

Josh Pannell
**SESSION 4 | How To (and How Not To)
Find Contentment**

I. WHEN DISCONTENTMENT HELPS

A. “Think About It” (Haggai 1:4-6)

“By the studying of thy *heart*, thou wilt come presently to discover wherein thy discontent lies.” Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 56

“I abandoned you to pursue the lowest things of your creation. I was dust going to dust.” St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 1.13.21

B. “The One My Soul So Long Has Craved”

“You made us for Yourself, oh Lord, and our heart is restless, until it repose in You.” St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 1.1.1

“So the woman left her water jar and went away into town.” (John 4:28)

**II. GETTING THE CART BEFORE THE HORSE: THE WAYS WE
GET CONTENTMENT BACKWARDS**

A. Outside In vs. Inside Out

“The being content upon some external thing, it is like the warming of a mans clothes by the fire; but being content by the inward disposition of the soul, it is like the warmth that a mans clothes hath from the natural heat of his body.” Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 8

“If I am contented because I have that that I have a desire to, perhaps I am contented in that one particular, but that one particular doth not furnish me with Contentment in another thing; but if I have once

overcome my heart, and am contented through the grace of God in my heart, then this doth not content me only in a particular, but in general, whatsoever befalls me." Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 76

B. More is More vs. Less is More (1 Timothy 6:6-10; Proverbs 30:8-9)

"Certainly, our Contentment doth not consist in the getting of the thing we desire, but in God fashioning our spirits to our conditions." Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 75.

"Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the Lord?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God." (Proverbs 30:8-9)

C. Our Many Needs vs. Our Greatest Need (Luke 10:41-24; Psalm 27:4)

"That Soul that is capable of God, can be filled with nothing else but God; nothing but God can fill a Soul that is capable of God." Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 19.

"My Brethren, the reason why you have not Contentment in the things of the world, it is not because you have not enough of them, that's not the reason, but the reason is, Because they are not things proportionable to that immortal soul of yours that is capable of God Himself." Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 49.

"I must have the peace of God: But suppose you have the peace of God, Will not that quiet you? No, I must have the God of peace." Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 19.

D. My Comfort Come vs. Your Kingdom Come

"You all say, you should submit to Gods will; but a Christian hath gotten beyond this; that is, he can make Gods will and his to be the same." Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 25.

"Had any other condition been better for you than the one in which you are, divine love would have put you there." Charles Spurgeon.

III. HOW TO GET CONTENTMENT

A. Ask (and then ask again...and again) (Luke 18:1-8)

"God is thus far mercifully indulgent to our weakness, and he will not take it ill at our hands, if by earnest and importunate prayer we seek unto him

for deliverance, till we know his good pleasure therein. And certainly thus seeking for help with such a submission, and holy resignation of spirit, to be delivered when God will, and as God will, and how God will, so that our wills are melted into the will of God, this is no opposition to the quietness which God requires in a contented spirit.” Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 4.

B. Wait

“I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living! Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!” (Psalm 27:13–14)

While We Wait:

1. Stop Listening to Ourselves; Start Talking To Ourselves

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.” (Psalm 43:5)

“Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself? Now this man’s treatment [in [Psalm 43](#)] was this; instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself, ‘Why art thou cast down, O my soul?’ he asks. His soul had been repressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says: ‘Self, listen for a moment, I will speak to you’. You have to take yourself in hand, you have to address yourself, preach to yourself, question yourself. You must say to your soul: ‘Why art thou cast down’—what business have you to be disquieted?” D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cures*, pp. 20-21

“There is no condition that a godly man or woman can be in, but there is some Promise or other in the Scripture to help him in that condition. And that’s the way of his Contentment, to go out to the Promises, and fetch from the Promise, that which may supply.” Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 36.

2. The Gift of Lament

“Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman. And Eli said to her, “How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away from you.” But Hannah answered, “No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord.” [. . .] Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.” (1 Samuel 1:13–18)

3. Doing Good Where God Has Placed Us

“Perhaps they are gotten upon an hill, and they look a good way off and see another hill, & they think if they were on the top of that, then they were able to touch the clouds with their fingers; but when they are on the top of that hill, alas, then they are as far from the clouds, as they were before. No, no, let me consider what is the duties of my present condition, and content my heart with this, and say, Well, though I am in a low condition, yet I am serving the Counsels of God in that condition wherein I am; it is the Counsel of God that hath brought me into this condition that I am in, and I desire to serve the Counsel of God in that condition.”
Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 25.

4. Counting Our Blessings

“Didst not thou pray to God for these mercies that God hath sent of late to the public, these great victories that God hath given, didst not thou pray for them? now thou hast them, is not there enough in them to quiet thy heart for some private trouble thou meetest withall in thy family?”
Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 103.

“Though I cannot know what your afflictions are, yet I know what your mercies are, and I know they are so great, as I am sure there can be no afflictions in this World so great, as the mercies you have: If it were but this mercy, That you have this day of grace and salvation continued to you, it is a greater mercy than any affliction, set any affliction by this mercy, and see which would weigh heaviest, this is certainly greater than any affliction; that you have the day of grace and salvation, that you are not now in Hell, this is a greater mercy, that you have the sound of the Gospel yet in your ears, that you have the use of your reason, this is a greater mercy than your afflictions; that you have the use of your limbs, your senses, that you have the health of your bodies, health of body is a greater mercy than poverty is an affliction; there is no man that is rich, but if he be wise, if he hath a sickly body, he would part with all his riches that he might have his health; therefore thy mercies are more than thy afflictions.” Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 103-104.

5. Remembering the Gospel

“If he wants outward comforts, good cheer, feasting, a good Conscience is a continual feast, he can make up the want of a feast by that peace he hath in his own Conscience: if he wants melodies abroad, he hath a bird within him, that sings the most melodious songs that are in the world, and the most delightful.” Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 39.

“The greatest burden is the wickedness of their own hearts.” Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 41.

6. Drawing Comfort from Christ's Sympathy (Hebrews 4:14-16)

"What is my affliction? Is it poverty that God strikes me withal? Jesus Christ had not a house to hide his head in; the Fowls of the air had nests, and the Foxes had holes, but the Son of Man not a hole to hide his head in: now my poverty is sanctified by Christs poverty, I can see by faith the curse and sting and venom of my poverty, taken out by the poverty of Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus he was poor in this World to deliver me from the curse of my poverty, that it should not be cursed unto me, then my poverty is not afflictive, if I can be contented in such a condition. That is the way, not to stand and repine, because I have not what others have, no, but I am poor, and Christ was therefore poor, that he might bless my poverty to me." Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 30.

7. Enjoying God's Good World (Ecclesiastes 3:12-13)

"Though there be a vanity in the Creature in its self, in respect of satisfying the soul for its portion, yet there is some goodness in the Creature, though there be a vanity, there is some desirableness: but wherein doth that consist? It consists not in the nature of the Creature itself, for that is nothing but vanity; but it consists in the reference it hath to the first-being of all things" Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 54.

"Every good thing the people of God do enjoy, they enjoy it in Gods love, as a token of Gods love, and coming from Gods eternal love unto them, this must needs be very sweet unto them." Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 28.

8. Remember Future Hope (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

"One drop of the sweetness of Heaven, is enough to take away all the sower and bitter of all the afflictions in the world." Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, 45.