

Character Trait for January 22-26 is Contentment

Philippians 1:9-10, "And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ"

Character: the qualities built into an individual's life that determine their responses, regardless of circumstances.

Contentment: Realizing that true happiness does not depend on material conditions.

Derivation: **contentment**-happy enough with what one has or is; not desiring something more or different; satisfied. From the Latin verb continere meaning "to hold together; bind; limit; enclose; surround."

Weekly Verse: Phil 4:19—"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."

Bible Story: Matthew 6:19-24.

Quote: "Contentment is a state of the heart, unaffected by our outward circumstances."

Application:

First, learn to give thanks in all things. Paul had learned to give thanks in every circumstance and he exhorted all believers to do the same.

Second, learn to rest in God's providence. If we truly know God, we know that He is unfolding His agenda and purpose in our lives. He has sovereignly determined each part of His plan for us so that we'll be benefited and He'll be glorified.

Third, learn to live above life's circumstances. That's how Paul lived. In 2 Cor. 12:9-10 he wrote, "Most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." Paul didn't take pleasure in the pain itself, but in the power of Christ manifested through him in times of infirmity, reproach, persecution, and distress.

Fourth, learn to rely on God's power and provision. The apostle Paul wrote, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"; and Jesus said He will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb. 13:5).

Finally, become preoccupied with the well-being of others. A self-centered man is a discontented man. But the soul of the generous man, the man who lives for the interests and benefit of others, will find blessing upon blessing in his life.

Discussion Questions:

Can you describe yourself as being preoccupied with the well-being of others?

Why is it so difficult for us to find contentment in life?