

Week 2: The More Of Less: Strength in Contentment

ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS

How do you typically respond to unmet desires or disappointment?

WORD

Let us continue the series” The More of Less”. Quick recap from last week sermon, we learned that in order for us to be content we must be freed from selfishness, greed, and covetousness through repentance, Self awareness and spiritual assessment is the antidote for selfishness.

God taught us so far how to enter into a state of contentment, and this week God will show us how to maintain it, to be aware of the things that can kill our contentment and to ultimately stay strong within our contentment in Jesus Christ.

Philippians 4:10-13

10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. 11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Paul had modelled what it is to live with contentment in Christ. Even though he was in prison, his faith put him in a state of contentment, his strength in Christ made him to live content.

DISCUSSION

Are there specific habits or practices that help you cultivate contentment?
How can your faith in God play a role in helping you find strength in contentment.

WORD

*CONTENTMENT IS AN ACTIVE CHOICE.

Philippine 4:11 NIV

Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

How can someone be in the state of being rich and poor at the same time? They can't, but they can have the posture and mindset of someone who has access to God's riches while being "poor"

Look within ourselves and analyze the condition of our hearts, asking ourselves if we have that mindset. In the same way, Pastor Joel Magpnatay encouraged us last week to look within ourselves to see if we needed to repent of certain things in order to be content.

The greatest enemy of contentment is fear. Fear - Acronym: **False Evidence Appearing Real**. Do not be afraid is mentioned 365 times in the bible. Fear can paralyze and blind us from God's provision

Philippians 10:12

I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

We can see through the life of Paul that throughout his life he had every opportunity to be fearful, and every reason to even believe that his ability to preach the word has been stolen from him. But he still flourished as a believer and was a missionary, preaching the Word of God everywhere he went. **Contentment is not complacency, its containment.** - (Willmington's Guide to the Bible pg 487.)

Contentment is not saying "It's alright I have enough already" but actively and attentively saying "I will not allow this to take away my contentment" or "I have chosen to be content with what has been given to me already". To

contain the thing that is attempting to instill fear into us and in turn pull us away from our contentment.

***CONTENTMENT IS STRENGTHENED FROM AN ASSURANCE IN GOD`S IDENTITY**

Philippians 10:13

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Our action and desire to express our love for God through our actions in hard times assures us of God's identity. There is an assurance that is found in God's identity not on our own circumstances. Through Christ, we can do all things, not on our own abilities, talents, skills but **ONLY THROUGH HIM**, the **HOLY SPIRIT** lives in us. He gave us the **HOLY SPIRIT** so that we can do it all no matter what challenges we have.

DISCUSSION

The Apostle Paul modelled finding strength in contentment through Christ, Who in your life models strength in contentment well? What do you admire about their approach?

LIFE APPLICATION

Proverbs 30: 7 - 9 NIV

“Two things I ask of you, Lord; do not refuse me before I die: 8 Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. 9 Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the Lord? Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.

Let us recognize the provision of God in our lives, focus on the things that we already have. Let us Trust in Christ`s strength not on our own The idea of practicing Contentment is being grateful. Contentment -starts with a relationship with Christ. Contentment in Christ makes us generous.

Let us NOT be the “Thermometer Believer” Our satisfaction is TOTAL DEPENDENT upon outside circumstances. It is just simply registers the prevailing spiritual temperature.

Instead....Let us BE the “Thermostat Believer”. Our satisfaction is TOTALLY INDEPENDENT of the outside circumstances. We are not only unaffected by it, but we have a control on the area surrounding us and we can do this through Christ who strengthens us.

DISCUSSION

What is one step you can take this week to pursue contentment? Are there any beliefs, mindsets, or habits you feel you need to let go of to be more content?

VERSE TO MEDITATE

Psalm 73:25-26 NIV

Who have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

PRAYER

Share your prayer request and answered prayer. Pray for one another and throughout this week