



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## The Secret of Contentment

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**The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians** (60-62 A.D.), Paul is imprisoned (one of four Prison Letters, the others being Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon) in Rome addressing the established Christian (mostly Gentile) church in Philippi, the first founded by Paul in Europe. In this letter, Paul, having a fondness for the people of the church of Philippi, because of their faithfulness and generous nature, wanted to thank them for their gifts, letting them know why he was returning Epaphroditus to them, sharing his situation in prison, urging unity in church, and warning them against false teachers. While false doctrine had started to plague many of the churches, he wanted to provide encouragement for practical living and support for sound doctrine. While much of the letter deals with spiritual growth, the tone throughout is that there is joy in Christ and Paul rejoices in Christ being proclaimed regardless of his circumstance and that they also must conduct their lives, suffer, press on and live in harmony in and for Christ. (Php 4:10-13 NASB)

*“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.” (4:10)*

**Joy in the Lord.** Paul reflects fondly over his relationship with the Philippian believers and thanks their recent support and for their support in the years prior. While Paul struggled greatly for the nearly 10 years between support actions, he didn't blame the Philippian church for their lack of support during those years but rather knew that they cared for him yet didn't know where he was or his level of need; they lacked opportunity. Paul shares during that time he learned a very important lesson.

*“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.” (4:11-12)*

**Contentment in all circumstances.** Paul shares that he learned a very valuable secret; that he can be content in whatever circumstances he is placed. Content can be defined as; lacking nothing, in a state of peace or satisfaction. Paul never considered himself a victim of his circumstance. Paul trusted in God's perfect will and timing in his life. Paul understood that his circumstance did not determine the secret for peace; whether he was sick or healthy, rich or poor, hungry or well fed. Paul's trust, life and joy was in the Lord. Paul shared this contentment in several of his other letters. *“And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;” (2 Co 9:8)* and *“But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment..... If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.” (1 Tm 6:6,8)*. Where did Paul find his strength in all circumstances?

*“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” (4:13)*

**All things in Christ.** Paul was not talking about doing all things that that he could dream up, but rather Paul could do all things that Christ wills and demands of him and finds the strength to accomplish that will in Christ. (See 2Co12:9, Eph 3: 16, Col 1:11) Paul found joy and strength in Christ and that he would have all the power necessary to accomplish His will and purpose.

### For Your Consideration:

- Do you seek the opportunities to serve God?
- Have you found the secret for contentment?
- Do you believe that you can accomplish, through His strength, all things that God calls you to do?

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### BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: SESSION OR HEARING WEDNESDAYS AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE RM. 44

STAFF, LOBBYISTS AND CAPITOL SQUARE COMMUNITY: WEDNESDAYS AT NOON, STATEHOUSE RM.44