

Philippians 4:10-13

The Secret of Contentment III

Life's learning curves ...

I. Living for the Lord

- A. In Tune
- B. In Practice

II. Learning Contentment

- A. Trials
- B. Temptations
- C. Triumphs

III. Growing in Grace?

- A. Retrospective
- B. In the Moment
- C. Anticipation

... navigated with confidence.

Children, Listen ...

1. How do we get to know God and His ways better?
2. You are young, but can you think of a time when God helped you face something difficult?
3. How can hard times help us learn to trust God?
4. Why is it important to thank God regularly when times are good?

Easy Street or Treacherous Turns

The ultimate contentment in life's varied and sometimes extremely complicated circumstances comes from complete trust in the Lord. When we look at the course of our lives we can often see the Lord's hand at work – other times it is not so clear – and in some cases we are totally confused as to why the Lord allowed this or that to happen to us. When we forget to trust in the Lord, in good times or bad, we will not only forget that we are utterly dependent upon Him for strength to remain faithful to Him – we will begin to forget that He is always faithful to us and that all things actually work for our good according to His perfect plan. It may not be this simple, but two simply ingredients to recognizing our dependence is prayer and increased understanding of God's will and ways as expressed in His Word. Neglect those two things and in time life's difficulties are sure to put you out of sorts, and unless you become numb to it, negative circumstances will begin to agitate you and may even shake you to the core of your being. Neglect those two things and in the good times and in time you may well convince yourself that creature comforts are enough satisfaction for you ... and you forget the Lord and become proud. That might sound dramatic, but the bottom line is that we don't want to lose sight of our utter reliance upon the Lord for life and to live our lives devoted to Him in every circumstance. Our confidence is in Him and resting in Him will provide true satisfaction for our souls. Jesus exemplified this perfectly when He walked the earth – most powerfully displayed when He faced hostility and endure the cross. Paul learned the secret through times of peace – but most poignantly through great trials and tribulations. God will give us the grace too; trust Him for strength, rest in His power and wisdom, commune with Him in prayer, hear Him in His Word and He will guide you in life's long learning curve with contentment as you journey life's road to glory.