

WEEK TWELVE

Contentment for Today

Philippians 4:10, 14, 18 ^{NIV}

I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.

¹⁴ Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.

¹⁸ I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent.

Philippians 4:12 ^{NIV}

I have learned the secret of being content in any
and every situation...

WEEK TWELVE

Contentment for Today

Contentment for Today

Its importance

Its rivals

Its priorities

Its result

Its source

Importance

Philippians 4:11-12 ^{NIV}

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

You do not know quite what it is you do
want but it fairly makes your heart ache
you want it so.

- **Mark Twain**

Importance

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Rivals

Philippians 4:11-12 ^{NASB}

Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. ¹² I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

Stoicism

Go to what's 'above' to
detach from what's
'below.'

Stoicism

Go to what's 'above' to
detach from what's
'below.'

Epicureanism

Go to what's 'below' to
detach from what's
'above.'

Stoicism

Go to what's 'above' to
detach from what's
'below.'

Epicureanism

Go to what's 'below' to
detach from what's
'above.'

Cynicism

Go to what's 'inside' to
detach from what's 'above'
and 'below.'

Stoicism

Grin and bear it.
Accept your lot in life.

Epicureanism

Don't worry,
be happy.

Cynicism

No right, no wrong, no rules
for me. I'm free.
Let it go.

Rivals

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Philippians 4:11-12 ^{NIV}

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Money

Time

Attention

Priorities

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Priorities

Philippians 4:14-17 ^{NIV}

Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. ¹⁵ Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; ¹⁶ for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. ¹⁷ Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account.

Priorities

Philippians 1:21-24 ^{NIV}

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²² If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴ but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

Priorities

Matthew 6:21, 33 ^{NIV}

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

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Result

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Source

Philippians 4:12-13 ^{NIV}

I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Source

Philippians 4:19-20 ^{NIV}

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

²⁰ To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Stoicism

Go to what's 'above' to
detach from what's
'below.'

Epicureanism

Go to what's 'below' to
detach from what's
'above.'

Cynicism

Go to what's 'inside' to
detach from what's 'above'
and 'below.'

The contentment of the Christian is relative. An independence from the world through a dependence on God. The Stoic self-sufficiency pretends to be absolute. One is the contentment of faith, the other pride. The Stoic and Paul both stand erect and fearless before a persecuting world; one with a look of rigid defiant scorn, the other with a face now lighted up with unutterable joy in God.

- George Findlay, *Christian Doctrine*

Gospel Contentment

Go to what's 'above' to
transform what's
'below' and 'inside.'

Source

Philippians 3:7-9 ^{NIV}

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

Aim at Heaven and you will get earth 'thrown in': aim at earth and you will get neither...When the real want for Heaven is present in us, we often do not recognize it. Most people, if they had really learned to look into their own hearts, would know that they do want, and want acutely, something that cannot be had in this world. There are all sorts of things in this world that offer to give it to you, but they never quite keep their promise. The longings which arise in us when we first fall in love, or first think of some foreign country, or first take up some subject that excites us, are longings which no marriage, no travel, no learning can really satisfy.

- C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

The Christian says, 'Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists.' A baby feels hungry: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water. People feel sexual desire: well, there is such a thing as sex. If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world. If none of my earthly pleasures satisfy it, that does not prove that the universe is a fraud. Probably earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing. If that is so, I must take care on the one hand, never to despise, or be unthankful for these earthly blessings, and on the other, never to mistake them for the something else of which they are only a kind of copy, or echo, or mirage. I must keep alive in myself the desire for my true country.

- C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Gospel Contentment

Go to what's 'above' to
transform what's
'below' and 'inside.'