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life goal: contentment

by Kris Swiatocho

What creates contentment? Is it our age? Marital status? Career? Material possessions? Our relationship with Christ? Perhaps it is all of the above for a time or a season. Or is it forever?

I believe contentment has come in many forms and in many places in my life. I am sure that when I was young and my mom would stop and let us eat ice cream before dinner—knowing it would spoil our appetite—that was contentment. I am sure as I walked down the aisle at my college graduation I was content. After all, I was out to conquer the world—or at least it seemed that way. I know what contentment was—it was at the great age of 28 when my business was really going places. I had more customers than I knew what to do with. Yes, that must have been contentment. Or perhaps it was when I turned 35, realizing that I would probably not marry nor have children but finding peace about it.

As I look back I can see that contentment came in many forms. However, true contentment—the kind that lasts longer than an ice cream cone, a party with your graduating friends, or one more customer with a big budget—was what I had been looking for all my life. To be honest, until I was around 35 I had never really known true contentment. Sure, there were many days of feeling safe in Christ. I had been saved a very long time (since my college years). There were many weeks and months of incredible contentment because of a Bible study or a wonderful Christian friendship that took me so much farther than my existing walk. But was this true contentment, the way I believe God was telling Paul to instruct us in Philippians 4:11-12: *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want?"* Paul do this? How was he able to be content in all situations? And how could I learn to be this? For me it has been simple. In the past I had lived a life that did not follow God and as a result brought discontent in several areas. So, obedience was the beginning. In Job 36:11, Job says, *"If they obey and serve him, they will spend the rest of their days in prosperity and their years in contentment."* Does this mean I will get a big car and a big house if I obey God, and these things will bring contentment? Some may think so, but I believe God is talking about much more. I believe it means prosperity in Christ. The key here is **fruit brings contentment.**

Now, I will agree that having the bills paid, a decent place to sleep and a car to drive does help in the stress area—but how much stuff and how big that stuff is does not bring contentment. The only thing that has worked in my life is to truly know our Lord and Savior. **To put Him first. To listen to Him. To follow Him. To understand Him. To serve Him. To have a direction led by Him.** Fruit will come as well as true contentment. When you have a direction...a goal...a purpose...that is directed by God because of your relationship with Him, you will produce an unbelievable amount of fruit.

Contentment comes from knowing you are doing God's work, His way. The fruit is evidence of this. Today, I have a great life. I have total contentment in my personal, professional and spiritual life. In fact, I can't wait to see what tomorrow brings! Do I get frustrated sometimes and wish I had a spouse, a different home, a different car? Sometimes... but those moments are only a fleeting instance, for I focus on what is written in Hebrews 13:5, *lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."*

Now, how can anyone ever be discontent knowing that our Lord is with us always? We know the end... so enjoy the journey.



About the author: Kris Swiatocho is the President and Director of [Thesinglesnetwork.org Ministries \(TSN\)](#) Raleigh, NC. TSN is a ministry for single adults, their leaders, and their pastors. TSN helps churches evaluate, develop, and support their single adult ministries through consulting, speaking, conferences, seminars, and leadership development activities.



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