

Reflection Questions: Philippians 4:10-13

For the message, "The Secret of Contentment" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on April 23, 2023

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read the Scripture text: Philippians 4:10-13

10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. **11** Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. **12** I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. **13** I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

A summary of the message: The secret to being content in any and every situation is having the ability to endure all things through Christ who not only is with me but also empowers me to do so.

Let's get started...

- When you think of being content, what normally comes to mind?
- When do you find you are most discontent?

QUESTIONS

1. Two times (vs 11 & 12), the Apostle Paul speaks of learning the secret of contentment. What do you take from the fact that this is something *learned*?
2. Paul tells us that the secret to contentment is the ability to "do all things through him who strengthens me." He doesn't say he can do it in his own power, but only through the power that Christ gives him. How does this help you understand the secret to contentment?
3. When Paul says that he has "learned the secret," the phrase literally means "to be initiated into / instructed in the sacred mystery." Paul went through a lot by any measure. Why do you think we cannot be initiated into this sacred mystery without going through trials? In other words, what is the connection between learning and experience?

4. A commentator named Dennis Johnson said, “For many of us, the challenge is not to be content when we have nothing. After all, we have never had *nothing*. The challenge is to be content when we have *more* than we need but *less* than we want.”
 - How does this resonate with you?
 - Why do you think we have to learn to be content when we abound, as Paul said in verse 12?
5. In what area of your life now do you need to learn contentment? And how does Jesus’ empowerment enable you to do this?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

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