



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

**FOLLOW MY EXAMPLE, - PHILIPPIANS 4:10-13**

**WYOMING**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2013**

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*In Philippians 4 Paul exhorts the believer to stand firm with right attitudes, right thoughts and finally with right actions. As a result, Philippians 4:7-9 reminds us that our hearts and minds will be guarded by the peace of God and the God of peace. As we mature in our dependence on Christ, the “practice” in our lives becomes an outgrowth of what is secure and steadfast in our hearts. Our faith becomes who we are and shows itself in how we live. This is the continuing path of spiritual maturity.*

## I. CONTENTMENT- PHILIPPIANS 4:10-13

*“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. Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 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. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:10-13*

In a world that breeds discontentment and desire for what we don't have, Paul moves us towards not only right attitudes, thoughts and actions but an acceptance of where God has us and what He has provided for us. These verses in Philippians revolve around living a life of contentment, another key to standing firm in the faith. What does true contentment mean?

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**%content+**Greek word **%autarkes+** means being self sufficient, having enough, not being dependent on others, to be satisfied, independent, lack of necessity of and or help, sense of by myself with Christ.

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Biblical contentment means we are satisfied with the position we are in and the possessions we have before God in a trusting way. One commentary on Philippians wrote of an ancient writer who used the word in reference to a country that supplied itself and had no need of imports. True contentment can only come from God as we are satisfied with what He has provided or where He has placed us. We are satisfied and at peace in the midst of any situation or circumstance. With this definition in mind, let's proceed through these three verses in Philippians and see what challenges God has for our own lives as we stand firm in the faith.

## A. PAUL'S THANKFULNESS FOR PROVISION. PHIL. 4:10

*“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.” Philippians 4:10*

Before Paul concludes this letter to the Philippians, he wants to thank them for their concern and gifts to him since the inception of the church some ten years ago. Paul rejoices because of their kindness to him expressed through their gifts. God had used this church to supply his need and he was grateful. The Philippians had always cared for him but lacked the opportunity to give because they lost track of him in his travels and didn't know where he was. When they found out where Paul was, they could once again help him in his need. They sent one of their own in the church to deliver their gift to Rome thereby assisting Paul in ministry there.

## B. PAUL'S TRUST IN GOD'S PROVISION. PHIL. 4:11

*“Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.” Philippians 4:11*

Paul wanted to make sure the Philippians didn't misunderstand him. He wasn't expecting anything from the Philippians but rather his contentment rested with God's provision. He fully trusted God to provide for all his needs. His dependence wasn't on people but rather in God and Paul was not feeling neglected. Paul was completely satisfied with whatever God provided for him in his position (remember he was in prison) or his possessions (which weren't much). God provided what Paul needed and they were often the basic necessities of life; food, shelter and clothing.

But our world today tells us we “need” so much more and we won't be satisfied without it. On every commercial, every billboard and in every store we are constantly tempted to “need” whatever we don't have that they sell. But that's not the mind or attitude Paul expresses here.

1 Timothy 6:6-8 says, *“But godliness actually is means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into this world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.”* Rarely could we ever say we have lived on a “need” level. We confuse our needs with our wants and desires. We always think we need more. But Paul did not seek for more than what God had already given him and found his source of true contentment in Christ. Paul wrote that godliness with contentment is great gain. That's spiritual maturity. Are you satisfied with what God has provided for you or do you always seek for more? Paul learned to trust in God's providence and sovereignty. The New Bible Dictionary defines God's providence in this way:

“UNCEASING ACTIVITY OF THE CREATOR WHEREBY, IN OVERFLOWING BOUNTY AND GOODWILL, HE UPHOLDS HIS CREATURES IN ORDERED EXISTENCE, GUIDES AND GOVERNS

## BIBLE STUDIES

**LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR, STAFF & SPOUSES: WEDNESDAY, 6:30AM, BREAKFAST SERVED**

**WYOMING STATE CAPITOL, HERSCHLER BUILDING COMMONS AREA**

# Capitol Commission, Wyoming

Follow My Example, Philippians 4:10-13

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ALL EVENTS, CIRCUMSTANCES AND FREE ACTS OF ANGELS AND MEN, AND DIRECTS EVERYTHING TO ITS APPOINTED GOAL, FOR HIS OWN GLORY."

God's providence aligns all circumstances in our lives for His appointed goal and glory. Paul trusted in God's providence for his daily provision and that's how we are called to live life as well. Are we grateful and content with God's provision or do we always want more, living outside of our means? Remember, to be content is to be fully satisfied with what you have. Do you have enough, or do you always want more? What about the circumstances you find yourself in. Are you content with where you are? Paul was in chains and yet he was content, fully satisfied because he trusted in a sovereign God and his satisfaction was found in the all sufficiency of Christ.

## C. PAUL'S CONTENTMENT WITH LITTLE OR MUCH.

PHILIPPIANS 4:12

*"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." Phil. 4:12*

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**%humble means+**Greek word **%tapeinosis+** means to recognize absolute dependence on God, being abased, being reduced to humble conditions, to be ranked below others who are honored and rewarded.

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Paul knew how to get along with just the basic necessities in life. He was totally dependent on God trusting Him for what he needed. Therefore, as he served Christ, regardless of his circumstances, he stood firm in his faith with an absolute dependence on his God for what he needed. What is our attitude if we lack something? Often what we lack is never a true need. If we lack, do we grumble and complain or are we content and fully satisfied with what God has provided? Can we live with little and still rejoice, secure in our sufficiency in Christ? Paul did and we are exhorted to the same.

On the other side of the coin, Paul also knew how to live in prosperity.

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**%abound+**Greek word **%perisseuo+** means to super abound, be in excess, to have more abundance, that which is above and beyond, overflows.

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Paul knew how to live when he had enough as well as when he didn't have enough. To maintain a trust and dependence on God can be more difficult when we have all we need because we tend to forget about God, but Paul was content with either. That's where we need to find ourselves. Paul

served God and was grateful and content in any circumstance he found himself. This resulted from his deep, abiding, steadfast relationship with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Paul goes on to say that he knew the "secret" of "being filled and going hungry." What is this secret Paul describes for certainly we need this secret as well?

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**%secret+**Greek word **%muno+** means to be instructed, intimately acquainted with something, to be fully instructed in something.

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Paul knew something, a secret about being content. The word "secret" is in the perfect tense suggesting that what Paul knew was not instantaneous, yet emphatic in any and every situation. Paul knew he was in the will of God and he knew he was the recipient of God's providential care. This resulted in the certain confidence that wherever he was, or in whatever circumstances he found himself, he was there by divine appointment! He was in God's will and would be taken care of by God's providence. The secret Paul had was his security found only in Jesus Christ. Where is your security??? When circumstances in life are not exactly what you planned...cancer, financial hardship, loss... where is your security? You are safe and secure in the sovereign arms of God no matter where you find yourself!

## D. CAN DO ALL THROUGH CHRIST. PHILIPPIANS 4:13

*"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13*

Paul, then, comes to the obvious conclusion that in God's will for him, he could do all things, suffer all things, be content in all things, endure all things because of Christ Who lives within him and does the strengthening in his life. God knows what we need to live the life He has called us to. He knows what we will need to endure through whatever comes our way. And He graciously provides for us just exactly what we need, when we need it. Paul knew he was strong enough to endure anything through Christ Who would strengthen him through the hardest of difficulties. The word for "strengthen" means to be strong, to have power and resources capable of producing results. We have limits, but in Christ we have the power of God working in us to accomplish His work, His way. Be encouraged as Paul writes in Ephesians 1:19-21, "...and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places..." (See also Ephesians 3:14-16, 20)