**True Happiness - Contentment**

Happiness may be difficult to define, but we all want to experience it. The Bill of Rights in the US Constitution documents that we all have the God-given right to pursue it. A lot of people are trying really hard to be happy but, at the end of the day, they find that true happiness has eluded them.

Our Creator made us the way we are, then provided us with a book that reveals His wisdom regarding the fulfilled human experience. If we are wise enough to study the inspired Scriptures, the Bible, we will find that our sense of well-being is multifaceted. In fact, it might be helpful to think of happiness in layers.

The reason so many struggle to find true happiness is because they fail to recognize the two most fundamental levels: Contentment and Joy. In fact, any positive feelings I may have are fleeting and unreliable if they are not based on a foundation of Contentment.

**Contentment.** We’re not talking about a false sense of security. This is a peace of mind that comes when a person knows that he has been reconciled to His God by the blood of Jesus Christ through his own faith and obedience. God has made some powerful promises to those who love Him and who seek first His kingdom and righteousness (Matthew 6:30-33; Romans 8:28). He has promised to provide for their basic needs and to make all things work together for their good.

The mature Christian with complete faith in the promises of God will build his entire life on the premises of Philippians 4:6-7: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Always remember this about true contentment: *There is absolutely no connection between this peace of mind and the circumstances of my life. None.*

The life of Paul illustrates this principle beautifully. The Philippian church had often provided financial support for Paul but he had experienced a dry spell because of their lack of ability to get funds to him. In Philippians 4:10, Paul expressed his joy that the flow of support from them had resumed, but then he makes an interesting observation. “Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. *I can do all things through Him who strengthens me”* (vs. 11-13).

You see, Paul’s plenty or poverty had no effect whatever on his peace of mind! He did what he could (making tents for a living at times), and trusted God to take care of the variables of life over which he had little or no control. He was content on the road or sitting in prison (Acts 16:25). He was at peace when he was healthy and when he was suffering physical ailments (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). He enjoyed the peace of God that surpasses all comprehension!

The biggest miscalculation for unbelievers and some believers alike is that one’s happiness is a function of the good things that happen to them. Complete faith and trust in the promises of God result in a peace of mind that all the problems in the world can’t shake. Perpetual contentment.

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