

I was always an angel... at least in the nativity play at church. I had to wear this humiliating (and what I was almost sure was biblically inaccurate) costume made out of a white sheet, with a silver tinsel garland halo and glittery poster board wings. FYI - white is not my color. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy..," blah, blah, blah. Always an angel... but I wanted to be Mary.

There were several angels, but only one Mary. That part was important. I never got to be Mary because one of the other little girls had long brown hair, and we all know Mary had long brown hair. And, salt to my wounds, she didn't appreciate the honor... I could tell. My parents kept my hair short, but I always wanted long hair... then I could be Mary and be happy.

If only I had, or did, or didn't have, or had not done, etc. This life can be so full of disappointment, injustice, suffering, and a struggle to find purpose and meaning in it all. So much of scripture addresses the insufficiency of our worldly pursuits to bring happiness, and points us to The One in Whom true and lasting satisfaction is found.

The book of Ecclesiastes addresses these things. It can seem like a pretty depressing book unless we purposefully look for the deep truths and eternal perspectives contained within. If you, like me, struggle at times with being content and trusting God's heart in all this life stuff, **I invite you to participate in one of the upcoming women's Bible studies by Dee Brestin called "A Woman of Contentment."** There will be three offerings: **Tuesdays at 9:30 AM (starts 1/16), Tuesdays at 6:30 PM (starts 1/16), and Wednesdays at 6:30 PM (starts 1/17).** This is not a video series, there is minimal homework involved, and childcare is provided. And if you have it all together in this area, please come and encourage the rest of us!

My struggle to be a woman of contentment continues, but so does God's pursuit of my heart to free me from my attachments to the lesser loves and pleasures I am so prone to chase after and give my heart to. On those occasions when I seem to catch them, I end up finding no lasting satisfaction in them. They are only pale reflections pointing me to the superior pleasure found in my relationship with my Savior. There is a [song](#) I like that ends with a line I often pray for myself, "Pry my fingers from the earthly, oh let me love your glory, everything is mine in you." That self-centered little girl still rears her short-haired head (complete with tinsel halo) from time to time, but I'm thankful for a patient and loving Father who faithfully shows her a better way and teaches her to trust His heart.

Romans 8

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

