

Philippians 4:10-13

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Date: 07 February 2013

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[0 : 00] Can I go on in Philippians 4? Just go ahead and turn there, Philippians 4. I hope you've enjoyed studying through Philippians. We're pretty much on our way to being done with Philippians.

It was one of the first books that we talked through about six years ago in Wes's old apartment, I think, something like that. So, tonight we're going to pick up in verse 10 of chapter 4.

And, as always, I definitely feel the weight of life. This is like one of those coffee mug versus t-shirt, Christian t-shirt versus. And so, I understand just the weightiness of what I'm about to speak on tonight, and I pray the Lord really works.

So, verse 10, chapter 4. I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length you have revived your concern for me.

You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

[1 : 15] I know to be brought low. I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I've learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. So, let's pray for me for a minute. Lord, I just give you praise for these words.

And, Lord, I recognize that even for those of us who are born again, who have you in our lives, it is a daily fight to believe these words in a way that affects how we live.

Even up until 15 minutes ago, I was battling, trying to believe these words. And, Lord, can just so easily be attacked.

And so, Father, I pray that you would enable us to truly come around this idea tonight of contentment and joy in you. I just give you the praise.

[2 : 22] In Christ's name, amen. So, just a little bit of introduction. Verse 10, where he says, I've rejoiced in the Lord greatly, but now at length you have revived your concern for me.

You were indeed concerned for me, but had no opportunity. And so you know what he's just mentioning here in this first verse. Ten years prior to this, Paul had been in Philippi.

And he had received the generous gift from the Philippians church, a financial gift to kind of support his ministry when he arrived in Thessalonica. So they supported him financially.

And their giving came from an overflow of joy in Christ. It wasn't something they did under compulsion or something that they thought they had to do. They did it out of the overflow of their hearts in Christ.

And even as someone who lives on, you know, financial support myself to do ministry, I realize that a lot of times some of the most cheerful givers and people that even support me in what I do are those who have really been touched by Christ, who really have been satisfied in Christ.

[3 : 35] And in some way have been ministered to by someone at some point who told them the gospel. And they know the power of the gospel and they want to support those who are, you know, continually ministering to people.

So it was out of gratitude they supported Paul financially, but lately they haven't really had an opportunity to support him. So he's talking about that and kind of addressing that.

And so a major theme, the major theme that we're going to talk about tonight is the word contentment. And it's what we're going to be unpacking.

And so, but where it says it right here in verse, let's see. Yeah. In verse 11, we said, I've learned, you know, whatever situation I'm to be content.

And that word for content, it just means having enough. It actually means even to be self-sufficient. It means to be, to be pleased with or to be satisfied with something.

[4 : 43] You're not looking to something else. You're not dependent on something else. It's contentment. It's what really what the word kind of comes from to. So to possess contentment is really to possess joy and peace.

If you have those things kind of, they all kind of connect together. Joy, peace, contentment. They're all, we use those a lot in the Christian life, kind of almost as just different substitute words for the same thing.

So contentment is what we're going after tonight. And I'm saying that joy, contentment is a fight for even those who have Christ and an impossible fight for those who are without Christ.

And so I have just three things to focus on tonight out of this. But the first one is true contentment is not circumstantial. True contentment is not circumstantial.

And that's seen in verses 11 through 12. Now I'm not speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I'm to be content. I know how to be brought low and know how to abound.

[5 : 47] In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. So you see here that he's like in any situation, in any circumstance.

That's his language he's using. And so he's kind of like been all over the spectrum. He's had an abundance. He's had like wealth.

He's actually been like in poverty and in great need. He's been all over the map with that. He hasn't just lived a certain way his entire life. And so the point kind of is this teaches us that contentment is something not found in the current situation.

Because he says, I have contentment. I've found it. I've learned it. And I've learned it in every circumstance. And it's not in a particular circumstance that you actually find contentment.

And that's really a, we're going to kind of go after here. It's not circumstantial. And so in other words, it's not something that we can attain that's outside of us. That's what we constantly tell ourselves.

[6 : 52] Because what we've got to understand is that the problem is internal. The problem is something not outside that we need. It's something that's like wrong with us.

Something that is internal. So kind of go here with me. This will be a question later. Many think if only I had or if only I could fill in the blank, I would be content.

If I had good health, if I had good looks, good grades, millions of dollars, a nice house, you know, a husband or wife or family. Then these things, if I had these things, then I would be content.

I mean, I just came straight from the gym to here. And like, I go to the Delano Catholic Center. And it's just, it just really breaks my heart. I was even thinking about it while I was there. Just how, man, so many of those guys particularly just think that, man, if I can just look like I had to rip somebody's head off, like I'll be content.

And just see them in there just fighting for that. And that one thing day after day. And spend their lives trying to attain these things.

[8 : 00] All these things that we mentioned, which are not bad things. But we spend so much time and energy, whatever the cost, to attain them. And so we fail to see that discontentment is a bitter fruit of like an inward condition that we have.

And that condition is indwelling sin. Even for the believer, we have indwelling sin. Sin that's a part of us. An inward condition.

And so even as believers, we still have like the fallen flesh that we are kind of cloaked in. And this flesh is under the sentence of death. Like what you see right here and what you are will eventually die.

It's not going to live forever. It's not what's eternal. And so that's why even Paul calls it, Paul, being a believer, he says this body of death.

And he says, even when I want to do good, evil is like ever present with me. Like it's like right there with me. Like trying to pull me away and to make me draw to it.

[9 : 06] So the things that are outside of us, you know, we battle. It says in Scripture we battle that. We battle the devil. We battle the world. And a lot of times we stop there. Like in reality, we think it's the devil who's making me feel this way.

Or it's just the stuff in the world. But to be honest, like those things just kind of encourage you to act according to what's already inside of you.

Like which is your sinful, your indwelling sin. And so it encourages you to sin. It doesn't make you sin. As a believer, we're talking about. And so it kind of draws from us.

And so turn to, you know, as always, keep your hand in Philippians. But turn to Mark 7 real fast. And let's just read something that Jesus himself says about this.

So for the believer, you can't ever say the devil made me do it. Or my circumstances were just so terrible that I just had to sin.

[10:07] I had to go this way. You can't say that. Not if you have Christ abiding in you. And so look at Mark 7 verse 19. And we'll see that it's not what's outside of somebody, but what's in somebody.

Verse 20. He said, Wow.

So our enemy, really, a lot of the time is ourselves. We're our own worst problem. And so we have so many things that pull us into that state.

And so we see that, like, contentment and joy are not the things that just naturally flow out of us. It's something that, what flows out of us is the natural soil of our flesh is grumbling, covetousness.

I'm always thinking, if I just had this, this contentment. That's what kind of naturally comes. We have to battle for contentment. And a book that I'm going to refer to quite a bit throughout the night, I do recommend it.

[11:37] If you want, like, a reading recommendation, it's called *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*. And it was written by a Puritan back in the day in the 1600s named Jeremiah Burroughs.

And he, that's the focus of this book. He just talks about contentment. And it's so good. It's a book that Nathan West and I read while we were in school a few years ago.

So it's so good. But something he said was, The mystery of contentment consists not in bringing anything from outside to make my condition more comfortable, but in purging out something that is within.

And so it's something that we have to deal with. It's inside of us. Let's see. Turn over to 1 Timothy 6 real fast and go to verse 6.

1 Timothy 6, verse 6. And so we have warnings all throughout Scripture saying, Don't look for this outside of, in the world.

[12:40] Don't look for, this isn't an external thing that you need. The problem is inside of you. It's a battle for contentment. And so we're warned about that. And so look at 1 Timothy 6 and go to verse 6.

He says, Now there is a great gain in godliness with contentment. For we brought nothing into this world and we can take nothing out of the world. But if we have food and clothing with these, we'll be content.

But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.

So it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains. And so he's saying like a immoderate love for money.

And money is not a bad thing, but he just understands, as Jesus does, that money can be used to do great evil or do great good. And he's saying that if you love money, if that's your goal to attain, then it will bring great harm upon you.

[13:57] But he says like godliness, like being like God, like pursuing Him, knowing Him, becoming like Him, there's great contentment. And so there's all these warnings about this.

So something else, Jeremiah Burroughs says, that the Christian, this is one of those little nuggets, a Christian comes through contentment, not so much by way of addition as by way of subtraction.

We don't think if I just had this, if I just could add this to my life, I would be content. And he was saying that true satisfaction in Christ, you actually might be able to subtract things from your life.

Like that's what it really looks like, to have something of great value to where you don't really need all these other things. So if you're saying, if I had a little more, if I just had a little more of this, a little more of that, like seriously mistaken, and I know I've been in this position so many times.

So if you're not satisfied with what you have now, you won't be satisfied when that portion is doubled or tripled. It's like you have to, it's something to be possessed now. And it's the fruit of indwelling sin.

[15:10] Just remember that. Like discontentment is the fruit of indwelling sin. Even for the believer, even at our best, sin is always there trying to make us drowsy and lazy and tries to prevent us from doing any good thing before God.

So there's something on this inside. So that's the first point. True contentment is not circumstantial. The second point is true contentment is found only in Christ.

Go back to Philippians again. True contentment is found only in Christ. And this is found in verse 13 where he says, I can do all things through him, Christ.

Okay. And so flip to back one chapter in Philippians to chapter three. Something that we covered a few weeks ago.

But Philippians three and go to verse seven. He says, but whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

[16:21] Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord. For his sake, I've suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I might gain Christ.

So what does that, what does that look like? Does it sound like he's trying to add stuff for, for joy, trying to add stuff to his life for contentment? He's like, no, like I've lost everything to possess Christ, the one eternal treasure that will satisfy and bring me contentment.

And he's like, that's, that's what he said right here. The surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord. And the Greek word for knowing right there, we've, we've mentioned this before.

It's an experiential personal involvement. No, it's something that you've actually laid hold of. And, and to the Greeks, this meant like a mystical secret union with a God.

Like when they use this, when they use this phrase, like a, a secret mystical union with a God. And like a, a transcendent knowledge that goes beyond just like the mundane, everyday things of life.

[17:32] And so that's what they were saying. And the same word in Hebrew, the equivalent of knowing in Hebrew means like an intimate knowledge of something, a love bond, a union, the way, like a, way a husband would know his wife.

And so this is like a, a warming theological concept of like knowing Christ. And, and so he's not just saying no about Christ. I know so many people, and even myself, when I was a teenager, I could tell you like a lot of correct theology about who Jesus was.

I didn't know him. Like I had not like encountered him at all. I wasn't really experientially walking with him and knowing him. So, and then in Hebrews 13, I'll just read you this.

It says, verses four and six, it says, keep your life free from the love of money. Be content with what you have. For Christ has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.

So we can confidently say the Lord is my helper. I will not fear. What can man do to me? So he, he's saying like, I can be content because Christ has told me he'll never leave me or forsake me.

[18:46] And like, he is my helper. He is the one that I need. It's not found in what I can attain outside. And, uh, so, so, um, just a warning though, about satisfaction in Christ and contentment in Christ.

Um, I've even heard some very dear brothers of mine share the gospel this way before. And, and I've also seen the devastating effects of sharing the gospel this way.

So if you're, if you're aware that, um, that you are sharing this way, you can just kind of keep that yourself and just ask the Lord, uh, to help you not share the gospel this way.

But I'm going to tell you like a tale of two plane passengers. Okay. And I hope this really alters how you think a little bit, but two well-traveled men are on an airplane together and a flight attendant goes up to the first man.

And he says, and offers this man a parachute. And he says, put this parachute on. If you put this parachute on, it's going to make your, your flight a lot more comfortable, a lot more enjoyable.

[19:58] um, just do this. And, um, she, and even she's wearing one, the flight attendant is wearing a parachute. She's like, I promise like it will bring you joy on this flight.

It'll make your flight a lot better. It'll improve it. And so he just kind of like, okay. And that sounds good. And so he, he tries it on, he puts it on. And immediately he feels like how heavy it is, how cumbersome it is.

And, and like, he tries to sit down in his seat and he's just so like thrown off. And uncomfortable. And he's thinking in his mind, this is not what she said, but I'm going to give it a chance.

I just put it on. I'm just going to wait it out for a while. And he's just sitting there getting hot and his clothes are getting all wrinkled. And then he hears people across the aisle laughing at him.

They're like, what is that guy doing? Look, what an idiot. And so then like, not only is he uncomfortable, but he's feeling like humiliation, like some kind of like persecution from the people

on the plane.

[20 : 57] And so he, he said, you know, he, he keeps it on just for a little while longer because the flight attendant did promise him, this will make your flight more enjoyable. But finally he had a, and he like took the parachute off and he threw it down the aisle.

And he's like, this is, this is stupid. What was I thinking? And he actually gets angry and bitter at the attendant that told him that. so that's the, that's the first man.

The second man is also offered a parachute from a flight attendant. Who's wearing a parachute herself, very kind lady. And she just says, put this parachute on because in two minutes, the plane's going down.

Like we're having some serious malfunctioning problems. Put this parachute on and it'll save your life. And so he quickly traps the parachute on with delight and takes no notice of how like uncomfortable it is at all.

And then when people start laughing at him, he really doesn't care. Like he's like, that's, that's all right. And he, he thinks only about how awful that jump would be without the parachute.

[22 : 11] And actually having that parachute does bring him like some comfort and peace while he has it on. Cause he knows that he knows what's about to happen. So consider like the motive and the result of each, each passenger.

The first man, he was offered by the attendant who was well-meaning, you know, like put this parachute on and it'll bring you comfort and enjoyment. It'll improve your flight.

And the result was anger, bitterness, and frustration. That's like how this guy, the first man felt. The second man, not so much. Um, he did to escape the danger of jumping out of the plane at 2000 feet.

And so he feels joy and peace and, and delight. Um, and he's actually very thankful to the attendant that told him that. Actually, the other guy is embittered and angry with the attendant.

All right. So, so here's the deal. The gospel message is not come and be joyful and happy in Jesus.

[23 : 13] God loves you and has a great plan for your life. That's not, it's not the gospel message. If you tell anybody that, they'd be a fool to be like, I don't, I don't want that.

I don't want joy. I don't want fulfillment. Um, they would, they'd be like, okay, sounds good. And so they buy that message. And then like later on, life doesn't get better.

Like life gets harder. People start laughing at them. They realize how hard things are. They, they usually, people that I've met that have experienced this, like they're, they're, they're pretty cool for a while.

They're kind of experiencing a new thing. And then like the talk I have with them later is, I was a Christian until this. This happened. Fill in the blank. I lost my girlfriend. My mom got sick.

I broke, you know, something in my body where I can't do this anymore. I lost my job. And so I just concluded that Christ is just a big hoax. And I'm actually angry with the person that told me that Jesus would give me fulfillment and happiness.

[24 : 15] So, so here's the gospel message. The gospel is out of the words of Jesus, Mark one, repent and believe the gospel. For the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And like the gospel is like you are condemned before God and that you're an enemy of God. Unless you turn from your sin and come to Christ, you'll perish. And so is it true that Jesus does give us contentment and does give us joy and give us satisfaction?

Yes. But that comes only by repentance of sin, taking up your cross and following Christ. There's no other way. Like that's just it. And so, because your joy is not in the present world, but in the life to come and found in Christ.

So, so just, just kind of keep that in mind. You know, like we don't want to, like we have Christ and we repent of our sins and those things are the result of having Christ.

And so you got to be careful with the gospel message. So, uh, he says, knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord, Paul says in Philippians, knowing Christ, that word, Christ, Messiah, savior, anointed one.

[25 : 28] Where is he saving you from? He's saving you from sin and judgment, um, and eternal death. My Lord, he's your sovereign. He's your master. You will follow him. Like you can't like neglect those words.

And so the peace and joy and contentment are the result of, of having Christ truly possessing Christ. Um, Thomas Brooks, another Puritan guy said, God has in himself, all goodness to supply you, all happiness to crown you.

God is an all satisfying good, a good that fills the heart and quiets the soul. He says, in him, in him, I have all comforts and all delights, all contentments, no good below him.

Who is the greatest good and can only satisfy the soul. A good wife, a good child, a good name, a good estate, a good friend cannot satisfy the soul. These may please, but they cannot satisfy. It's like what he said. And so the secret is having knowing Christ and having Christ dwell in us. If you were here last week, um, you remember the analogy that I gave you from, from, uh, that Burroughs used in his book.

[26 : 39] He was saying that if you're sick, like, you naturally actually get cold, like pretty easy. So you get cold anyway. Like, if you really are sick, you have to search from some kind of outside source, outside source, to make yourself warm.

A fire, a warm coat, and like, you need those external things to make you warm, because your body's sick. Like, but if your body is healthy, like, you can actually put cold clothes on, and it warms the clothes up, right?

It's like an inside out kind of thing. And he's saying that if you really are healthy in Christ, like, you don't need these external things to make you joyful, to make you content.

It's something that kind of happens from, from within. And so, knowing Christ Jesus, only in Christ is our true contentment found. Um, and even for the believer, it's a battle.

But, but we've experienced this. So, this leads us to the third point, which is, true contentment is sustained by God's power.

[27 : 42] True contentment is sustained by God's power. And then, um, verse 13, back in chapter 4, I can do all things through Him, through Christ, who strengthens me.

All right? And this is that. This is the coffee mug. verse. Um, I've actually been to, like, a baseball game before, where I saw, like, one guy had this verse, this verse written, like, like, on his, on his, you know, with the paint they put on.

And, it's just saying, like, I can win this baseball game with the strength that Christ gives me to win this baseball game. And then, I saw another guy on the team that had painted, like, Romans, Romans 8, forgot the verse, Romans 8, if God is for me, who can be against me?

Someone's gonna lose. Like, both can't win. So, and I've actually been around, like, seeing in Christian bookstores, like, the stuff plastered all over, sports equipment and everything.

I'm just saying, oh, no, like, this verse is for the single mom who works two jobs and has three kids at home and who feels like she's going to die under the weight of what she's going through.

[28 : 56] She can say, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. That's for her, not for these athletes who want to swell their pride up like Jesus is a means for me to be winning glory in some sport.

It's not, not a means. So, so, um, back to the verse. That was what the verse doesn't mean. Um, so, strength for lasting joy and contentment is found only in Christ.

The strength for lasting joy and contentment. So, this same Greek word for, for contentment is used by, like, the Greek Stoics, the Roman Stoics, but the philosophers, I don't know if you know anything about that, but Stoics are people who just say, come what may, no matter what happens, I'm undaunted.

I'm going to continue pursuing my whatever. Like, I'm this way. And nothing can alter that. It's kind of like a, kind of like, whatever comes, I'm going to be that way.

And they would say that, like, I'm content. I'm content. But, Paul is saying, like, eh, not really the same way. He's using this term completely differently.

[30 : 06] He says, I can do all things with Christ who strengthens me. So, contentment in Christ is going to be the result of His strengthening you, even as a believer. So, yeah.

So, he's like, I know what it's like to be in financial poverty, to be in unhealthiness, loneliness, whatever. Christ will strengthen you. He'll grant you what you need to have contentment and joy. So, let me see. Sorry. And this is something else that Burroughs wrote, just follow me. He said, a Christian finds satisfaction in every circumstance by getting strength from another, by going outside of himself to Christ Jesus.

By his faith and acting upon Christ and bringing the strength of Christ into his soul, he is thereby enabled to bear whatever God lays on him by the strength that he finds from Christ.

There is strength in Christ, not only to sanctify and save us, but strength to support us under all our burdens and afflictions. And Christ expects that when we are under any burden, we should act our

faith upon him to draw virtue and strength.

[31 : 17] Really good. Like, in Christ, acting upon him in faith results in satisfaction and contentment no matter what. And it comes from him. It's something that he supplies.

So, application, real fast. And, man, there was so much to say in this. And so, I was just trying to, like, I can't say that, I can't say that, I don't have time. So, getting into a little bit of application, look back at the text again in Philippians 4, and you see Paul uses a phrase twice.

He's like, I've learned. I've learned. And, he says that twice. I've learned this. I've learned to be content. And he says, learning something does not come easy.

Like, learning contentment is not something you can just read a book on and you're squared. Like, it's something that you've got to learn through experience that these other things don't content, so by letting down by things, but also actually being able to find contentment in Christ.

So, so Paul, you know, he's not getting contentment being in a dungeon cell. Like, he's not getting all this stuff, you know? Like, he, he realizes that contentment is something that he, that has to come from within, with Christ inside of him.

[32 : 36] And so, learning this is a discipline, like learning contentment. And, so, something else that will, we'll talk about this in the groups, but, cultivate thankfulness in your life.

Like, I mean, I can talk for an hour on thankfulness. Like, just cultivate thankfulness in your life.

Charles Spurgeon said, very simply, he that deserves nothing should be content with anything.

It's pretty good. And like, all of us, being like sinners and rebels against God, we don't deserve one good thing. Like, like that's the weight of your sin.

Like, someone asked me, one of my best friends, actually, who doesn't know the Lord. He's my oldest friend. I literally had pictures of like, he and I as like babies together. He says, how, how in the world can you still love Christ after all the stuff that he's allowed to happen to you?

And that's like, what his response. And this is, this was kind of my response. Like, a true understanding of the gospel means like, you don't deserve anything. Not the air you breathe, the food you eat, the clothes you have, nothing.

[33 : 48] And, it all is grace. Like, the unmerited, undeserved blessing and favor of God. And so, like that's the very foundational principle of the gospel is that you don't deserve anything.

And grace is getting something that you don't deserve. So, learn to cultivate thankfulness. I think that when we're dealing with discontentment, I think that often is at the heart of it.

We've forgotten, like, who God is, who we were, and how much he is like, so richly lavished upon us. Keep that in your mind. Like, learn to cultivate thankfulness.

And, just a little personal note before we break up in the groups that discuss some things. So, I'm just going to share with you a little bit about my quest, my search for contentment throughout my life.

And, but if you had asked me when I was 18, what would make you content? Like, what would make you satisfied? Like, if only I had, right, question, I would have probably put two things in there.

[35 : 00] I would have said, good health and a wife. That's probably what I would have said. Good health and a wife, a family. And, so, then I'll be satisfied.

I would have said that to you without hesitation. So, so, if you don't know, I have a, a disease called cystic fibrosis. It's a, a lung disease that like, produces abnormally thick mucus in the lungs.

And, around 30,000 people in the U.S. are infected with it. and it kills half of those by age 30. And so, like, I lost the ability as I got older.

Like, I lost the ability. By the time I was probably 16, I hardly could do, like, a lot of the big physical activities that I, I once did. And, but, but, playing sports, lost that ability.

Like, I didn't have the endurance to keep playing things. Although, I was a pretty decent, maybe a little better than average baseball player. Like, I couldn't, like, I didn't have the stamina to do it. Had the skill, just not the stamina.

[36 : 08] And, I couldn't get out and really go, like, hiking and do the things I really enjoy, like, out in the mountains. And so, you know, you just want to, you just want to feel good in life so you can, so you can do a lot, right?

And so, like I really said, if I only had good health, like, I would be content. That's something I would, I would say at that point. And then the other one was, you know, a wife, marriage.

It was a true desire for companionship. And I was, so, it was a real desire. Still is, but, it's like, the world told me, you have to be married to be a man.

That's like what I kind of gathered. And then I also learned that sometimes, you know, well-intentioned people, even in the church, can almost indirectly make you feel that way. And, I kind of grew up in my big brother's shadow.

I have an older brother named Lee, and he's one of my best friends. He doesn't know the Lord. And, he was like the cool older brother.

[37 : 10] Like, let me do everything with him. And if I ever had, like, an older guy that was, like, picking on me, I'd always be like, bring it on, man. But, like, my brother would be like, come and knock the guy out kind of guy.

Like, let my little brother alone. You know, he was, we were pretty tight. We did everything together. And, you know, but my brother was also, like, a good looking dude.

He always got, like, the best looking girls. Always was dating somebody. He was a star athlete. He got Gwinnett County Pitcher of the Year in baseball. That's, if you know anything about Gwinnett County baseball, that's a pretty big achievement.

He got one, one offer for, like, minors, but just didn't take it. He started having some throwing problems. And, and so, like, I just thought, if I could just get like that, you know, like, if I could just have these things, like, I'll be a man and I'll have contentment.

And, so, guess what? Since then, like, God has granted me one of those things, right?

[38 : 20] He gave me a lung transplant almost five years ago. So, although my health isn't, probably not really great compared to a lot of you in here, like, it's still, like, loads better than it used to be.

Like, I can do a lot now, you know, still with difficulty, but I can get out and do most things. And, so, I have that. Guess what?

I still struggle with discontentment. Like, I'm still not satisfied with, with just being able to feel a little better. So, if that's true, why in the world would I think that a wife would bring me contentment?

Like, if that's, if this is, if I'm struggling now, like, what about this later? And those of you who are in here who are single and do desire to be married and that's like you're filling the blank thing, like, discontented single people make discontented married people.

Like, you drag that, like, right into your marriage. So, unless we have Christ himself, we'll remain that way. Like, he is what we must battle to be content in.

[39 : 25] And when I say battle, because there's all these other voices telling you that he's not what you need. You need this. And, so, it is a battle. Jeremiah Burroughs, I'm just going to start calling him JB.

JB wrote, it is not so much the removing of the affliction that is upon us as the changing of the affliction, okay, so you got like a present thing bothering you, it's not so much like removing that affliction, but the metamorphosizing, that's a big word for you, of that affliction so that it is turned and changed into something else.

So, you have some kind of issue going on. The, the key to contentment is not to, to just remove it. We just think, if I just could get rid of this or just get this, I'd be content.

But he's saying that what you need to do is take that same affliction and like change it into something else. Like, allow it to like work for you and not against you, idea, that, that particular affliction you've got.

And, he actually talks about, he quotes Martin Luther in this book and Martin Luther said that Christians have been given an ability by God to create as their, their God as their creator so that, now they can create like light out of darkness, healing out of brokenness.

[40 : 50] They can like do things with what they've been given and create something out of it. So, that's what he's saying. So, I'm not, not, not perfect at this, but, but I can honestly say before you without a lie that I feel like I've learned to be content.

It's still a battle. I still really, really suck at it sometimes, but, but I do think that it's something I've learned. I've learned these other things, don't, don't cut it. And, for instance though, just, I made a little list here.

Um, in my sickness and suffering, I'm going to give you like a list of things I learned in that present circumstance that I had in my sickness and suffering, it made me thankful for what help I do have.

Um, sickness and suffering, um, allowed me to comfort others with the comfort that I've received from Christ in those hard situations.

And in my sickness and suffering, God has made me long for eternity more to be in heaven with Him. Like, I'm sick of, like when you're in pain, like you're just like, just get me out of here.

[41 : 58] Like, even when I got my transplant, the guys in the back can tell you, like, I remember telling them, like, death is great because it takes us to be with Christ, but dying sucks. That's what I told Wes when I was like, coming out of a surgery and like, but I gotta go through dying twice now.

It's not fun. So, so my sickness and suffering taught me to long more for eternity. In my sickness and suffering also, it really allowed me to like read and study doctrine and scripture like never before.

Like, what was my seminary? Being in the hospital. Like, when I got feeling better, what would I do in my time? Like, I would, I would study. Like, I would read. That's, that's where I, so it was a blessing.

That's where I had friends that had like hardly any time for that. Like, I already have 10 minutes to read the word. I'm like, I had like three hours a day to read the word while I was in the hospital. And so, that's where I, and there's no better place to learn theology than when you're suffering because it has like immediate application.

You know, tell me about God's sovereignty. Oh yeah, tell me that. Bam. You know, like right there in, in the heart. So also, in my sickness and suffering, God taught me that he's all I need when I'm facing death.

[43 : 11] It's real. In sickness and suffering, also, when I lost control of myself and I got angry with my friends and my parents who were trying to like help me and my weakness, like his grace was sufficient in those times.

In my sickness and suffering, like, I just learned all these things. So, that was what I was dealt with, right? Like, and through Christ in me, I was able to like create that into something else and use it for something else.

So, now, like, now, talking about, like, singleness, and my singleness has taught me that Christ is the most kind, faithful, companion, and friend that anybody could have.

Let's see. Also, in singleness, this allowed me to mature and be prepared, mature as a man in general. As were before, like, I was nowhere near ready to be married.

I almost came close to being engaged to a girl when I was 20. And, like, I look back on that now and I would have been like, that would have been a disaster. Like, not just because the girl was not the, not the right girl, but, but also because I had a lot of growing up to do.

[44 : 31] Like, I had a lot of things to learn. It's about being responsible and being a man that God has taught me. And now, if the Lord ever does bring a wife, I feel like I'm far ready, far more ready now than ever before.

Also, in my singleness, it's allowed me to develop myself to more study. Like, it's allowed me to, like, even the guys in the back can tell you the families. Like, they do study, but they have to, like, really fight for that time because they have so many other, they have to, like, honorable duties attending their family.

Also, in my singleness, it's allowed me more and more time to minister and serve others that probably I wouldn't have if I was married. So, like, until, you know, there's still a desire I have, but, like, there's still a crisis enough.

Like, that's not going to make me satisfied and content at the end. Flip to, last place you're going to look, flip to Psalm 73 real fast. the bomb-diggity psalm on contentment.

Psalm 73, you can go to verse 25. Excuse me. A little context.

[45 : 47] This is not a psalm of David, it's a psalm of Asaph, one of David's chief musicians, and, and, at the beginning, he's like, surely God has been good to Israel.

He kind of mentions that. So, at the outset of the psalm, he tells you that God is good. And then he says that, but as for me, like, my feet had nearly slipped, I had nearly fallen.

He kind of tells you, like, he went through an experience where he almost, like, wasn't able to confess that God was good. Like, he was struggling. So then he tells you his situation.

And the situation was, basically, Lord, why do I, as a man who loves you and has you in his life, why does life just suck for me? Like, I have nothing I want.

Like, I, I, I'm the one who, like, deals with all this hardship. And then I look around, and I see the wicked, the people who hate you. They're living, like, high on the hill. They have all these things that, that I want.

[46 : 47] And, what is going on with that? Like, why aren't you punishing them and giving me what I want? And so that's kind of his, his attitude. But then it says, this is a little bit before, verse 25, like, he, that's what he believed until, like, he went into the house of God, until he went to worship the Lord and put his mind on the Lord.

And then he said, wow, guess what? The evil, the wicked don't have anything. Like, they, they're going to perish. They're going to be judged. Like, like, so they don't really have anything. They're enjoying it now, but, like, later on, not so much. And, and don't let this fool you, even though, like, some of your unbelieving friends who constantly may even persecute you or whatever, and they, they appear after they're really living high on the hog. Not really. Like, deep down, they're like, they don't, they're not happy. They're not, they're not joyful. They're not content. They just try to, like, put on the show as if they are in those things. And, so, so after he realized that the wicked have nothing, he realizes on the other side that he has everything in God. And, and this is like the overflow of that.

[48 : 01] Verse 25, it says, who am I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on the earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail.

So, in other words, he's going to struggle with this. He's still going to be a battle for him. But, God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Portion means, like, what fills you completely. Not like a, a portion of pizza or a portion of pie. It means, like, what fills you completely, your portion forever. For behold, those who are far from you shall perish.

You put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. But for me, it is good to be nearer to God. I have made the Lord my God, my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.

So, a picture of, like, contentment there, like the Lord is my portion. I need nothing else. And so, so God, yeah, like, help us believe that Christ is enough.

[49 : 08] He is. And, and you know, like, just even look in your life and you'll be able to, like, just trace all the evidence that none of this junk lines up. It's not what satisfies. It doesn't bring contentment.

Only found in Christ alone. And so, let me pray for us and, I don't know where Wes is, but, oh, let's get his head down. Wes can come up and play a song.

Father, we just want to come before you and confess that even as people who know you, people that you brought salvation to, we still battle with, um, with being content.

And, we believe the lies or we believe if we just had whatever that we'd be content. And, but that's the lie.

It's, contentment's only found in what we've been given in Christ, in Him. Nothing outside of Christ. Not something that Christ even gives us. Not even a good thing.

[50 : 12] It's only found in Him. One place with a capital P and it's Jesus. And, God, I pray that we would just believe that, help us, strengthen us to believe that we can do all things through Him who gives us strength.

And, so, Father, may that be true of us and may You work in our hearts and as we respond just in singing, may it be a way just to further draw near to You, Lord, and in our discussion groups later. I pray all this in Christ's name. Amen.