (Psalm 37:16; Pr 15:16; 16:8).
 2. If you measure success by love, anything else is extra and unnecessary (Proverbs 15:17; 21:19).
 3. If you measure success by peace, anything else is extra and unnecessary (Proverbs 17:1; 21:9).
- E. Contentment is the attitude of a joyful heart: such a person can have a continual feast (Prov 15:15).
- F. The preparation of your heart for contentment is to pray for convenient things only (Prov 30:8-9).
- G. Constant thanksgiving will promote contentment. Count your blessings! Name them one by one!
- H. Disciplined moderation in the use of all things can affect how you appreciate them (Prov 27:7).
- I. Ignoring things that are matters of liberty and/or none of your business can bring contentment.
- J. A long-term view will blow away the disappointment of the short-term (Ps 73:1-28; II Cor 4:17-18).