

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Contentment in Christ—Part 3

JEFF ROBINSON, PHD

1



(See also [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) of this series.)

As fallen men, even redeemed fallen men, we will never be entirely content in this life. Our hearts are too prone to wander, far too apt to flirt with idolatry, for us to be completely content in Christ. As Calvin famously put it, the human heart manufactures idols day and night every day. Still, we pray for contentment and, like Paul in [Philippians 4:11](#), we seek to learn the secret to contentment in Christ.

If we are content in Christ, what shape will our lives begin to take? What is the contented heart drawn to? When my contentment is in Christ, then four things ought to be true of me.

- **I will exhibit a deeper love for God's Word.** Because my contentment is in Him, I will want to know Him more. We know Him more through His Word. Contentment is a plant that must be tended daily, as Spurgeon said in his inimitable style: "Now, contentment is one of the flowers of heaven, and if we would have it, it must be cultivated. It will not grow in us by nature; it is the new nature alone that can produce it, and even then we must be specially careful and watchful that we maintain and cultivate the grace which God has sown in it." One of the primary means is by hiding His Word in our hearts and

WWW.LIONANDLAMBAPOLOGETICS.ORG

© 2023, LION AND LAMB APOLOGETICS—1305 CHESTER ST—CLEBURNE, TX 76033

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

having it on our person as a constant reminder that apart from our Lord, we can do nothing.

- **I will exhibit a deeper and more mature love for God's church.** When your satisfaction is found in Christ, then you will want to be in His church and with His people. It will also transform the way you see the church. This building is not the church; you are. And when your contentment is in Christ, you will love God's people, all of God's people, not just those people with whom you are comfortable. And you will love His church, even though it is imperfect and stained with sin. If I am content in Christ, then it will set me free from false expectations in others and will set me free to love people who come from a different background than I do.
- **I will not fall apart when adversity comes.** I will rest in the absolute sovereignty of God and in His prerogative. You and I have a very limited ability to exegete our circumstances. Because we are weak and lack omniscience (though we crave it), there will be many moments in life when we simply do not understand what is going on. We will face moments when the God whom Scripture calls good brings or allows things into our lives that will not seem good. They may even seem very bad: The doctor said it was cancer. Stage four. The boss said my position has been cut. Your son continues to reject the God I taught him to love. ISIS beheaded another Christian. Your daughter admits same-sex attraction. There will be times when all you have is Christ, but if you are content in Him, He will be enough. When we are content in Christ, we can say with Paul, in [Phil. 3:7-8](#), *"But whatever gain I had, I counted loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss for because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ."* When it pleases the Lord to take away some earthly blessing I cherish, then I should be able to say with Job, "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord."
- **I will want others to know the great gain that comes from godliness with contentment.** I will want my friends, neighbors and family members to find the peace that passes understanding. Thus, I will not be embarrassed to proclaim to them the only path that leads to the Celestial City.

I have written this series, not because I am always content or am an expert in the doctrine of contentment. Actually, I have written this because I am an expert in discontentment and am seeking contentment in Christ. May it please God to grant it. So far, I must say, it comes and goes. I have to repent much of discontentment.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

I close out this brief series with memorable words from Spurgeon on the absurdity of discontentment for the follower of Christ:

“Permit me to remind you again, that you should be contented, because otherwise you will belie your own prayers. You kneel down in the morning, and you say, “Thy will be done!” Suppose you get up and want your own will, and rebel against the dispensation of your heavenly Father, have you not made yourself out to be a hypocrite? The language of your prayer is at variance with the feeling of your heart. Let it always be sufficient for you to think that you are where God put you. Have you not heard the story of the heroic boy on board the burning ship? When his father told him to stand in a certain part of the vessel, he would not move till his father bade him, but stood still when the ship was on fire. Though warned of his danger he held his ground. Until his father told him to move, there would he stay. The ship was blown up, and he perished in his fidelity. And shall a child be more faithful to an earthly parent than we are to our Father, who is in heaven? He has ordered everything for our good, and can he be forgetful of us? Let us believe that whatever he appoints is best; let us choose rather his will than our own. If there were two places, one a place of poverty, and another a place of riches and honour, if I could have my choice, it should be my privilege to say, ‘Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.’”

3

(Spurgeon’s entire sermon from [Phil. 4:11](#) simply titled “Contentment” is available [here](#).)



Jeff is a senior editor for The Gospel Coalition. A native of Blairsville, Ga., Jeff holds a bachelor’s degree in journalism from The University of Georgia, a Master of Divinity in biblical and theological studies and a Ph.D. in historical theology with an emphasis on Baptist history from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. He is pastor of New City Church in Louisville, KY.

© Founders Ministries. Retrieved May 1, 2023.

<https://founders.org/articles/contentment-in-christ-part-3/>

WWW.LIONANDLAMBAPOLOGETICS.ORG

© 2023, LION AND LAMB APOLOGETICS—1305 CHESTER ST—CLEBURNE, TX 76033