

Caleb Collins

SESSION 2 | Contentment in Christ

I. INTRODUCTION & REVIEW DEFINITION OF CONTENTMENT

II. WHAT DOES CONTENTMENT IN CHRIST LOOK LIKE?

1. **A Definition of Contentment in Christ** is: a gracious act of God where the Christian has been transformed through God's Word by an eternal and sanctified perspective of reality (a proper view of (1) God, (2) himself, (3) the person and work of Christ and (4) the Christian's position in the world), and thus sees, and then treasures, Christ for his worth and worthiness.
2. Self-Denial Amidst a World of Self Promotion (p.86-91)
 - a. Mark 8:34-38
 - b. Galatians 2:20
 - c. Phil 3:4b-11
 - d. Burroughs
 - i. "A man who is little in his own eyes will account every affliction as little, and every mercy as great." Burroughs, p.89
 - ii. "The nearer we come to learning to deny ourselves as Christ did, the more contented shall we be, and knowing much our own vileness we shall learn to justify God." Burroughs, p.90
 - iii. "A gracious heart says, God's ends are my ends and I have denied my own ends; so he comes to find contentment in all God's ends and ways, and his comforts are multiplied, whereas the comforts of other men are single." Burroughs, p.90
 - iv. "If you will only have contentment when God's ways suit with your own ends, you can have it only now and then, but a self-denying man denies his own ends, and only looks at the ends of God and therein he is contented." Burroughs, p.90

3. A Biblical Outlook (p.92-102)

4. Exposition of Phil. 4:11-13

- a. “Paul’s “everything” is constrained by the context. His point is that whatever the circumstances in which he finds himself, whether with the rich and the powerful or with the poor and the powerless, whether preaching with unction to substantial crowds or incarcerated in a filthy prison, he has learned to cast himself on God *and to be content*. He can do all these things, *everything* that God assigns him to do, through the one who gives him strength. Let the gospel advance, let God’s will be done in me and through me, Paul is saying, I am content, for I can trust the one who invariably strengthens me to do what he assigns me. It takes the strength and resolution and **perspective** that only God can provide to live above changing, difficult circumstances. But to live above circumstances, utterly content in Christ Jesus, is to ensure that you will never give up the Christian walk. **Resolve to learn the secret of contentment.**”

D. A. Carson, *Basics for Believers: An Exposition of Philippians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 119–120.

- b. “*I can do all things through Christ*. As he had boasted of things that were very great, in order that this might not be attributed to pride or furnish others with occasion of foolish boasting, he adds, that it is by Christ that he is endowed with this fortitude. “*I can do all things*,” says he, “but it is in Christ, not by my own power, for it is Christ that supplies me with strength.” Hence we infer, that Christ will not be less strong and invincible in us also, if, conscious of our own weakness, we place reliance upon his power alone.”

John Calvin and John Pringle, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 125.

III. “ROAD SIGNS” FOR THE CHRISTIAN FINDING CONTENTMENT IN CHRIST (p. 103-117)

Prosperity

1. The Burden of Prosperity

- a. “Just as men need strong brains to bear strong wine, so they need strong spirits to bear prosperous conditions, and not to do themselves hurt.” Burroughs, p.103

2. The Danger of Prosperity
3. There is a Burden of Duty in Prosperity: Be Generous!
4. For those who don't see themselves in this category

Following the Heart

An Unsatisfied View of God's Providence

1. "Not only that God by his providence rules the world, and governs all things in general, but that it reaches to every detail; not only to order the great affairs of kingdoms, but it reaches to every man's family; it reaches to every person in the family; it reaches to every condition; yea, to every happening, to everything that falls out concerning you in every particular: not one hair falls from your head, not a sparrow to the ground, without the providence of God. Nothing befalls you, good or evil, but there is a providence of the infinite eternal first Being in that thing and therein is God's infiniteness, that it reaches to the least things, to the least worm that is under your feet." Burroughs, p.111-112