

MORNING SERMON OUTLINE

CONTENTED IN GOD'S SUFFICIENCY

Philippians 4:10-13

Near the close of his letter the Apostle Paul comes to "Thank You" point of the letter. Immediately he sees the need to clarify his words, lest there be a misunderstanding. The first clarification assures his friends in Philippi that he is only grateful and not at all critical toward them (a lesson in tact and sensitivity). The second brings us to one of the most useful passages of Scripture from which to learn the secret of contentment in all circumstances. God taught it to Paul. He models it and shares it with us.

1. Thanks to the Philippians for their care & gift - and no implied criticism!

2. Thanks – and no subtle request for more.

The Secret of Contentment in All Circumstances

People today are conditioned to be very needs-centered
(their own more than those of others).

Paul displays an entirely different outlook.

Let us try to learn from Paul. We can, by the grace of Jesus Christ.

a. His material needs were real.

Chapter 1 (unjust confinement), 4:14 ("my affliction")

b. He accepted the ups and downs of his life as directed by God (Providence) – vs.12

c. In every (providential) circumstance he had *learned* to be content.

That he "learned" it means it did not come naturally or all at once –
so with us. Complaining is naturally, Contentment is learned.
Paul's word is curious. It means "self-sufficient" (???) – used here,
and in 1 Timothy 6:6 & 2 Corinthians 9:8. See below.

Is this the egotistical self-sufficiency of the proud individualist
who no dependence on anyone but himself for anything?

d. The "Secret" to godly contentment – vv.12,13

(1) Paul's focus is on Christ & on his calling to serve Christ

- so clearly illustrated in Chapter 1.

"If the Gospel is preached I rejoice...

For me to live IS Christ ..."

(2) Trust in God's provision of strength & grace. Vs.13

"I am made strong by the One who empowers me" to (handle)
all circumstances and be enabled to pursue my calling.

NOT "self"-sufficiency, but God-sufficiency (see 2 Cor.9:8).

e. The importance of godly contentment –

Phil. 2:14,15 (again), and Proverbs 30:8,9