

# Philippians: Week 14 Study Questions

## Philippians 4:10-23

While we naturally try to find the next thing that will be “enough” for us, Paul reminds us that as believers we can find contentment regardless of circumstances. He has learned and trained to be content in little and in plenty, finding contentment in God’s character and the hope of Jesus rather than comfort. The fullest satisfaction of our souls is available to us outside of success, affirmation, security, control, or anything else we grasp as a false source of contentment.

## Application

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1. It is when we give away sacrificially and generously that we are content. When we sacrifice and release, we are reminded that we do not *need* the thing we are sacrificing and recognize there is greater hope and contentment. Where are you currently sacrificing to create space for Jesus to be enough? How have you found that Jesus is greater?
2. Contentment is not a fleeting feeling; it is something that we train in our souls over time. Paul references two training grounds (listed below). Identify which of these represents you in this particular season and answer the questions that follow.
  - a. Seasons of life in which Paul had nothing: In these circumstances, comfort may have been stripped from you unwillingly, or you may put yourself in an inconvenient or uncomfortable situation for the greater mission of God. When in your life has comfort been stripped away to leave you with certainty that God is enough? If this has never happened for you, what is one step you can take to let go of your comfort and let God prove to you that He is enough?
  - b. Seasons of life in which Paul had plenty: In these circumstances, we can confuse comfort with contentment in Christ. Where are things going well for you that you are tempted to feel self-sufficient and like you do not need Jesus? What are you looking to as your source of life that is really just fool’s gold (ex. someone’s approval, a certain measure of control, a particular comfort or feeling of achievement, etc.)?
3. When our hearts cry out with anger, fear, anxiety, panic, etc., we have to do the work of discovering where that comes from. When was the last time you reacted in one of these ways? What do you think was the false source of contentment that was being exposed in that moment? If you cannot trace it back, ask someone who knows you well: “Where have you noticed I give all of my best energy and my affections? What do you think is a false source of contentment for me?”
4. As a Christian, Paul’s life is located in Jesus, his ability for contentment comes from his personal connection with Him, and all of his needs are met through Him. In what ways do you or do you not feel connected and plugged in to

Jesus? If you don't *feel* connected to Jesus, be reminded that being plugged into Him is a reality that doesn't always match our feelings.

## Key Points

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- Discontentment is a restless desire or craving for something one does not have, while contentment is being satisfied with what one has; not wanting more or anything else.
- “Christian contentment ... is the direct fruit of having no higher ambition than to belong to the Lord and to be totally at His disposal in the place He appoints, at the time He chooses, with the provision He is pleased to make.” -Sinclair Furguson. When doing God's work and knowing Him is what satisfies us, we can be content.
- We have to be careful not to confuse comfort for contentment in Christ.
- Even when circumstances do not line up with the *feeling* we desire, we can trust God's character.