

“Learning Contentment” ***Philippians 4:10-23***

Are you Happy?

Happiness for us is something that is fleeting, usually based on circumstances, and is often measured by the absence of negative things.

Content meant “contained”, in the Greek, “self-sufficient” it is an abiding peace and confidence. Paul learned to be content through experience (beaten, stoned, starved, left for dead, imprisoned, impoverished, chained, waiting execution, sick and nearly blind, shipwrecked three times, “thorn in the flesh”, and his own guilt from his past) He gives us three resources for contentment.

The Providence of God V. 10

What is providence?

It comes from two words in the Latin “pro” meaning before, and “video” meaning to see. God sees to it before hand.

What in your life is a surprise to God? ***Jonah 1:17***

Genesis 50:20, Romans 8:28, John 10:4

Abraham’s favorite name for God was Jehovah-Jireh – the Lord will see to it

Genesis 22:14, Psalm 139:1-12, Mark 5:1-20

Contentment then is a recognition of “God- sufficiency” and a letting go of self. Seeing, knowing and relying on His purpose and will rather than our own. Seeing past the situations in life and seeing God in them.

The Power of God V. 11-13

What can you accomplish?

In and of myself, nothing, but through faith in Christ ALL things are possible.

Judges 6:11-16 – Gideon, ***John 15:1-11*** – vines, ***Matthew 17:14-20*** – seed

What robs contentment?

Need and/or Abundance. We have an “I” problem. We focus on our own need or abundance and the situations that bring that about rather than His power and sovereignty. ***Mark 4:35-41*** – Calm, ***Luke 16:19-31*** - Abundance

The Promises of God

Reviving V.10

“Revive your concern” or Flourish – An agricultural term for blossoming after a dormant winter. God promises an end to the winters in our life and that His blessings will be renewed as springtime. ***Romans 8:26-30, James 1:2-4***

Investment V.14-17

“Giving and receiving” – They gave financially and received spiritually. God pays a dividend on our investments we make. The return may not be what we expect or in the manner we expect but He does pay high dividends. ***1 Corinthians 3:10-15***

Sacrifice V.18

Their gift was a sacrifice laid on the alter of God. What is the purpose of sacrifice? Worship, honor, humbleness, to realize who He is and who we are not. The outcome of sacrifice is a closer relationship with God the obstacles and hindrances are removed. ***Romans 12:1-2***

Discussion Questions

What provision of God did you recognize this week?

What in your life is too big for you? Is it too big for God?

What promise from God has been fulfilled in your life this week?

Homework

Read *Isaiah 1-5*

Answer the following questions:

1. What does God's Word say? List the facts.
2. What does God's Word mean? Learn the lessons.
3. What does God's Word mean to me? Listen to His voice.
4. How will I respond to God's Word today? Live it out.

Review and apply what you have learned from Philippians.