

CONTENTMENT

*The word “content” comes from an old Anglo-French word that means “to satisfy.”
The Medieval Latin also means “satisfied.”*

There are a number of ways that we become either content or discontent. It may have to do with our circumstances, or with how we **interpret** our circumstances. In other words, how we view our circumstances directly affects our response to them. The latter is sometimes referred to our “worldview” (the perspective of ourselves, and the world around us).

The different worldviews (one's perspective) and world religions attempt to answer four key areas of our existence:

- 1) Origin (where we came from)
- 2) Destiny (where we are going)
- 3) Morality (right and wrong)
- 4) Meaning and purpose (why am I here and do I have value)

All but the Christian worldview depends on circumstances for our happiness, meaning and purpose while some worldviews even deny ANY meaning or purpose.

For many, that leads to the main objective of experiencing pleasure, and avoiding pain.

Why the Christian faith offers joy and contentment that goes beyond our circumstances:

- This is the only religion or worldview that offers peace and eternal life in heaven that does not depend on our works but by our faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross.
- God's promise of a life with Him and others who love Him with no evil, pain or suffering.
- His peace, guidance, help and comfort during our present times of pain and suffering, used to further transform us into His likeness.
- God is the source of all truth, joy, hope and meaning regardless of our circumstances.

Being content does NOT mean the absence of:

Pain	Grief	Sadness
Sorrow	Mourning	Disappointments

Bible passages that speak of contentment:

- 1) Psalm 49:16-17
- 2) Proverbs 30:7-9
- 3) Ecclesiastes 1:8; 5:10
- 4) 1 Timothy 6:6-10
- 5) Philippians 2:14-15; 4:11-13
- 6) Hebrews 10:34; 13:5

Questions to consider:

- 1) Describe how God has given you peace and contentment in times of pain and suffering.
- 2) How can faith in Jesus be a comfort to someone who does not share the same worldview and is watching us in times of trouble?
- 3) What are the signs that someone is NOT content?
- 4) How does one achieve contentment?
- 5) How is a spirit of complaining incompatible with contentment?
- 6) How does discontent affect others (such as those in a marriage, family, at work and at church?)
- 7) What is the difference between complaining, and confronting things that need to be addressed?

The Serenity Prayer:

*God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.*