

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE
SERMON OUTLINE

By James M. Duncan, Pastor

MAY 28, 2017

“THE SECRETS TO CONTENTMENTS”

Philippians 4:10-13

While unable to change his outward circumstances of being in a Roman jail, Paul found great peace and joy from within. He determined to focus on the Lord and faith in Him instead of allowing current circumstances to dominate his existence.

As you know, there is a great lack of contentment in the world today, and this attitude so often begins to spill over into the church. But if there was anyone who had just cause to complain, it was Paul. Instead of grumbling, he said, 'I rejoice greatly in the Lord' (4:10).

Now in v-10 he speaks of gratitude for what he had received. He is very careful to express appreciation for their acts of kindness. The word “*flourished*” means “*bloomed again.*” We can understand why Paul loved this church so greatly. They stood with him and they provided for his needs.

So, Paul is now about to share with us the secret of contentment. **Contentment is something that we learn.** It is not that we become a Christian and suddenly we are content. It is something that must be continually practiced in order to perfect it.

So how do we learn contentment? First . . .

I. LEARN TO AVOID COMPARISONS V. 11

One of the basic reasons we struggle with contentment is that we are comparing ourselves and our situations to others. *2 Corinthians 10:12* tells us not to compare.

Secondly . . .

II. LEARN TO ADJUST TO CHANGE V-12

The reality is that life is **FULL** of ups and downs, highs and lows. One day you will be on top of the mountain, but the next day you may be down in the valley.

The word “**know**” (v-12) is used in an unusual way. It means “**to understand.**” Paul says that he *understood* about change. Now here’s someone who learned to deal with change!

There are three types of circumstances we face:

- those which I can control and I do:
- those which I can control and I don’t:
- **those which I cannot control.**

And then Paul gives us the third lesson to learn:

III. LEARN TO ACCESS CHRIST’S POWER V-13

The Christian has all the power *within* that he needs to be adequate for the demands of life.

Paul knew that God's grace was sufficient for him in every situation as he shared in *2 Cor. 12:9-10*. When Paul writes that God’s grace was “*sufficient*” for him - that’s the same root word we find here for “*contentment.*”

The fourth lesson we need to learn...

IV. LEARN TO TRUST CHRIST TO MEET MY NEEDS V-19

What is the lesson here? **That God wants to be your steering wheel, not your spare tire.**

God wants you to put Him **FIRST!** God says if you put Him first, He’ll take care of working out all those details that we so often worry about.