

Sunday, November 24, 2013—A Hearth of Thanksgiving: Thanksgiving the Key to Contentment

Introduction

- The last two weeks we have been studying about the connection between Grace, Thanksgiving, and Joy. We have seen the close connection between Grace and Thanksgiving in the Scriptures in terms of underlying Greek words, translation, as well as definitions.
- In addition, to observing that Thanksgiving is seedbed of Joy we also saw that it is necessary for a life of constant continual prayer.
- This week as the title suggests, we want to consider Thanksgiving as the key to contentment.

Defining Our Terms

- There are a variety of words in the New Testament that deal with the concept of contentment.
- Content—occurs 16 times in 16 verses in the KJB.
 - Mark 15:15—“to content the people” In this case the underlying Greek word means to do that which gives stratification or is satisfactory.
 - Luke 3:14—“be content” In this case the underlying Greek word means to suffice one’s self with, i.e., to be stratified or content with. The word is variously translated: be content (3x), be sufficient (2x), be enough (1x), suffice (1x), and content (1x)
 - II Corinthians 12:9—“my grace is sufficient”
 - Philippians 4:11—“content” In this case the underlying Greek word means sufficient in one’s self self-adequate, needing no aid, hence contented. The Greek word only occurs in this verse.
- Contentment—occurs 1 time in 1 verse in the KJB.
 - I Timothy 6:16—“contentment”
- *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* offers the following meanings of English words related to contentment. For the record there are 13 English words steaming form the root word content.
- Content--quiet; not disturbed; having a mind at peace; easy; satisfied, so as not to repine, object, or oppose (I Tim. 6). 1) To satisfy the mind; to make quiet, so as to stop complaint or opposition; to appease; to make easy in any situation (Mark 15:15); 2) To please or gratify.

- Contented--Satisfied; quiet; easy in mind; not complaining, opposing or demanding more. The good man is contented with his lot.
- Contentedness--State of resting in mind; quiet; satisfaction of mind with any condition or event.
- Contentless--Discontented; dissatisfied; uneasy.
- Contently—in a contented way.
- Contentment—1) Content; a resting or satisfaction of mind without disquiet; acquiescence. 2) Gratification.
- It is important to note that the following English words denote a lack of contentment: contention, contentious, contentiously, contentiousness

Thanksgiving The Key to Contentment

- Matthew 15:32-39—notice how the crowds not enough became more than enough through the giving of thanks. Don't misunderstand me what I am after here is the principle. I am not suggesting that God is working this way during the dispensation of Grace. No matter how much or how intently you pray over your food God is not going to physically multiply it as he did here. If you are counting in this sort of divine working to furnish your Thanksgiving table this Thursday you will be sadly disappointed.
- I am after the principle here. When give thanks for what we currently have and possess we are able to find our stratification and contentment in what and who we already are not in what we do not currently possess.
- Philippians 4:6—as we saw last week all our prayers and requests are to be offered with thanksgiving.
- Psalms 100:4—thanksgiving is the proper heart attitude to enter his courts with.
- I Thessalonians 5:17-18—as we pray without ceasing Paul instructs us to give thanks IN every circumstances or situation.
- It is giving of thanks IN EVERYTHING that teaches us to be content. WE ARE NOT BY NATURE CONTENTED PEOPLE! CONTENTMENT IS A LEARNED PROCESS.
- Philippians 4:11—Paul had to learn to be content in “whatsoever state” state he found himself. Paul had to learn to be content regardless of his circumstances.

- According to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* the English word “learn” means “To gain knowledge of; to acquire knowledge or ideas of something before unknown.”
- Philippians 4:12—Paul “learned” to be content regardless of his circumstances.
- Please notice that within the context of the passage Paul’s learning to be content in verses 11-12 does not happen apart from his IN EVERYTHING offering PRAY AND SUPPLICATION WITH THANKSGIVING in verse 6.
- Through the process of practicing I Thessalonians 5:18 “IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS” in his pray and thought life Paul LEARNS to be content regardless of the situation he finds himself in.
- A Heart of Thanksgiving is able to turn Paul’s WANT or NOT ENOUGH into CONTENTMENT.
- Philippians 4:13—the “all things” in this verse has a context in verse 12. Paul can handle and face time of not enough as well as times of more than enough through Christ working in Paul.
- Today in this dispensation when you pray and give thanks over the seven loaves of bread and few small fish God will physically multiply them he will teach us to be content with what we have regardless of the number.