

Are You Content or Satisfied?

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Webster's Dictionary defines:

“**Content** as to limit (oneself) in requirements, desires, or actions; and **Satisfy** as to gratify to the full.”

One of the biggest problems in the church is a lack of contentment. It is nothing new. When God delivered the Israelites out of the bondage of slavery, promised them a land with milk and honey, promise to guide and protect them, gave them the food of angels and the purest of water from a stone. They were not content. They murmured and complained until they convinced Aaron to make them a gold calf to worship as they did in Egypt. They were a people who would never be satisfied much less be content.

I watched a movie with my son and nephew the other night as we camped out in the living room. We were watching *Over the Hedge*. And this raccoon named RJ was trying to steal something some of this bears junk food he had stored. As he entered the cave and seen all the goodies he said to himself, just take what you need. Then in the very next scene he has loaded it all on this little red wagon. He is just about to make it out of the cave with it all until he sees the bear with his paws clinched around a can of Spuddies potatoes chips. He tries to resist but the slogan keeps going through his little head, “Enough just isn't enough.”

The slogan is right. We live in a culture where enough self-gratification just is not enough. We live in a society where the end state is to have relative justice, no morale restraints and no absolute judgments. It is self-satisfaction to end and at all cost. A.W. Tozer states in his book, *I Call It Heresy*, “Almost everything we touch in this life is defiled. Injustice and oppression run through everything. You know what I think about the devil-possessed origins of communism and its godless partisans who criticize our faith and our ideals and our way of life. But it is the human defilement on every hand which gives the communist his one lone weapon – because what he says about us is not all lies.”

In America today we not only battle the ideologies of communism but humanism, hedonism, secularism, totalitarianism, and terrorism just to name a few. Each is strategic in their infiltration of traditional America. They know that you cannot just come in and in one season rake Americans backyard of all fundamental, historical and traditional Judeo-Christian heritage. You have to gradually appease the human desire for satisfaction and gradually break down the awareness of immunity and redefine social morality and sear the conscience of the majority. No one will blatantly take their family in an drink cool-aide they know is laced with strychnine unless you have convinced them of some self-seeking just cause.

Most are familiar with what Moses dealt with concerning the discontentment of God's people. Let us look at what Joshua dealt with in **Joshua 7:7** *And Joshua said, "Ah, Sovereign LORD, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan!*

Joshua had to contend with the Amalikites and Amorites today in the church God has to contend with the **Give-Me-ites** and the **Bless-Me-ites**. God has no problem with us having wealth or even things we desire but consider the cost and let not your soul be defiled. When we get request from other offices and units we always conduct a reality check against their mission and authorization. My Colonel often states a phrase I consider useful, there is a difference between requirements and desirements. What does the Word of God say about contentment.

Job 36:11 *If they obey and serve him, they will spend the rest of their days in prosperity and their years in contentment.* **Proverbs 13:25** *The righteous eat to their hearts' content, but the stomach of the wicked goes hungry.* **Proverbs 19:23** *The fear of the LORD leads to life: Then one rests content, untouched by trouble.* **Ecclesiastes 4:8** *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless— a miserable business!* **Philippians 4:12** *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.

Timothy 6:3-12 *3If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; 4He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings. 5Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. 6But **godliness with contentment is great gain.** 7For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8And having food and raiment **let us be therewith content.** 9But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many **foolish and hurtful lusts**, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10For **the love** of money is the root of all evil: which while some **coveted (to passionately long for; to intensively fix your desire on)** after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 11But thou, O man of God, **flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.** 12Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

True thankfulness or gratitude is found in contentment. True trust in God is found in contentment. Contentment accompanies true faith or obedience. Contentment is a friend of righteousness.

When we covet something we mope, wine, murmur or are grumpy until we get it. Some folks become down right childish when they really want something and cannot have it. Satisfaction is never satisfied. It is like an opium that seeks no end. Self can never be satisfied. It always craves more. It can only be restrained unto death in Christ and a passionate love for the Law of God. Contentment in the Word of God is restraint of desire, indulgence, pleasure and gratification. Without contentment no matter how much God blesses you it is never enough. No matter what God does in your life, your never happy. You can never see the blessings God has placed right in front of your face because you can only see what you haven't got. You cannot see what God is doing because you are too focused on what you want Him to do for you.

God has no desire to satisfy you, your wants and desires. He wants you to first learn contentment. It is founded in the principle of "he who is faithful in the little things shall be ruler of much." If you are not faithful or obedient with what God has given you now because it is not enough, then you will get no more to be unfaithful with. We so often deceive ourselves into thinking that if God would just or give me this and this then I will be obedient to Him and His Word in this and that. It does not work that way. What we are really saying is God if you will satisfy my desirements then I will meet Your requirements. Wrong. His law came first. Do I wait until He blesses me enough to tithe then commit to tithing? Or do I trust His Word in obedience that He might bless me because I am content to obey?

You see, God knows the ingredients and consequences of satisfaction. When you seek to be satisfied and find it is never enough you get disillusioned, discouraged, and dishearted and thus begins a slop of spiritual degradation. Satisfaction destroys your hope and ambition to seek more of God. Your obedience slacks more and more and you become complacent in your relationship with Christ. Then self-pride follows, and it gets easier to fall back to religiosity which requires no intimacy with God only an outward presentation of Holiness.

To be content means that your attitude, behavior or response changes not regardless of you getting something you want or not. Contentment brings an inner peace and a rest in the hardships of life that only the Holy Spirit can bring. It brings resolve and confidence that God is sufficient. Contentment avoids strife, and disobedience because it finds its strength in the law of the Lord.

The principle of contentment does not just apply to material things in life. It applies to everything. It applies to God using you or not. It applies to your successes and failures. It applies to your expectations and disappointments in relationships. It applies to your work place, your church, your emotions, your will, your state of mind.

God does not ever want you to be satisfied. Never become complacent especially in your growing in Christ, the Word and things of God. But learn to be content and practice your due diligence in obedience to seeking and growing in Him.