



THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE GOSPEL

PHILIPPIANS 4:10-13

Contentment in Christ

Small Group Study Guide

¹John MacArthur, *Philippians: Christ, the Source of Joy and Strength* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2007), 103.

1. What lesson of the Christ-life did Paul learn (v. 11)?
2. "In a greedy, materialistic culture, it is easy for Christians to become discontented and obsessed with worldly wealth and possessions."¹ Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain your answer.

3. Part of the challenge of being truly content is that contentment is relative to what we believe our need to be. In our culture there is a continual blurring of the line between a need and a want. Fill in the chart below. For each "basic need" identify examples of how this can be met in a "sufficient" way. Then identify how that need can be blurred from a need to a want by giving examples of how we can desire to have more than what we need to be adequately and sufficiently supplied.

CONTENTMENT (AUTARKES)

The word means to be fully satisfied or to have enough. To have that which is sufficient or adequate.

| BASIC NEEDS | SUFFICIENT | WANTS |
|-----------------------|------------|-------|
| <i>Shelter</i> | | |
| <i>Clothing</i> | | |
| <i>Food</i> | | |
| <i>Transportation</i> | | |

4. What are some things that are beyond "basic needs" that we have identified in our culture to still be "needs" and how are these even blurred to be more than what we need to be adequate? For example, a phone might be considered a need, but is a phone that can take pictures a need?

Don't Forget:
Discuss the Sermon Notes from this week

5. From your perspective, which is harder to be content in: when you have humble means - going hungry and suffering need - or when you experience prosperity - being filled and having abundance? Explain your answer.
6. What is the opposite of being content? Look up the following verses and see what Scripture says about this.
- Exodus 20:17
 - James 4:1-3
 - Luke 12:13-34
 - Colossians 3:5
7. Paul stated that he learned this lesson. Is contentment a one-time lesson you learn or is contentment a lesson learned progressively throughout one's Christian life? Explain your answer.
8. Philippians 4:13 is often taken out of context to make it say much more than what Paul intended.

- Based on the context of this paragraph, what is the "all things" he is referring to?
- What are some examples of how this verse is misused as a "promise" of God?

BIBLE MEMORY:

*I have learned
the secret of being filled
and going hungry,
both of having abundance
and suffering need.*

*I can do all things
through Him
who strengthens me.*

Philippians 4:12-13

8. What is the secret to being content in any circumstance? (Hint: Identify "him" in verse 13).
9. So, at the heart of contentment is a trust issue. What are the areas that you are struggling to trust in the sufficiency of Christ to meet your needs? What are the things or area in your life where you are seeking satisfaction that goes beyond contentment in Christ?

For Next Week:
Prayerfully meditate and study the following: **Philippians 4:14-20**