

***TO LIVE IS CHRIST*****Grateful and Content in All Circumstances   Philippians 4:10–23**

*I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances...I can do everything through him who gives me strength.* Philippians 4:11b, 13

**Day 1: Read Philippians 4:10–19.**

1. In this passage Paul thanks the Philippians for the gift they sent through Epaphroditus; beyond the gift itself, what is the source of Paul’s rejoicing? (vss. 10, 17)
  
2. Paul states in 4:11 that he has learned to be content whatever the circumstances.
  - a. Read 2 Corinthians 11:23–28 and Philippians 1:13–17. What kinds of temptations might Paul face in the midst of these difficult circumstances?
  
  - b. Paul also states that he knows how to be content with plenty. What kinds of temptations might Paul face in the midst of prosperity and abundance?
  
3. In what ways does God enable Paul to “learn” the secret of being content?
  
4. While both want and plenty can threaten our faith and our growth in Christ, they can also be a means of increasing them. Consider the present circumstances in your life. Where are you finding it difficult to experience the contentment Paul speaks of? How can you be a learner in the place where God has you?

**Day 2: Read Philippians 4:12–17.**

5. While Paul is grateful for the Philippians’ gift, it is clear that something other than material gifts enables him to cope with his present difficulties. What is it that enables him to keep going? (vss. 12, 13, 17)
  
6. Stoic philosophers of Paul’s time used the term “contentment” to mean self-sufficiency. In their view this was the most valuable attribute of a wise person. The Stoics sought to be unaffected by physical deprivation or physical comfort. How does Paul’s understanding of contentment agree with and yet radically differ from the Stoics?

7. Paul's ability to "do everything" comes "through" or literally "in [Christ]" (vs. 13). What does it mean to be "in Christ"? How have you seen this work itself out practically in your life? (See also 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 6:10.)

**Day 3: Read Philippians 4:14–16.**

8. Paul tells the Philippians they have done well to share with him in his troubles. We have already considered Paul's afflictions, how have the Philippians suffered? (2 Cor. 8:1–2 [note: Philippi is located in Macedonia]; Phil. 1:28–30; 2:14–15; 4:2)
9. Paul thanks the Philippians for their aid and commends them for their giving. If the accomplishment of God's purposes is not dependent on human help (Acts 17:24–25) and if all our needs are met in Christ (Phil. 4:19), then why do we need each other? (Matt. 25:35–40; 1 Cor. 3:5–9; 2 Cor. 5:20)

**Day 4: Read Philippians 4:11–19.**

10. Read Paul's prayer for the Philippians in 1:3–11. In light of this passage, explain what Paul means by the "credit" he looked for in their "account" (vs. 17).
11. How does the language of sacrifice in verse 18 reveal the true value of the Philippians' gift? (Eph. 5:2; Rom. 12; Heb. 13:15–16)
12. Paul promises the Philippians that God will supply *all* their *needs* (vs. 19). What do you think this means? How do verses 11, 12 and 19 help us understand what we truly need? (Rom. 5:3–5, Jas. 1:2–4, and 1 Pet. 1:3–9)

**Day 5: Read Philippians 4:19–23.**

13. How can deprivation or poverty be a means God uses to meet your truest need? (Prov. 30:8–9; Hos. 13:6; Lk. 16:13; 2 Cor 12:9–10)
14. What does verse 20 reveal as the primary goal of the ministry in which Paul and the Philippians' participate together? (1:5)
15. Pray this doxology for yourself and each other.