

# Trusting God: The Journey and the Destination

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Story of when I was doing service work in Iowa and the GPS coordinates led me to an apple orchard. No service on my phone at the time and I drove back into Decorah Iowa until I had service.

**“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. Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. 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. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” (Phil. 4:10-13)**

Paul begins this text with an encouragement of rejoicing with the Philippians for their generous gifts sent by them through the hands of one of their own Epaphroditus. Who is the one who actually delivers this letter back to the Church in Philippi. He was rejoicing not primarily because of the gift that was given, but because it displayed their love for Paul and their partnership in the gospel.

Paul shows us this clearly in the preceding verses, which he uses as an opportunity to teach the Philippians and us how trusting God should be the destination, and then He shares the only route to get to this destination.

## Observation point

**True contentment is a state of being that is a byproduct of a wholehearted trust in God. Content- meaning to be satisfied or satiated with things as they are.**

Are we supposed to seek contentment as our destination? We can all have incorrect desires that have turned into destinations or goals set in the GPS of our hearts. Some of these desires can be easily identifiable as wrong or sinful... greed, lust, control, escape. But what if they are not inherently bad like a desire for love or to be loved, for purpose, or for contentment. These good desires when they turn into the destination itself will ultimately leave us unfulfilled and wanting more.

Paul, states that he has learned that he is **to be** content in verse 11 and also in verse 12 that states he has learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. How did Paul develop this ability to be content in whatever he faced?

Currently Paul is talking about receiving a generous gift from these Philippians... Which we could consider a time of abundance, but he has definitely faced being brought low and has

been in need. At this point in Paul's life as a Christian he has been imprisoned, shipwrecked, whipped, beaten, stoned. Yet with all these hardships he could confidently say in **2 Cor. 4:17-18. "For this light and momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison for we trust not in the things seen but the things unseen for the things seen are transient and the things unseen are eternal."** Paul had an unwavering trust in God and God's control over all things. What was the route by which Paul could have this unshakeable trust in God.

Paul shares the secret with us in verse 13 **"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."**

One of the most taken out of context verses in the bible, but one of the richest to shape how we view the world and circumstances. Not a blanket statement that we are to take mean, I can do all things... doesn't matter how hard I flap my arms I can't fly.

**This is meant to give us the path that leads to the destination of trusting God. It's through Jesus Christ, it's the Gospel!**

**God's Word says that "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved." (Eph. 2:4-5)**

If you are feeling the weight of being dead in your sin and trespasses this morning, turn and trust in the Savior Jesus Christ and the payment made in full for sin. Submit to Him as Lord of your life and follow Him!

Anyone who is feeling discontentment from the circumstances in your lives today take heed to Paul's solution and search your heart for anything that has taken the place of a trusting relationship with the Sovereign God of your salvation. Be strengthened in your heart and mind by the good news of Christ sacrifice for you freshly today. May this give a realigned perspective of whatever you are facing relationally, situationally, and emotionally so that you can confidently say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

**The solution for discontentment is the Gospel for the initial grace of our salvation and for the sustaining grace of daily lives in sanctification. By anchoring our heart in Christ continually we are given an eternal perspective that puts the temporal in its proper place.**