

1. We are continuing with our series this morning about contentment.
2. The basic definition of contentment is being satisfied with what we have, or being at peace with where we are.
3. **1 Timothy 6:6** But godliness with contentment is great gain.
4. In this context, I would define godliness as surrendering to the Lord's work in us to move us toward a place of spiritual maturity.
5. We are not saying that having Godly dreams or Godly desires is a bad thing.
6. This is also not a teaching about staying where we are spiritually and not growing or progressing in our walk with the Lord past where we are right now.
7. I believe Paul was saying to young Timothy, in your pursuit for godliness it is also great gain, or of great value to be content. To be at peace with where the Lord has you on that journey.
8. We looked at an aspect of contentment last week by examining Solomon's statement in **Ecclesiastes 1:8** Everything is wearisome beyond description. No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied. No matter how much we hear, we are not content. (NLT)
9. Basically, Solomon was saying our life becomes meaningless because no matter how much we have; no matter how good things look and how good things sound, we grow tired of them and seek something else to fill the void.
10. The only problem is when we do get those new things, they don't last either. And we again long for something else.
11. I called it the syndrome of the next big thing.
12. How many have every heard the saying, 15 minutes of fame? It basically indicates that the attention of people is only on things or people for a very short time, and then they move on to something else.
13. We live in a world that is continually changing focus on the next big thing that will hold their attention.
14. This is the type of culture that we live in. Never content with anything for any length of time.
15. But we must be aware that the culture of our day leads to the same conclusion that Solomon came to and that is that when there is an absence of contentment, everything is meaningless.

16. So, how do we break the hold of discontentment that is around us all the time?
17. **Psalm 118:24** This is the day the LORD has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. (NLT)
18. This day has meaning to the Lord. If this day didn't have any meaning for me than the Lord wouldn't have given it to me.
19. So, if this day has meaning, then what does the Lord want me to do with it? He wants me to rejoice and be glad in it.
20. When we see each and every day as a gift from the Lord, and we purpose in our heart, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to rejoice and be glad in that day, then that means that our joy, happiness, fulfillment, fullness, wholeness, and completeness are not out there somewhere, they are right here where we are.
21. **Contentment is not something we possess; contentment is something we practice.**
22. Let's look at another aspect of contentment. Turn with me in your bibles to...

TEXT: **Philippians 4:10-13** How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. **11** Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. **12** I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. **13** For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

TITLE: **Heart Bypass.**

INTRO:

1. You may remember this last verse from our series about hope. When we filter the stuff of life through our hope in Jesus Christ it changes our perspective.
2. Again, this morning I want us to consider this idea of living life through Jesus Christ.
3. You may remember that Paul is closing out a letter he wrote to the believers in the city of Philippi.
4. And in these final words from verse 10 he thanks them for their concern over his physical situation.

5. But in describing his physical situation, he identifies his source of contentment.
6. He says in verse 12 I have learned the secret to contentment. The secret is, whether I have everything, or I have nothing. Whether it is with a full stomach or empty. With plenty or with little.
7. I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.
8. The secret to contentment is to live life through the strength and power that only Jesus Christ can give.
9. Now. That is not a difficult concept to grasp. On the one hand it makes perfect sense. When I live my life through Jesus Christ, then the end result is contentment.
10. Not difficult to grasp. But that concept can be very difficult to live out. Why?
11. Because we are continually tempted to live out our lives depending on different sources besides the strength of Jesus.
12. We said last week that we are in a spiritual battle; and one of the aspects of that battle is that our enemy, Satan, continually tempts us to trust in every other source besides Jesus.
13. He wants us to go looking for contentment in all kinds of places except through Jesus Christ.
14. Because the enemy knows exactly what Paul knows. And that is the secret to contentment is living life through Jesus Christ.
15. Let me say it another way. Our enemy wants us to bypass Jesus Christ and look for another source to give us life and hope.
16. When an artery of the heart becomes extremely blocked, it is sometimes necessary to do bypass surgery.
17. We have several people in our church who have experienced the extreme difficulty of this type of procedure and the recovery process that follows.
18. Heart bypass is when the surgeon removes a vein from one part of the body, usually the leg, and uses that vein to bypass the diseased artery so that blood can begin to flow freely again.
19. If we were to equate that to our spiritual life, the only way to experience true hope and contentment is through Jesus Christ.

20. But Satan will attempt to block that flow of strength and contentment from Jesus, and get us to bypass Jesus for some other source.
21. But here's what our enemy doesn't tell us. All other sources leave us with a diseased heart.
22. All other sources besides Jesus don't lead to the wonderful, life-giving contentment that Jesus longs for us to have.
23. All other sources lead us down the same path as Solomon and that is living a meaningless life.
24. So if we go back to Philippians, Paul not only tells us what the true and only source of contentment is, Jesus Christ. He also shows us some false sources of contentment.
25. So what is the purpose of this message? We want to identify false sources of contentment so we can reject them. And instead hold on to the only true source of contentment, and that is Jesus Christ.
26. So let me show you three things Paul has learned to NOT base his contentment on.

Contentment is not based on our treatment from others.

1. Rest assured, each and every one of us, including me, are under constant temptation to base our contentment on how others treat us.
2. What they do and don't do to us or for us. But we know from this passage that the treatment of others was not Paul's source of contentment.
3. **Philippians 4:10** How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. (NLT)
4. What is the help that Paul has needed? He is writing this letter, along with several other letters in the New Testament from a Roman jail cell.
5. At the end of Acts chapter 21, Paul is arrested in Jerusalem, and through a series of events ends up in Rome, under arrest, where he spends most of the rest of his life until he is eventually executed for his faith.
6. So, when Paul says in verse 10, I am grateful that you are concerned for me, that is what he is talking about.

7. But very quickly, we discover that concern was all they were able to offer Paul. It says they didn't have the chance to help Paul financially, or to help meet his needs for food and clothing and living expenses.
8. So, in verse 12 when Paul says I have learned the secret to being content, we know for sure that the secret had nothing to do with what the people in Philippi did or didn't do for him.
9. That's because Paul had learned what all of us would be wise to learn and that is that contentment that is based on the behaviors of others is no contentment at all.
10. To put it bluntly, as human beings we are not all that dependable. Just do a bible search sometime about the condition of the human heart.
11. **Jeremiah 17:9** "The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? (NLT)
12. **Genesis 6:5** The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. (NIV)
13. **Mark 7:21-23** For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22 adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. 23 All these evils come from inside and defile a person."
14. How many are starting to get the idea that searching for strength and contentment from within others is a pretty discouraging pursuit?
15. To put it simply. Others will let us down, and we will let others down.
16. That is the way we are wired.
17. And yet, all of us are tempted on a regular basis to base our contentment on the treatment or behaviors of others.
18. But basing our contentment there leads us with a diseased heart.

Contentment is not based on what we have or don't have.

1. **Philippians 4:12** I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.
2. Why is it impossible for what we have or don't have to provide us with the contentment we long for?

3. Because no human being, no matter how hard we try, can avoid the needy places of life, the empty places of life, the times in life where we experience lack.
4. Sometimes that lack is mental.
5. Sometimes that lack is physical.
6. Sometimes that lack is spiritual.
7. And sometimes that lack is emotional.
8. Whatever the source, what we have or don't have is a terrible place to hang our hopes of contentment.
9. Again, do a simple bible search for the word trouble.
10. Psalm 55:2 hear me and answer me. My thoughts trouble me and I am distraught.
11. Psalm 90:10 Our days may come to seventy years, or eighty, if our strength endures; yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.
12. John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."
13. What I have or do not have are terrible sources of contentment. If our contentment is based on those things, our level of contentment will be like being on a roller coaster ride.

Contentment is not based on our own strength.

1. Philippians 4:13 For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.
2. Being beaten up by life had proven to Paul that he could not rely on his own strength in times of trouble or need.
3. In our small group, one of the guys made the statement that when we are younger, we tend to make an idol out of our own strength. We tend to think we are invincible. That we can trust in us.
4. I now know, the older I get, that my strength isn't very reliable. And yet, in times of lack and trouble I am still tempted to trust in me more than trusting in the Lord.
5. We would all do good to be reminded that our strength is no match for the troubles of life.

6. Psalm 22:15 My strength has dried up like sunbaked clay. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You have laid me in the dust and left me for dead.
7. Psalm 31:10 I am dying from grief; my years are shortened by sadness. Sin has drained my strength; I am wasting away from within.
8. Psalm 33:16-17 The best-equipped army cannot save a king, nor is great strength enough to save a warrior. 17 Don't count on your warhorse to give you victory—for all its strength, it cannot save you.
9. I don't know about you, but I am feeling pretty weak right now.

Conclusion:

1. Early on in the message we said the way to break the hold that discontentment wants on our life is to do what Psalm 118 says.
2. Psalm 118:24 This is the day the LORD has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. (NLT)
3. That is a wonderful verse and I believe it is true.
4. But I also believe that rejoicing in today is going to be next to impossible if my rejoicing is based on...
 - How others treat me.
 - What I have or don't have.
 - On how much strength I possess.
5. Rejoicing is only possible in the Lord, and in the strength he provides.
6. Psalm 73:26 My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever.
7. Psalm 84:5 What joy for those whose strength comes from the LORD.
8. Psalm 93:1 The LORD is king! He is robed in majesty. Indeed, the LORD is robed in majesty and armed with strength. The world stands firm and cannot be shaken.
9. This may not hold true for anyone else, but I have found in my own life, if I am having difficulty rejoicing in the day the Lord has given me.
10. If I will stop and evaluate where I'm trying to draw my strength from, I generally find that the reason for my difficulty in rejoicing comes from the fact I am trying to draw my strength from someone or somewhere else than the Lord.
11. And it normally is one of the three areas we have talked about today.
12. When I am struggling to rejoice in the Lord I often find I am looking to others, or I'm looking at what I have, or I am looking at

myself for strength and comfort and contentment; and those things always leave me wanting.

13. This is not a series of condemnation. We are all in this struggle.
14. This is a series about refocus.
15. As we close today let's adjust our focus onto the Lord and his strength.
16. Lord, I thank you that you are my source of strength.
17. Lord, I thank you that no matter what others do, you are still good.
18. Lord, I thank you that no matter what I have or don't have, you are still good.
19. Lord, I thank you that even when my strength fails, you are still good.