



"Be content with your lot; one cannot be first in everything."
—Aesop

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Be Content in All Things (Part Two)

Last time, we saw that discontentment began with [Satan](#) the Devil and that he broadcasts his continual unhappiness to humanity. We have to control our minds and not allow his attitude to affect us. This is especially dangerous for a Christian because, like Satan, we have been given so much. Christ has given us the priceless gift of His life to redeem us, as well as the Holy Spirit to give us eternal life and the opportunity to be in the Family of [God](#) for all eternity. If we are ungrateful, then we despise His gifts and are in danger of losing our eternal life.

People, influenced by their self-seeking human nature, have the propensity to forget the wonderful things that were done for them. There is even a common saying that reflects this: "What have you done for me lately?" When it comes to what God has done for us, though, we dare not have this attitude because what God has done in the past is a solid foundation of our [faith](#). We cannot afford to forget or become discontented with the gifts of God.

Discontentment is like a disease that slowly and insidiously affects the mind, and people who suffer from it find that it grows out of control if left unchecked for long. Before we realize it, we can find ourselves thinking and

then doing things that we have perhaps condemned in others. Discontent, like all thought-waves from Satan, comes about very subtly, and it takes vigilance to resist its pressures and push it from our minds.

As we read in Part One, the apostle Paul writes in [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#): "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." This is God's antidote to help us ward off discontentment. If we are busy being grateful for everything that God has done in our lives, it leaves no room for discontentment. In giving thanks, we soon realize that, despite the seemingly too-frequent stumbles that we all experience, "all things work together for good for those who [love God](#)" ([Romans 8:28](#)).

The bar is set high because God knows better than anyone else—certainly from His experience with Satan—just what can result when a person allows himself to become discontent. It is a constant choice. At some time or another, all of us have faced disappointment, and when that happens, we have to choose whether to accept it and move on or fall into discontentment.

For my wife and I, such a choice arose when we planned to travel from our home in Australia to America to keep the [Feast of Tabernacles](#) with our brethren. Our hopes were seriously dashed when health restrictions and insurance company decisions prevented us from following through on this plan. We had sought God's will concerning this long and rigorous journey from the start, but we had allowed ourselves to be convinced by assurances from the travel agency that turned out to be false, as one insurance company after another turned us down.

To say we were disappointed would be an understatement, and there were plenty of opportunities to lay blame, become disgruntled, and just be totally discontented. Instead, after the initial shock had worn off, we determined not to be down in the dumps and discontented. And it was definitely the right choice. As it has turned out, two years on God was able to use events that sprang from this experience to help others and, of course, ourselves.

Had we chosen to give in to our carnal natures and let ourselves become discontented, we would not have learned the valuable lessons God wanted us to learn or been able to aid others as we did. God always knows what is best

for us, but if we had succumbed to discontentment, we would never have learned of the good things God did through these circumstances, nor would the new relationships that we made have ever existed. We learned that being discontent is a [sin](#), and if we give in to it, it can block God's will in our lives. On the other hand, if we fight discontentment off and soldier on, it can lead to blessings and much [joy](#).

The main thing is not to let circumstances cause us to be discontent. Have we considered that, by letting our tongues run away with themselves in sharing our discontent with others, we could seriously hurt other people? Have we ever said something, perhaps in all innocence, only to see the look of disappointment cross a listener's face because, through our thoughtlessness and discontentment, we have deeply hurt them?

Discontentment can lead to marriage problems, [adultery](#), distrust, murder, jealousy, lust, pride, hatred, [coveting](#), and many other sins of mankind. It can hurt not only our families and friends, but have a ripple effect on others as well. It is responsible for all the wars of our world, robberies and fights among neighbors, and all sorts of problems that plague our generation. And it will not stop until we do as God's Word says: "In everything give thanks." This was not a suggestion by God, but a command, and unless we obey it, we fail a great test of faith.

Do we imagine that God will allow those who are discontent into His Kingdom, where none of man's ways will exist? For those of us whom God chooses to be His [firstfruits](#), it will be a time of continual rejoicing and giving thanks for everlasting life and a truly intimate relationship with the Father and Son. Would God allow anyone to be part of this most wonderful time if he had not overcome his discontentment?

Think of what discontentment would do to the atmosphere of His Kingdom and the damage it would ultimately cause to relationships. We would be right back where we started! Only this time, we would have no Savior to die for us, to pay the penalty for our sin. We cannot sacrifice Christ a second time ([Hebrews 10:26](#)). Better by far to overcome our discontent now and live for all eternity in perfect joy, [peace](#), and harmony with our God.

We are entering a serious time in the history of mankind; everything "good" that has been built in our societies seems to be becoming seriously unstable and unreliable. [The world](#) is in a severe recession, which will only get worse before it gets better, if it gets better. Now more than ever we need to make discontentment a thing of the past. We must remain focused on putting on the image of [Jesus Christ](#) and look forward to the greater goal of life in God's Kingdom.

We have been called to be kings and priests in a better, coming world ([Revelation 5:10](#)), so we should not allow the situations in this world to rob us of such a wonderful opportunity. We need to put out of our lives any discontent about anything, and do as God advises: Give thanks in all things, for all things work together for those who love God. If we truly love God and want to spend eternity with Him, we will, as the apostle Paul says in [Philippians 4:11](#), learn to be content in any situation we may find ourselves in.

- Geoff Preston

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Don't Take God for Granted](#)

by John O. Reid

Human nature has the dangerous trait of allowing familiarity or complacency to lure people into carelessly taking something for granted. It is particularly dangerous to take God and His purpose for us for granted. If we see God clearly, we will not. Contributing factors in not clearly seeing His purpose include 1) sloppy prayer and Bible study (I Timothy 4:14-16), 2) becoming entangled in the world's cares (Matthew 13:22), and 3) refusal to change or overcome. With a contrite heart, we need to love God zealously (Deuteronomy 6:5), never taking our eyes off the great purpose He has for us.

From the Archives: Featured Article

The Road to the Kingdom

by Mike Ford

In many places in Scripture, God promises to guide us along the godly path. Also within the pages of the Bible—our main source of information about spiritual matters—are the details about the way we are to conduct our lives. Mike Ford shows the steps we should take when faced with trials, problems and decisions.

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