

## Paul's Contentment

**PHI 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.**

1. "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly"
  - a. "I was very glad, as a Christian" - Gspd.
  - b. "I rejoice greatly in the Lord" - NIV
2. "that now at last you have revived your concern for me" - This is not a rebuke. They had lacked opportunity.
3. "indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity"
  - a. Lit. "you had no opportunity"
  - b. They had always been interested in helping him, but had lacked opportunity, at times, to help him.

**PHI 4:11 Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.**

1. "Not that I speak from want" - He was not complaining and was not writing this under pressure of want.
2. "for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances [conditions] I am"
  - a. He was content regardless of his circumstances.
  - b. Circumstances can change quickly or slowly, but this should not govern the Christian's contentment.
  - c. Here are two other scriptures on the importance of contentment. (Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:6-8).

HEB 13:5 Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"

1TI 6:6 But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment.

1TI 6:7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

1TI 6:8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

- d. Paul was content because his relationship to Christ was what counted most to him.

**PHI 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.**

1. "I know how to get along with humble means"- He had learned to manage when he had little.
  - a. He was able make ends meet and be happy with what he had.

- b. It is vital that our happiness and contentment not be dependent on outward circumstances.
- c. Some of the poorest people in the world have learned to be happy with little, and some the rich people in the world are only happy if they have abundance.
- d. Some who have abundance are not happy, and never seem to realize that material things are not the source of genuine happiness. (Lk. 12:15).

LUK 12:15 And He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."

- 2. “and I also know how to live in prosperity” - He knew how to live when he had enough and perhaps more than enough.
- 3. “in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled [well fed] and going hungry”
  - Lit. “in everything and in all things”
    - a. This can only be achieved when one puts his/her full trust in God and His Son.
    - b. This attitude is **learned** through faith and steadfastness.
      - 1) “Learned” is from “muelo” [moo eh oh] and it is used in the New Testament to mean “to be disciplined in a practical lesson, to learn a lesson.”
      - 2) Learning takes time and experience.
- 4. “both of having abundance and suffering need [facing poverty]”

### Foes Of Contentment

|                           |                               |                        |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Covetousness (Heb. 13:5). | Pessimism                     | “I can’t be satisfied” |
| Unbelief (Heb. 13:5,6).   | Self-Pity - “Life cheated me” | Setting goals too high |
| Envy (Gen. 26:14).        | Ingratitude                   | Laziness               |

### PHI 4:13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

- 1. “I can do all things” - This is a great and inspirational statement.
  - a. Paul is talking about living the Christian life.
  - b. He is not talking about doing miraculous or superhuman things.
    - 1) Jesus gives His followers the power and strength to deal with life’s circumstances.
    - 2) Paul was not performing miracles or doing superhuman things in his imprisonment.
    - 3) It was his faith in the Lord and attitude that made him such an outstanding example.

2. “through Him who strengthens me” - Lit. “in the one who strengthens [empowers] me”

- a. He is affirming he was ready for anything through the strength of Jesus who lived in him.
- b. He had the strength for every situation through the power and strength of Christ.
- c. He was able to suffer persecution, poverty, death because of the empowering strength of Christ.

**PHI 4:14 Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction.**

1. “Nevertheless, you have done well” - “nevertheless” is from “plen” [playn] - “however, nevertheless.”
  - a. He is commending them for their actions.
  - b. They had done all they could to help him.
2. “to share with me in my affliction” - They had shared his troubles the best they could.

**PHI 4:15 And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;**

1. “And you yourselves also know, Philippians” - See Phil. 1:1.
2. “that at the first preaching of the gospel”
  - a. Paul had made reference to their participation in chapter one. (Phil. 1:5).  
  
PHI 1:5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.
  - b. “beginning” refers back to the time he established church at Philippi and Macedonian churches. See Acts 16
3. “after I departed from Macedonia no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone”

**PHI 4:16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift [contributions] more than once for my needs.**

1. “for even in Thessalonica” -2 Cor. 8:2.
  - a. The work of Paul in Thessalonica is recorded in Acts 17:1-4.

ACT 17:1 Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

ACT 17:2 And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

ACT 17:3 explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."

ACT 17:4 And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a great multitude of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women.

- b. Paul had met with much opposition there. (Act 17:5-9).

ACT 17:5 But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the market place, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and coming upon the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people.

ACT 17:6 And when they did not find them, they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have upset the world have come here also;  
ACT 17:7 and Jason has welcomed them, and they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus. "  
ACT 17:8 And they stirred up the crowd and the city authorities who heard these things.  
ACT 17:9 And when they had received a pledge from Jason and the others, they released them.

c. He did not accept support from the brethren there. (2 Thess. 3:8),

2TH 3:8 nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we might not be a burden to any of you;

2. "you [Philippians] sent a gift [contribution] more than once for my needs" - He did receive aid from the churches of Macedonia. (2 Cor. 8:1,2).

2CO 8:1 Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia,

2CO 8:2 that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.

**PHI 4:17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account [credit].**

1. "Not that I seek the gift itself" - It is not the support I am anxious to receive.

2. "but I seek for the profit [fruit] which increases to your account"

a. The Greek has "karpos" [kahr **pahs**] meaning "fruit."

b. He desired their acts of kindness be rewarded by God. (Matt. 10:42; 25:31-46).

**PHI 4:18 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.**

1. Paul had now sent him back to Philippi. (Phil. 2:25).

PHI 2:25 But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need;

2. "But I have received everything in full [that I require], and have an abundance [more than I require]"

3. "I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent" - the support.

4. "a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God"

a. They had pleased God with this proof of their love and loyalty.

b. Their help was like the sweet fragrance of a sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God.

## **God's Sufficiency**

4:19-20

**PHI 4:19 And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.**

1. “And my God” - 1 Cor. 1:4; 2 Cor. 12:21; Phil. 1:3.

- a. Paul’s “God” was the one and only God. (Eph. 4:4-6).
- b. Paul did not acknowledge any of the so-called gods. (1 Cor. 8:5-6).

1CO 8:5 For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords,

1CO 8:6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

c. Paul had complete trust in the God of heaven to provide for his needs and the needs of those “in Christ Jesus.”

2. “shall supply all your needs” - See Psa. 23; Matt. 6:25-33.

3. “according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus” - This is a reference to the greatness of God’s “riches” or wealth.

- a. God’s riches includes material things (Psa. 24:1), but it is not limited to material things.
- b. God riches also include strength, comfort, providence, wisdom, sunshine, rain, etc.

## **Doxology**

**PHI 4:20 Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

1. “Now to our God and Father “ - He changes the words “my God” to “now to our God and Father.” See Phil 4:19.

2. “be the glory forever and ever. Amen”

- a. He believes God should be glorified forever.
- b. Lit. “into the age of the ages” translated “forever.”
- c. “amen” [ah mayn] - Aramaic word spelled with Greek letters. It means “so be it.”

**PHI 4:21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.**

1 . “Greet every saint in Christ Jesus”

- a. “saint” refers. in this verse, to church members at Philippi.
- b. It is a reference to God’s people [Christians].
- c. See notes on “saints” - Phil. 1:1.

2. “The brethren who are with me greet you”

- a. Here are some of those with Paul.
  - 1) Timothy (Phil. 1:1,2).
  - 2) Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:19, 25).

b. Other unnamed people were with him, and each of them were a blessing to Paul and others.

**PHI 4:22 All the saints [in Rome] greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.**

1. "All the saints greet you" - This is a reference to the church members in Rome generally as distinguished from the smaller circle of companions who remained near him to assist him in good works and encourage him.
2. "especially those of Caesar's household" - This was probably servants and perhaps some guards who were not necessarily members of Caesar's immediate family.

**PHI 4:23 The grace [favor] of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.**

1. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ"
2. "be with your spirit"
  - a. KJV has "be with you all."
  - b. Greek has "with the spirit of you" - The "you" is a plural "you."
  - c. "spirit" can refer to attitude (Matt. 5:3), but it can also refer to the immortal spirit. (Acts 7:59; Heb. 12:9, 23; 1 Thess. 5:23).

ACT 7:59 And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive **my spirit!**"

HEB 12:9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the **Father of spirits**, and live?

HEB 12:23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to **the spirits of righteous men made perfect**,

1TH 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and **may your spirit** and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. "amen" KJV - This is omitted by many Greek manuscripts.
  - a. It is included in some manuscripts.
  - b. Its presence or absence does not change the meaning of this grand and inspirational epistle.

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