

Cultivating Contentment

Phil. 4:10-13

Phil. 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.

The Ten Commandments

- #1 → You shall have no other gods before me (idolatry)
- #2 → You shall not make for yourself a carved image
- #3 → You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain
- #4 → Remember the Sabbath Day
- #5 → Honor your father and mother
- #6 → You shall not murder
- #7 → You shall not commit adultery
- #8 → You shall not steal
- #9 → You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor
- #10 → You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

Do Not Covet -- Enemy of Contentment

- Deut. 5:21 → “And you shall not covet your neighbor's wife. And you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, or his male servant, or his female servant, his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.’ (10th Commandment)
- Eph. 5:3-5 → **3** But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. **4** Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. **5** For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. (cf. I Cor. 5:11)

The Character of Covetousness

- Pervasive in our materialistic society.
- Jesus had much to say about the danger of money and material things. (Matt. 6:19-20, 24; 19:23-25; Lk. 12:15ff; Lk. 16:19-31; etc.)
- What are some of the symptoms of a covetous heart?
 - Bible makes analogy between physical sickness and spiritual sickness – sin.
 - What are some of the signs and symptoms of this debilitating sin -- evidence that all is not well in our lives.

Symptoms of Covetousness

- ***Aggravation, frustration***, that is not satisfied with what one has...
 - Eccl. 5:10-12 → **10** He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. **11** When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? **12** Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.
 - The example of Ahab. (I Kings 21:1-16; esp. vv. 4, 5)

Symptoms of Covetousness...

- ***Jealousy*** over what someone else has or obtains, that I don't → What is our mental state when friends, neighbors, relatives, brethren get new car, house, promotion, etc. Am I just happy for them, or do I wish it was me?
 - 1 Cor. 3:3 → for ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men?

Symptoms of Covetousness...

- ***Love of money***

- II Pet. 2:3, 14 → And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. 14 They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!
- I Tim. 6:9-10 → But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

Symptoms of Covetousness...

- Exhaustive efforts for that which does not satisfy.
 - Isa. 55:2 → Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.
- Fights and conflicts.
 - Js. 4: **1** What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?
2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel...
- Compromising integrity.
 - Gehazi. (II Kings 5:16; 20-22)

What Is Covetousness? – What Does It Look Like?

- Desiring what belongs to someone else.
- Physical, material wants become the orienting feature of your life. Something else becomes your god.
- When you disobey God to get what you want.
- “Covetousness is wanting something so much that we lose our contentment in God. Or it is losing our contentment in God, so that we start to replace God with something else.” (Piper)

Contentment – the Cure For Covetousness

- Phil. 4:11-13 → 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.

Keys To Cultivating Contentment...

- Keep an attitude of gratitude.
 - Phil. 4:6 → do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
- Refuse to live a life of comparison.
 - II Cor. 10:12 → Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.

Keys To Cultivating Contentment...

- Don't be given to excess.
 - Prov. 25:16 → If you have found honey, eat only enough for you, lest you have your fill of it and vomit it.
- Avoid needless temptation.
 - Matt. 26:41 → Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”
- Accept that only God can ultimately satisfy.
 - Ps. 103:1-5

Psalms 103:1-5

- 1 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!
- 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,
- 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,
- 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
- 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalms 63:1-8

- 1 O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
- 2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.
- 3 Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.
- 4 So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands.
- 5 My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,
- 6 when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night;
- 7 for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.
- 8 My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

Heb. 13:5-6

- 5 Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”
- 6 So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”