

Home Group Leader's Notes

Philippians 4:10-23

Share

When do you feel contentment in life? Why?

- Contentment is rare in America. We will for “more”
- Listen carefully to their answers and discussion. It could help segue into our theme topics.

Learn from the Bible

What was Paul's response to their generosity?

- Some commentaries are quite confused on this question
- But I believe it is clear that Paul was thankful and appreciative
- Consider what he said: He rejoiced, you gave as soon as you had opportunity, not one other church gave when you did, etc.
- In summary: Paul had deep appreciation

How did Paul view his circumstances when in need? What was his secret?

- “contentment” as he trusted God in all circumstances
- That was because he believed and had seen God provide strength for everything God wanted to do through him.
- Please note that this was not only about financial need. It was about a need for “strength.”

What promise was given to them about their needs? (19) How would you explain this lifestyle to a friend?

- Again, this is about “needs” and not wants.
- Paul lived by faith in God, believing that as he had needs, God had all riches would indeed provide
- This is in high contrast to the world.
- Here we can ask another question: What dominates our conversations with people? Is it about goods? Wants? Entertainment? Having or doing more?
- Do we think that we have enough or that God cares about and provides for our needs? We will contrast with the world as we live and talk contentment rather than the pursuit of “more”

What we do learn about giving to advance the gospel? How did their investment have dual benefits? What is God's response to this kind of giving?

- The dual benefit of giving to advance the gospel is (1) benefitting God's work of the gospel, and (2) our benefit of knowing that we are pleasing the Lord.

Discuss Together

How could Paul's "secret" (12-13) influence how we view our circumstances? How should we see life's circumstances differently than the world?

- What if we, like Paul, really believe that God provides for every need? How would this change our thoughts, feelings, actions, conversations, etc?
- The world is striving, always thinking that they need more. Circumstances that block or delay efforts for more are considered wrong, painful, and hindering their happiness.
- Rather, Paul considered circumstances (see chapter one) to be in God's hands – under His loving and wise direction and plan.

What was Paul's secret of contentment? Why do we seem to have so much discontent in our lives? What keeps us from living like Paul? Why might those outside of America be surprised at our discontent?

- Paul believed what Jesus taught, that as we seek Him, "all these things will be added unto you."
- This life never satisfies – it is not meant to satisfy. And even when we feel satisfied for the moment, it doesn't last long enough.
- Adam and Eve thought they needed more than what God offered. We continue their flaw of thinking that God is not enough.
- To those outside of America, they think we have a plethora of goods, opportunities for more, and that we should live content in every way. They are wrong. Americans are discontent.

What are ways that we can invest to extend the Gospel? How are these connected with God's work and design in our lives? How do you decide what, who, etc. to invest?

- The list of ways is extensive and exciting.
- Do we understand that we are and have belongs to the Lord?
- Knowing, loving, and following Jesus means that I will be "all in" with my life - my time talent and treasures.

"Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen."

Steve