

## **“When Less is More”**

**Ps. Jim Critcher**

PHIL 4: 11–12

Before I can abound, I must learn to be content.

- Some circumstances can make us think we are justified to be discontent
- Paul knew a secret that allowed him to be content.
- V.12 – “I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound...”

We try to manage too much, possess too much.

- Mini-storage for physical things is an American phenomenon.
- An iPhone is a major source of storage
- Our scheduling indicates “too much”
- An our belief in God is for the grace to manage it all
- We are trained as consumers – we are trained to be “hoarders”
- We are inculcated with discontent
  - Whether its acquiring another thing, another responsibility, another challenge
  - “If I can take on a little more...”
  - We keep consuming even when we can’t afford it
  - “Lust” is wanting, desiring more than God wants you to have
- In this, people’s faith has become shipwreck because God didn’t prove to be a divine ATM
  - We wouldn’t be stressed out, burned out if we didn’t take more to ourselves than what God intends.
  - Grace can be overdrawn. We have only enough grace as which is being poured out in this moment.
- Is there room for anything from God?
- There is a principle for “making space for God” that goes beyond real estate.
  - EPH says we’re to be filled with the Spirit of God, the fullness of God, the joy of the Lord
  - We want things from God, but there is no room for Him to pour out
- The women who built the room for the prophet – she made room for God’s man and then God made room in her womb for a child.
  - But once we get our miracle, we must not fill the room we made for Him.

- The room she made for God was still there when she needed a miracle.
1. What are you willing to get rid of in order to have true wealth.
    - a. We must not define wealth as the world does
    - b. When we do so, we wrongly define what is true wealth
    - c. We must define wealth as God does
    - d. The Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure buried in a field for which a man sells everything to obtain the field
    - e. The Kingdom of Heaven is like the pearl of great price – to possess it, you must sell everything
    - f. When we stop clamoring after everything else, we kind find true wealth.
    - g. Wrong expectations must be adjusted to conform to God's expectations
      - i. Unmet expectations lead to let down
      - ii. Our expectations need to be seen from the viewpoint of God and what HIS purpose is
    - h. We may need to get rid of some dreams because they've become nightmares.
  2. How much of our intercession is born from some discontentment rather than a seeking after more of God and the coming of His Kingdom
    - a. If we only pray when we're discontent, we haven't learned the value of being discontent.
    - b. We are in a place of trying to move God with our great need; yet God works something out in the suffering, He perfects something in the suffering
    - c. Jesus' groans from the cross didn't move God to change anything or deliver, but rather He worked out something wonderful.
    - d. JAM 4 – What causes fights and quarrels? Its wrong motives...motivation of acquisition rather than relationship.
    - e. The end game of prayer is FELLOWSHIP; the aim is a greater knowledge of who He is.
    - f. When the motive is to get God, not something from Him
  3. Excess is not blessed
    - a. Wealth is having not having a lot, its having enough to live off and a bit more to give.
    - b. The parable of the sower – the one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the one who is corrupted by the "deceitfulness of wealth" – such thorns choke out true fruitfulness.

- c. Fruit is the evidence of true wealth –
  - i. The worries of this life cuts off our ability to bear fruit.
  - ii. “Wealth consists not in have great possessions, but having few wants.”
  - iii. The Bible says that to have food and clothing is enough
- d. Can you have true worship without true contentment?
  - i. Without real contentment there can be no real worship; real praise
  - ii. God loved me enough to move on my behalf and I am content.
  - iii. An offering of worship that stems from anything other than true contentment is a “lame sacrifice”
- e. Jesus taught his disciples to pray for to ask for ONE THING – “give us today our daily bread”
- f. Possibly why our prayer is so restricted and our worship so limited is that its not coming from a real contentment.
- g. A good place to start in prayer: seeking for forgiveness and also offer thanksgiving
  - i. “I’m sorry” and “Thank you” is a good place to start to truly approach God

**PRAYER:**

God protect us from acquiring what You don’t want us to have. Give us the courage to live differently and to define wealth for what it is and what you say it is. God help us forsake our neediness in prayer and seek to be worshipers whose worship stems from true contentment. Forgive us for being discontent. Teach us what Paul learned to find contentment in EVERY SITUATION and declaring contentment in every place.

We declare that you are the Pearl of Great Price. May everything we regard as wealth be given to you and exchanged so as to possess You. May this process be our real life.