

Contentment

Int.

1. Aim: To show the areas in which we are to have contentment and then other areas in which we must have discontentment.
2. Text. Phil.4:11-13 "Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
3. Contentment is a great virtue and a great sin, depending upon the circumstances.
4. Age of Discontentment:
 - a. Anxiety, worry, and frustration - Financial woes - stock market
 - b. Large percent of hospital beds filled with people with emotional disturbances
 - c. So we need to learn contentment
5. Also an age of contentment:
 - a. People are unconcerned about some things and indifferent
 - b. They say "who care's?" and "So what?"
 - c. We need to learn to be discontent
6. The problem is : We are content when we ought to be discontent and we are discontent when we ought to be content.

Discussion

I. THE REALM OF CONTENTMENT

A. Definition

1. It is not satisfaction - "the state of having one's desires fully appeased."
 - a. This is the man who has "everything"
 - b. This is really beyond the reach of everyone
 - c. The rich may not have health. The beautiful may not have brains. Those who have both may not have happiness in their family life
 - d. Our desires change
 - e. Contentment is not satisfaction

2. It is not suppression, of desire for better things.
 - a. Paul was a Roman prisoner - he desired to live in his own hired dwelling - Acts 28:30
 - b. This was much better than a dungeon
 - c. So contentment is not just a lack of desire for improving our lot in life

3. Contentment is learning to live with the changes of life without worry and anxiety in the belief that there is a good heavenly Father who knows our needs and will supply them. III. Worry - Trust - Robin and Sparrow - Mt.10:29-31

4. Contentment - "that state of not being disquieted or disturbed by desire, even though not every wish is gratified."

B. Scriptures emphasize Contentment

1. Be content with wages - Lk. 3:14 "And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages."
2. Be content with material things -
 - a. 1 Tim. 6:6-8 "But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."
 - (1) Contentment is great gain
 - (2) This word refers to a state of mind; a calm and satisfied feeling; a freedom from murmuring and complaining.
 - (3) Thayer's Greek Lexicon says that word means "a perfect condition of life, in which no aid or support is needed" or, which is the same thing "a mind contented with its lot."
 - b. 1 Tim. 6:9-10 asv " But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
 - (1) "Minded" - NKJV = those who desire
 - (2) The word "minded" means to have a desire, and when that desire is strong enough, its possessor is willing to make any kind of effort to achieve his goal.
 - (3) He is minded to be rich, that does not lead to contentment.

c. Heb. 13:5 "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

(1) Things can never bring happiness

(2) Contentment is not measured in dollars.

(3) A proper relationship with God will bring true contentment and happiness.

3. Be content in times of adversity - Acts 20:24 "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

C. Necessity of Learning Contentment

1. We are not born with contentment

a. Cannot be given by another

b. Cannot be bought

c. Must be learned - Phil.4:11 "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

d. Where did Paul learn contentment?

2. He learned this from Christ

a. Pattern of Christ" Luke 9:58 "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

b. Teaching's of Christ

- (1) Matt. 6:25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"
- (2) Luke 12:15 ""Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."
 - (a) We must not over-estimate the value of material possessions
 - (b) Many conclude that the way to be content is to have abundance of money and material possessions
 - (c) The people who live in Beverly Hills, California have an abundance of all earthly goods. They are very wealthy.
 - (d) Has this provided contentment? According to the records they have 1,230 Psychiatrists in the city of Beverly Hills with a population of 33,784. That is one psychiatrist for every 27 people.

c. Promises of Christ Mt. 7:11 28:20

3. Paul applied these truth's about contentment in the school of adversity

- a. He suffered much for Christ II Cor. 11:23-27
- b. In Philippi he is an aged preacher unjustly confined.

4. The meaning of Paul's contentment

- a. Peace - Phil. 4:7, 9
- b. Joy - Phil. 1:2,18 4:4

- (1) The theme of the letter is "I rejoice - rejoice ye"
- (2) 20 times these expressions are used "joy", "rejoice", "thanksgiving", "contentment", and "peace"

II. THE REALM OF DISCONTENTMENT

A. Contentment can be a vice or sin

1. Sinful to be contented with our own shortcomings

- a. We are to be content with our lot in life but not with our self in life

Phil. 3:12-14

- b. In looking at ourselves in the mirror of God's Word, we ought to be

disturbed - moved - to improve. Jas. 1:25

2. Sinful to be contented with sufferings of others

- a. We see the hungry, naked, widows and orphans around us everywhere

- b. We must be disturbed - moved - to assist them Jas.1:27 Jas.2:15

- c. Jesus was not contented to see men suffering

(1) He was moved with compassion to help

(2) Mt. 14:14

3. Sinful to be contented with the ignorance of others

- a. When we see the crowds and throngs of people what do you think about:

(1) All will stand before Christ on Judgment

(2) They are ignorant of God's commands

(3) I ought to be disturbed so much that I will tell them of salvation

- b. Rom. 1:14 Rom.10:1 Paul was so discontent with the world lost in sin that he

was moved to be a soul-winner.

B. The congregation cannot have contentment:

1. With the number of members
2. With attendance at services
3. With knowledge of God's word
4. With interest in one another. Don't be content until every member knows every other member. We must grow in love, concern and closeness.
5. Heb. 13:1 "Let brotherly love continue."
6. With giving to support the Cause
7. As a congregation we must be disturbed - moved - to greater evangelization, attendance, study, fellowship and liberality

CONCLUSION

1. We need to pray "Lord, help us be content with the material and unimportant things, and help us be discontent with the spiritual and really important things."
2. We must keep the proper balance:
 - a. Being unconcerned - about worldly things..... Yet concerned
 - b. Being immovable from the truths of God's word. Yet moved to do greater things for Christ.
3. Phil. 4:11

Source

Sermons for Saints and Sinners by Eugene W. Clevenger

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Evening Nov. 16, 2008

Evans Church of Christ

515 Gibbs Road

Evans, Ga. 30809

706-855-1249

evanscoc@bellsouth.net

www.evansgachurchofchrist.org