

## I. Introduction

- **Question:** When I say the word contentment, what do you think that word means? What are examples?
  - A person is satisfied no matter the life circumstance
  - Living in a state of satisfaction
    - There's no complaining whether you experience positive or negative circumstances
    - You don't live in a chaotic state of pursuing more and more
    - You don't live in a lazy state of complacency
- **Question:** What does a chaotic state of pursuing more and more look like for a student?
  - Worry, anxiety
  - Negative talk, gossip, bullying
  - Business
- Or the opposite, You have received all things and you have fallen into a state of indifference
  - laziness
- **Question:** What do kids at your school think about the idea of being content? Is living a life of contentment a popular message?
  - May need to explain the difference between pursuing satisfaction and being content.
- **Question:** Do you even want to live a life of contentment? Why or why not?

**Big Idea:** When we are in abundance or need, Christ strengthens us to be content.

## II. Lesson

- **Read Philippians 4:10-20**

### A. When we are in abundance, Christ strengthens us to be content.

- **Question:** Do you have more than enough possessions?
- **Question:** Do you find satisfaction in your material abundance?
- If you find contentment in your circumstances then you are not living a content life. When you rely upon your material abundance, you are not relying on Christ.
- **Question:** What do you think is the root of a lack of contentment?
  - God will not provide therefore I must. It is a lack of trust.
    - **Question:** What is true? **Psalm 23** “The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want...”
      - (literal translation is “I shall not lack”)
      - I do not want because I will not lack. God provides.
        - Difficulty, His provision may not match your idea of providing. In trusting Him, He provides the strength to be content.
  - **Question:** How do you respond to successful semester in school?
    - Grades
    - Friendships: quantity or quality
    - Sports
  - **Question:** How do respond to the gifts your parents give you?
    - **Question:** Do you forget about God?
    - When we find ourselves at the end of a successful semester, we must ask God to help us to be content. Ask Him for the strength in Christ to fight the temptation to be greedy and complacent.

- **Question:** What are some practical actions we can do to fight against greediness and complacency?
  - Prayer: Give thanks to God rather than be ungrateful and trust in ourselves.
- This is how we know if our satisfaction is in Christ or material abundance.
  - If we can give thanks to God through prayer then we are content. As Christians, we rely on the free grace we receive in our union with Christ. Christ freely gives us strength to be content. We have the power to be content in whatever circumstance because Christ is in us and is our strength.

## B. When we are in need, Christ strengthens us to be content

- Paul knows what it means to be in need. Consider **2 Corinthians 11:27**
  - **Question:** As an Apostle, did Paul have an easy, cozy life?
    - He is recounting his sufferings, "...in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure."
    - Though Paul has been brought low in his life, here, in **Philippians**, we find out he still remains content.
  - **Question:** How did he remain content? Consider **2 Corinthians 12: 9-10**
    - Paul believes that Christ's grace is sufficient. Therefore Paul says that he will boast all the more gladly of his weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, he is content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For he knows that when he is weak, then he is strong in Christ.
- **Question:** I believe each of us has been here at some point in our lives... How can you be content after being told no to receiving a material good (i.e. Apple Watch) or rejected from a club? Or not considered being the best at your sport? Or not making the team? How do you remain content after not making the grade you wanted even when you worked your butt off to get it?
  - Note: indifference is not contentment.
- Christ's grace is sufficient and He gives it freely. We can hang onto Him during these difficult times. He is the one we find our strength in in order to get up out of bed and continue on with life. It is in Him we find our identity and not in our lack or plenty. Paul tells us in **Ephesians 6:10** to "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might." Christ will strengthen us to be content during a season of need as well.
- We can only remain content in Christ who is our strength.
- **Question:** Why do you think we rely on ourselves for strength?

## III. Conclusion

- God commands us to be content in abundance and in need and he supplies the strength to do so through Christ.