

JOY IN THE JOURNEY

LIVING RIGHT IN A WRONG WORLD

**“These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace.
In the world you have tribulation, but take courage;
I have overcome the world.”**

— John 16:33 —

LESSON EIGHT

I AM INVINCIBLE

Finding Joy in Contentment

DISCUSSION QUESTION

“How much money is enough?”

INTRODUCTION

- Luke 3:14
- 2 Corinthians 12:10
- 1 Timothy 6:8
- Hebrews 13:5

LESSON

I am Invincible: Finding Joy in Contentment

“I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.” (Philippians 4:11)

1. Money is necessary, but it doesn't bring contentment.
2. Circumstances change, but they don't dictate contentment.
3. Wealth is not necessarily a sign of God's favor, and poverty is not necessarily a sign of God's wrath.
4. God meets your needs, so don't ever think you did anything by your own strength.
5. **True joy is possible only when contentment saturates our entire being.**

**If you are truly tired of living without joy, peace, and contentment,
are you ready to finally release everything
– EVERYTHING –
for Him to manage?**

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Philippians 4:10-23

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity.

11 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.

13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

14 Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction.

15 You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;

16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs.

17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

20 Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.

22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

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Contentment

Charles Swindoll

Isn't it strange that we need a book to help us experience what ought to come naturally? No, not really . . . not when its major theme is contentment . . . not when we've been programmed to compete, achieve, increase, fight, and worry our way up the so-called "ladder of success" (which few can even define).

Contentment is the unknown "X" in life's equation. It is as strange to most of us as living in an igloo or eating fried worms or raising a live gorilla in our backyard.

Face it. You and I are afraid that if we open the door of contentment, two uninvited guests will rush in: loss of prestige and laziness. We really believe that "getting to the top" is worth any sacrifice. To proud Americans, contentment is something to be enjoyed between birth and kindergarten . . . retirement and the rest home . . . or (and this will hurt) among those who have no ambition.

Stop and think. A young man with keen mechanical skills is often counseled against being contented to "settle" for a trade right out of high school. A teacher who is competent, contented, and fulfilled in the classroom is frowned upon if she turns down an offer to become a principal. The owner of Super-Duper Hamburgers on the corner has a packed-out joint every day and is content. But chances are selfish ambition won't let him rest until he opens ten other joints and gets rich—leaving contentment behind. A man or woman who serves as an assistant or in any kind of support position in a ministry, company, or the military frequently wrestles with feelings of discontentment until he or she is promoted to the so-called "top rung." This applies to homemakers and nuclear scientists . . . plumbers and cops . . . engineers and seminary students . . . caretakers and carpet layers . . . artists and waitresses.

It's a curious fact that when people are free to do as they please, they usually imitate each other. As a result, we are rapidly becoming a nation of discontented, incompetent marionettes, dangling from strings manipulated by the same, stupid puppeteer.

Now, listen to John the Baptist: "Be content with your wages" (Luke 3:14). Hear Paul: "I am well content with weaknesses," and, "If we have food and covering . . . be content." (2 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Timothy 6:8). And hear another apostle: "Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have" (Hebrews 13:5).

I warn you: this isn't easy to implement. You'll be outnumbered and outvoted. You'll have to fight the urge to conform. Even the greatest of all the apostles admitted, "I have learned to be content" (Philippians 4:11, emphasis added). It's a learning process . . . and it isn't very enjoyable marching out of step until you are convinced you're listening to the right drummer.

When you're fully convinced, however, two things will happen: Your strings will be cut and you'll be free, indeed!