



FINDING JOY IN BEING CONTENT  
Philippians 4:10-20  
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### Opening Remarks

Ever heard the Rolling Stones wail "I Can't Get No Satisfaction"? After all these years, it's still a common complaint. All the time you meet people who are unhappy, unfulfilled, and unsatisfied.

In fact, the American economy is built on creating discontentment and craving for bigger, better, faster, more! If you were to believe what the commercials tell you, you would believe that contentment was something that could be sprayed on, rolled, eaten or driven. As if all of these products would give you lasting contentment. They don't.

What is the secret of a satisfying life? If you could bottle contentment, you could make a billion dollars overnight.

Paul writes that he "learned to be content whatever the circumstances." Want it?

### Warm it up

Take this survey and share and explain your replies with your group:

- 1] Are you content? [scale from 1-4: 1= anxious, worried 2= not the worst, maybe average 3= more than most 4= peace and bliss most of the time]
- 2] How are your circumstances in life? [scale from 1-4: 1= poor, painful 2=not the worst, maybe average 3= better than most 4= great [fulfilling relationships, sufficient funds, meaningful contribution, margin, earthly hope for my future]

### Talk it over

- 3] In verse 12, Paul celebrates "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every circumstance, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." In order to learn that secret of contentment, what attitude or perspective did Paul have to unlearn about possessions? Comparison with other people? Pleasure? Circumstances?



- 4] Paul's "secret of being content" is described as "I can do all this through him who gives me strength." [v. 13]

Discuss how Christ's strength connects to learning contentment in any circumstance.

To what extent have any of you experienced this phenomenon? In wanting to learn the secret of living with this contentment, what grade are you in? [From kindergarten – just learning the letters and numbers through grad student- committed researcher with much experience already.]

- 5] Another aspect of Paul's "secret of being content" is described as trusting that "My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." [v. 19]

Try to make sense of "will meet all your needs". How could it be miss-interpreted? What does this inspired promise mean?

### Work it out

- 6] What are your "needs" that you hold before God to meet?
- 7] How can we "learn to be content"? Describe some learning experiences available to you? What do you want to "unlearn" as you pursue contentment?

### Wrap it up

I appreciate that contentment is a learned behavior. Living as Christ's disciples means living as those who learn from and follow Christ. I also appreciate that contentment does not mean complacent! Paul was pressing on, striving, fighting to finish his task, fulfill his mission. At the same time, he could live as a contented, non-anxious man amid all that remained incomplete and sin scarred.

As we conclude this journey with Paul through his letter to the Philippian believers, may we learn to bring contentment INTO every circumstance, not FROM them!

### Pray it through

Using the inspired words of this passage, pray for the person on your right.