



# CONTENTMENT A RARE JEWEL

FFC WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES  
TAKE YOU TO GOD'S WORD FOR ANSWERS.

THE MATERIAL FOR THIS STUDY WAS ADAPTED FROM "RARE JEWEL OF  
CHRISTIAN CONTENTMENT" BY JEREMIAH BURROUGHS, (SOVEREIGN  
GRACE PUBLISHERS, 2001).

FAITH FELLOWSHIP CHURCH | 11478 MAIN STREET | CLARENCE, NY | 716-759-6632  
WWW.FAITHFELLOWSHIP.US

# Contentment—A Rare Jewel

A disciple of Jesus Christ becomes like Him when she desires to glorify God more she desires to breathe. That means she will be contented with whatever God allows into her life. She will train the inner structure of her person (heart and spirit) to be gentle and quiet... freely submitting, delighting, rejoicing, and resting in God's sovereignty. Contentment is an inward grace, given by God, that results in a mindset where a woman is satisfied to stay and rejoice in her circumstances for as long as God wills.

## Directions

Read the Scriptures passages for each section in preparation. Then, together as coach and disciple, read and discuss each section. After you have discussed each section, complete the homework on your own, and discuss it when you meet again.

### 1. WHAT IS CONTENTMENT?

**Galatians 5, Romans 8:2, Psalm 42:1-5, Psalm 62:8, James 1:2-8**

- **Contentment is the inner structure of a quiet heart, through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.** Just like a house has a frame, you have a frame for your heart. In order to have a quiet heart, the framework must be contentment. If the frame is in place, it means you are constantly judging your thoughts and emotions, and submitting them to God.
- **What does a contented heart not do?** It does not murmur or fret about what God is allowing into your life. It does not fall to sinking discouragement. It does not get distracted and confused, become unsettled and unstable, or allow heart-consuming cares. It does not rise up against God in rebellion, nor does it evade biblical responsibility to get relief and help. It does not ignore the seeking of wisdom and help in time of affliction.
- **What does a contented heart do?** A contented heart has a realistic recognition of a difficulty, and it does unload it's cares in complaint to God, but not to other people. It takes pleasure and rests in the hand of God. A contented heart honors God's name in affliction, and rises up strongly when God is dishonored, so a contented heart is not the natural quietness of sturdy resolution that you see in many people. It takes pleasures in the hand of God because it sees His wisdom and sovereignty in everything (Proverbs 15:6, Psalm 90:1-17, Philippians 4:18, 2 Corinthians 6:10).
- **A contented heart consistently submits to God's will in every condition, what ever the variety and length of the affliction.** It strongly sends it preferences, ideas and opinions down. A

contented heart readily submits to God's sovereignty without being forced, not from stupidity or lack of sense, but from a decision "to send under" (which is the definition of submission).

## **2. WE ARE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST—HOW WAS HE CONTENT?**

**Proverbs 23:5, John 15:5, Luke 10:42**

- **Jesus modeled self denial.** The paradox is that contentment is not from addition, but rather from subtraction of anything that does not glorify God. You will never become contented by adding to your life what you want. Jesus taught that only one thing is necessary, and that is to worship Him.

**Luke 9:58, 1 Peter 2:11, Psalm 119:19, 2 Timothy 2:3, 1 Peter 1:13**

- **Jesus had no place to lay His head.** Likewise, you must be content with the necessities of life. You must understand your relationship to the world as pilgrim, sojourner, a traveler passing through, a soldier with allegiance to God.

**1 Timothy 6:8-10, Philippians 4:11-14**

- **Jesus had few material belongings, but never complained.** A contented person does not complain. A prosperous outward condition is actually a burden because it will never satisfy you, while simplicity of lifestyle aids contentment. One of the beauties of contentment is that it increases inner comfort while requiring no outer comfort.

**John 5:19, 8:28-29, Psalm 73:25, Philippians 4:7-9**

- **Jesus did the work God wanted done.** The paradox is that contentment means being the most contented, as well as the most *unsatisfied* person in the world – always striving to become more Christ-like. Contentment does not strive to change others, but trains to change self.

**Hebrews 12:3, 1 Peter 4:12, Luke 22:42, Psalm 119:50, James 1:17**

- **Jesus had a right knowledge of God's providence and sovereignty.** In Christian contentment, afflictions are not removed nor are circumstances changed. Rather, afflictions and circumstances are metamorphosed – changed into something else. When you understand that problems are good gifts from God's sovereign hand, you can learn to be content no matter how difficult things are.

**Psalm 25:10, Ephesians 1:3**

- **Jesus enjoyed the sweetness of God's love in all afflictions.** To be contented, you must count your blessings. Take time to consider the abundant mercies God has shown you.

**3. WHAT IS THE PROGRESSION OF CONTENTMENT IN CHRIST?**

**Ecclesiastes 3:11, 1 Peter 1:13**

- First, I realize that it is a lie of Satan that I should not have to live with unfulfilled longings. I will always have unfulfilled longings this side of heaven, because the deepest longings of my heart cannot be filled by any created person or thing.

**1 John 1:8-10**

- Study my heart to discover where my discontentment lies. A paradox of contentment is that it comes not from getting rid of a burden, but from adding another burden = a heavy heart over my sin.

**James 4:1**

- Nothing changes about my situation or circumstance, but I purge out inner desires that have become more important than glorifying God.

**Colossians 3:1, Lamentation 3:24, Revelations 21:22, Luke 17:21**

- I begin to make up and satisfy all wants in God Himself. As I accept unfulfilled earthly longings, my longing for God and for heaven will increase.

**Acts 13:36, Psalm 47:4, Romans 8:28-29**

- I change my performance in the situation, as my will and desires are melted into God's will and desires, and I live on the dew of God's blessing recognizing that everything that happens is from God's love and is sanctified to me for my good.

**James 1:2-17, Isaiah 43:2, Joshua 1:5, Isaiah 54:17, 2 Corinthians 4:16**

- My contentment comes from God's promises - including a recognition of the good that affliction works in me as a good gift from God, and a realization of the glories of Heaven that await. You have to go down deeper than death to self, than the grave of the flesh, to find the truly freeing streams of miracle water that lavishes you with the taste of God's glory. Find your joy and satisfaction fully and only in Him. You will learn that it is only in breath-taking, total admiration of God that you can come to the end of self.

**HOMEWORK TO LEARN CONTENTMENT**

- Do I have a good temper of joy within my heart? What attitudes or thoughts do I have to change?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- Am I taking in more of the business of the world than God calls me to (Psalm 1)? Who should I not be hanging around with? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- Would God have me be in every business I go about? What should I cut out of my schedule? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
What should I add? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- Am I thankful in every situation? What responses must I change? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- Do I pray about everything regularly? (1 Samuel 1:18, Philippians 4:6-7) What inner desires must be confessed to God and purged out that have become more important than glorifying God (James 4:1)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- Will I exercise much faith by resigning and giving myself up to God and His ways (2 Samuel 16:5-14)? Must I become satisfied with less? If yes, what does that mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Do I aim at greatness, or obtaining great things (Jeremiah 45:5)? What must I let go of in order to satisfy all my wants in God Himself? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Do I labor to get my heart dead to the world daily (Galatians 2:20, Colossians 3:3)? Do I by the Spirit mortify my flesh (Romans 8:13)? What do I need to die to in order to be contented?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Do I let others talk about afflictions, rather than about the mercy and grace of God? How can I become a good steward of my trials and afflictions, and use them as opportunity to give God glory?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Do I make a good interpretation of God’s ways towards me, content that He is using trials to change what needs to be changed in me? Write a prayer thanking Him for and accepting His sovereignty in my condition, situation, or circumstance. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**LEARN AND REMEMBER BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES ON CONTENTMENT**

- I can learn to be content no matter how tough things are (Philippians 4:13).
- I must be content with what I have today. I need no more than the necessities of life (1 Timothy 6:8).
- A person who is content does not complain (1 Corinthians 10:9-10). When I complain I must confess my sin, and be granted repentance.
- I must thank God for all things (Romans 1:21).