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**Contentment: What Is It & Why Is It so Elusive?**

- What's Your Definition?
- The Three Big Influencers:

Human Nature   Marketing   American Culture

**Philippians 4:10-14**

Contentment is learned not acquired.

It is independent of circumstances.

**The Secret To Biblical Contentment**

**Understand What It Is.** The ability to handle anything.

**Understand What It's Not.**

It's not loving everything just the way it is.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Mark 14:33-42

It's not a lack of drive or desire to succeed.

1 Chronicles 4:9-10; Matthew 20:25-28

It's not laziness. Proverbs 13:4; Proverbs 24:30-34

**Watch Out For "Contentment Killers."**

Comparison & greed.

1 Thessalonians 5:18; John 21:18-22; Ecclesiastes 5:10;  
Proverbs 23:4-5

Unrealistic goals & dreams . Proverbs 13:12

Poison people & things. Proverbs 14:30; Matthew 18:8-9

**Give Jesus The Steering Wheel!**

Philippians 4:13; Galatians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 10:13

Turn a message into a conversation. Consider joining with a friend to review the message and dig deeper into God's word through the following questions.

The Apostle Paul emphasized that contentment is learned, not acquired with success or possessions. How was your definition of contentment confirmed, challenged or changed by this week's teaching?

There are many areas where discontentment can show up (i.e. job success, housing, self-image, education, relationships, clothing, health, money, possessions and much more). Which area, if any, do you tend to struggle with the most when it comes to becoming or remaining content?

Can you think of any healthy and/or unhealthy ways you've personally dealt with discontentment?

The book of Ecclesiastes records King Solomon's search for contentment in a world where he had everything at his fingertips. Take a look at what he learned by reading the following passages and then jotting down his insights about the pursuit of contentment.

Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

Ecclesiastes 4:4-8

Ecclesiastes 5:10-16

Which of the verses is most important for you to remember regarding contentment and why?

This week's message pointed out that biblical contentment does not mean checking our drive or desire to succeed at the door. God gives us the freedom to ask for blessings, protection and provision. How do you balance Solomon's prayer in Proverbs 30:7-9 with our freedom to ask for blessings beyond our needs?

How can Deuteronomy 8:10-18 help us further understand this balance?

In the late 1800's, Horatio Spafford wrote the famous hymn, *It is Well with My Soul*, in response to the tragic death of his daughters in a shipwreck. Here is the first verse of that song:

*"When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea-billows roll,  
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to know;  
It is well, it is well with my soul."*

His words lead us to believe that he had found contentment even amidst horrible circumstances. Biblical contentment does not mean we have to love everything just the way it is. But it does mean we can cope with even those things we most dread. How can Psalm 46:1-3 & 10-11 help us better learn to be content even in hard times that we'd rather bypass?