

Respectable Sins: Discontentment

Ben Finch, May 4, 2025 | Trinity Grace Church

1. Discontentment is Natural // Psalm 73: 1-15

Psalm 73:1-15

- 1 Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.
- 2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped.
- 3 For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
- 4 For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek.
- 5 They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.
- 6 Therefore pride is their necklace; violence covers them as a garment.
- 7 Their eyes swell out through fatness; their hearts overflow with follies.
- 8 They scoff and speak with malice; loftily they threaten oppression.
- 9 They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue struts through the earth.
- 10 Therefore his people turn back to them, and find no fault in them.
- 11 And they say, "How can God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?"
- 12 Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches.
- 13 All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence.
- 14 For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning.
- 15 If I had said, "I will speak thus," I would have betrayed the generation of your children.

Ecclesiastes 1:8

The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

Ecclesiastes 2.1-11

- 1 I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself." ...
- 4 I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself.
- 5 I made myself gardens and parks, ...I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem.
- 8 I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. ...
- 9 So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. ...
- 10 And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, ...
- 11 Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

What discontentment is & what it does:

- a. **Discontentment is a Lack of Trust in God**
- b. **Discontentment Can Lead to Covetousness**
- c. **Discontentment Distracts from a Grateful Heart**
- d. **Discontentment Can Lead to Idolatry**

2. Contentment is Possible // Psalm 73:16-22

Psalm 73:16-22

16 But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task,
17 until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end.
18 Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin.
19 How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors!
20 Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms.
21 When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart,
22 I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you.

a. **Contentment is Learned, Not Given**

Philippians 4:11-13

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.

“Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God’s wide and fatherly disposal.” - Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*

“Contentment is the ability to stay satisfied with God’s will in all circumstances, whether easy or difficult.” - Nancy Wilson

“If you are feeling restless in a painful situation, learn the secret: make choices over and over to trust God. And keep trusting, even when it’s hard. You will find contentment right around your corner.” -Joni Eareckson Tada

“Discontentment... most often arises from ongoing and unchanging circumstances that we can do nothing about.” -Jerry Bridges

“Be content to be nothing, for that is what you are.” -Spurgeon

b. **Contentment is Not Based on Circumstances**

“A man’s contentment is in his mind, not in the extent of his possessions. Alexander the Great, with all the world at his feet, cries for another world to conquer.” - Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening*

“You say, ‘If I had a little more, I should be very satisfied.’ You make a mistake. If you are not content with what you have, you would not be satisfied if it were doubled.” - Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening*

"To be content as a result of some external thing is like warming a man's clothes by the fire. But to be content through an inward disposition of the soul is like the warmth that a man's clothes have from the natural heat of his body... The warmth of the fire, that is, a contentment that results merely from external arguments, will not last long. But that which comes from the gracious temper of one's spirit will last." - Jeremiah Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*

"Of all created comforts God is the lender. You are the borrower, not an owner." - Samuel Rutherford, *The Loveliness of Christ*

3. Hope for the Discontent // Psalm 73:23-28

Psalm 73:16-22

23 Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.
24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory.
25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.
26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
27 For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you.
28 But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.

"Dost thou not know that the saint's afflictions stand for blessings?" -William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour*

1 Timothy 6:6-10

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain,
7 for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world.
8 But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.
9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.
10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

"If God does not forsake me, of what ill consequence can it be, or what matters it, though the world should all forsake me, seeing on the other hand, if I had all the world, and should lose the favor and blessing of God, there would be no comparison in the loss." - Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*

Notes: