

Members' Handout - Philippians 4:10-23

Series: Philippians



1. This is our last study on Philippians! Look back through the book: what has been most memorable or impactful for you?
2. Note the two qualifying statements in v11 and v17. What did Paul rejoice in (v10) and praise the Philippians for (v14-17)? How did Paul view the gift that he had received from the Philippians?
3. What is Paul's secret of "facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need"(v12)? How could he say that even if did not have the Philippians' gift, he was not "in need" and had everything he had?
4. In the Old Testament, fragrant offerings and burn sacrifices were means of worshipping and giving thanks to God. How was the Philippians' gift to Paul "a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God" (v18)?
5. Reflect on the various areas of our lives, what are some recent things that:
 - cause our anxieties and worries;
 - occupy a big part of our minds and pursuits;
 - give us a sense of confidence and security;
 - we struggle to be generous with;What does it reveal about what our heart cherishes or the posture of our hearts towards these things? How might that reveal discontentment in our hearts?
6. Why is it a challenge for us to learn contentment like Paul and be generous like the Philippians?
7. In v19, Paul says "My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." What are the needs that God has already met in Christ Jesus?
8. Consider our needs, desires or anxieties in the present (Q5). How has what God has given to us in Christ reshaped our desires or spoken to our anxieties in Q5?

9. How does the world define contentment and generosity? How is it different from true contentment and generosity that flows from the gospel?

10. Read Philippians 4:6-7 and approach God in prayer, asking Him to speak to our anxieties. Then, consider some of the following ideas on how we can be generous. Is there anything that God might be placing on your heart?

- Finances
 - Give to the church
 - Give to or volunteer with Mercy & Justice ministries that RHC supports:
 - For volunteer opportunities, see the [RHC Mercy & Justice digital booklet here](#)
 - We have folks both within RHC and in the broader community who need shelter & refuge for various periods of time. If you have a spare room and would consider making it available to those in need, please let us know at mercyandjustice@rhc.org.sg. You may also consider participating in the homestay program of our partner [Safe Place](#), to give refuge to women with unsupported pregnancies. (Reach out to the RHC M&J team or to Safe Place directly for more info on the homestay programme).
- Physical Resources
 - Offer your home as a hosting location for CGs
 - Offer a space or room in your home for someone that might need it
- Time
 - Lend a listening ear to someone struggling, or pray for them
 - Reading the Bible with someone
 - Offer to facilitate a CG session this year
 - Support families with young children (i.e. babysitting) or fold singles into families

(Optional) Leaders' Note: Consider reading this excerpt from *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, by Jeremiah Burroughs:

It may be said of one who is contented in a Christian way that he is the most contented man in the world, and yet the most unsatisfied man in the world; these two together must needs be mysterious. I say, a contented man, just as he is the most contented, so he is the most unsatisfied man in the world. You never learned the mystery of contentment unless it may be said of you that, just as you are the most contented man, so you are also the most unsatisfied man in the world. You will say, 'How is that?' A man who has learned the art of contentment is the most contented with any low condition that he has in the world, and yet he cannot be satisfied with the enjoyment of all the world. He is contented if he has but a crust, but bread and water, that is, if God disposes of him, for the things of the world, to have but bread and water for his present condition, he can be satisfied with God's disposal in that; yet if God should give unto him Kingdoms and Empires, all the world to rule, if he should give it him for his portion, he would not be satisfied with that. Here is the mystery of it: though his heart is so enlarged that the enjoyment of all the world and ten thousand worlds cannot satisfy him for his portion; yet he has a heart quieted under God's disposal, if he gives him but bread and water. To join these two together must needs be a great art and mystery.

Though he is contented with God in a little, yet those things that would content other men will not content him. The men of the world seek after wealth, and think if they had thus much, and thus much, they would be content. They do not aim at great things; but if I had, perhaps some man thinks, only two or three hundred a year, then I should be well enough; if I had but a hundred a year, or a thousand a year, says another, then I should be satisfied. But a gracious heart says that if he had ten hundred thousand times so much a year, it would not satisfy him; if he had the quintessence of all the excellences of all the creatures in the world, it could not satisfy him; and yet this man can sing, and be merry and joyful when he has only a crust of bread and a little water in the world. Surely religion is a great mystery! Great is the mystery of godliness, not only in the doctrinal part of it, but in the practical part of it also.

Godliness teaches us this mystery, Not to be satisfied with all the world for our portion, and yet to be content with the meanest condition in which we are. When Luther was sent great gifts by Dukes and Princes, he refused them, and he says, 'I did vehemently protest that God should not put me off so; 'tis not that which will content me.' A little in the world will content a Christian for his passage. Mark, here lies the mystery of it, A little in the world will content a Christian for his passage, but all the world, and ten thousand times more, will not content a Christian for his portion. A carnal heart will be content with these things of the world for his portion; and that is the difference between a carnal heart and a gracious heart. But a gracious heart says, 'Lord, do with me what you will for my passage

through this world; I will be content with that, but I cannot be content with all the world for my portion.' So there is the mystery of true contentment. A contented man, though he is most contented with the least things in the world, yet he is the most dissatisfied man that lives in the world.

A soul that is capable of God can be filled with nothing else but God; nothing but God can fill a soul that is capable of God. Though a gracious heart knows that it is capable of God, and was made for God, carnal hearts think without reference to God. But a gracious heart, being enlarged to be capable of God, and enjoying somewhat of him, can be filled by nothing in the world; it must only be God himself. Therefore you will observe, that whatever God may give to a gracious heart, a heart that is godly, unless he gives himself it will not do. A godly heart will not only have the mercy, but the God of that mercy as well; and then a little matter is enough in the world, so be it he has the God of the mercy which he enjoys. In Philippians 4:7, 9 (I need go no further to show clear Scripture for this) compare verse 7 with verse 9: 'And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.' The peace of God shall keep your hearts. Then in verse 9: 'Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.' The peace of God shall keep you, and the God of peace shall be with you. Here is what I would observe from this text. That the peace of God is not enough to a gracious heart except it may have the God of that peace. A carnal heart could be satisfied if he might but have outward peace, though it is not the peace of God; peace in the state, and his trading, would satisfy him. But mark how a godly heart goes beyond a carnal. All outward peace is not enough; I must have the peace of God. But suppose you have the peace of God. Will that not quiet you? No, I must have the God of peace; as the peace of God so the God of peace. That is, I must enjoy that God who gives me the peace; I must have the Cause as well as the effect. I must see from whence my peace comes, and enjoy the Fountain of my peace, as well as the stream of my peace. And so in other mercies: have I health from God? I must have the God of my health to be my portion, or else I am not satisfied. It is not life, but the God of my life; it is not riches, but the God of those riches, that I must have, the God of my preservation, as well as my preservation. A gracious heart is not satisfied without this: to have the God of the mercy, as well as the mercy. In Psalm 73:25, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon the earth that I desire beside thee.' There is nothing in heaven or earth that can satisfy me, but yourself. If God gave you not only earth but heaven, that you should rule over sun, moon and stars, and have the rule over the highest of the sons of men, it would not be enough to satisfy you, unless you had God himself. There lies the first mystery of contentment. And truly a contented man, though he is the most contented man in the world, is the most dissatisfied man in the world."