

The Mission Field: Married or Single, Will I Be Content?

Marian Townes

I. Introduction

“Beware of anything that competes with loyalty to Jesus Christ. The greatest competitor of devotion to Jesus is service for Him The one aim of the call of God is the satisfaction of God, not a call to do something for Him. We are not sent to battle for God, but to be used by God in His battlings. Are we being more devoted to service than to Jesus Christ?” -Oswald Chambers

II. Contentment according to the world (Gen 13, 14, 19). We see the picture of Lot in the Old Testament. He chose the best, according to the world (13:10,11).

- A. Good job and good wages (19:1).
- B. Money for dining out and stylish clothes (19:3).
- C. Keeping up with peers in material things.
- D. A big, well-furnished home.

III. Contentment according to God’s Word.

- A. Wages (Lk 3:14). Are the figures of a salary important to you?
- B. Food and clothing (1 Tim 6:6-8; Prov 17:1). Would you be content if everything was taken from you but food and clothing?
- C. Such things as you have (Heb13:5). Do you compare your possessions with those which others have?
- D. Much or little (Phil 4:11-13; Prov 16:2). Can you honor the Lord with a little as with a lot?

IV. Roots of discontentment.

- A. Unconfessed sin (Ps 32:3-5).
- B. Self-centeredness (Phil 2:3-8).
- C. Anxiety (Phil 4:6-7).
- D. Anger (Eph 4:26; Prov 14:29).
- E. An unforgiving spirit (Eph 4:32; 1 Thess 5:15).

F. Fatigue/physical disorders (2 Cor 12:7-10; Ps 127:1-3).

G. Excuses (Exodus 3-4).

V. Results of discontentment (Genesis 16 and 21).

A. Jealousy.

B. Meanness.

C. Unhappiness.

D. Blaming others - justifying yourself.

E. Hindrance to the Lord's work.

VI. Roots of contentment.

A. Relationship to God (Rom 5:1; 1 Jn 5:11-13).

-Our peace is based on a right relationship with God. It is not conditioned on circumstances.

B. Knowledge of God's Word (Ps 119:11; Jn 16:1; Col 3:1-2).

VII. Results of Contentment.

A. Peace (Gal 5:22; Jn 14:27; 16:33; Phil 4:7, 13, 19; 2 Cor 12:9-10).

-The knowledge that a Christian has that God is present with him no matter the circumstances, no matter the conflicts indeed should bring peace, yes, to his innermost being.

1. Our peace has nothing to do with circumstances and everything to do with knowing we have a right relationship with God.
2. Our peace has nothing to do with daily challenges or crises, and everything to do with knowing that our times are in God's hands.
3. Our peace has nothing to do with the conditions of our life, and everything to do with knowing that God is all-sufficient.
4. Our peace is an inward repose and serenity of soul that indicates a heart at rest—regardless of our circumstances—as we place complete confidence in God minute by minute (A Woman's Walk with God by Elizabeth George).

B. Fruitful service (Gal. 5:22,23; 2 Cor. 9:8; Jn 15:7-8, 16; Rom 12:10-21).

- C. Example of the believer to others (2 Tim 2:15; Prov 31:10, 31).

VIII. Application.

A. How can I apply these things in my life (Joshua 1:8)?

1. Look to God's Word.
 - a. Read it (Rev 1:3).
 - b. Memorize it (Col 3:16).
2. Love God's Word.
 - a. Meditate upon it (Ps 119:97).
 - b. Delight in it (Ps 1:2).
3. Live God's Word.
 - a. Heed it (Re 1:3).
 - b. Teach it (Deut 6:6).

B. You need a goal. "The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul" (Pro 13:19).

-What is a goal? (Taken from Strategy for Leadership by E. R. Dayton and Ted W. Engstrom.)

1. A goal is a future event towards which we can measure progress.
2. A goal is a statement of faith.
3. A goal is something that we believe that we can accomplish.

C. How can a goal be measured?

1. It can be measured by time.
2. It can be measured by performance.

D. Why are goals valuable?

1. Goals give a sense of direction and purpose.
2. Goals promote enthusiasm.
3. Goals help us to evaluate our progress.

4. Goals force us to plan ahead.
5. Goals take the emphasis off activity and place it on output. It is not how much we do (activity) that counts, but what we get done (output).

E. What are some guidelines for writing goals?

1. A goal should have a date when it will be accomplished.
2. A goal must be measurable.
3. A goal needs to be supported by a plan
4. You must believe that you can do it.

F. Write out some practical actions you can begin doing immediately to know and experience contentment in your life today. Set a pattern for discipline from God’s Word.

Perhaps the following will help you to get started by establishing a goal for Scripture memory.

I plan to memorize _____

I plan to start on _____

I will have memorized this passage/verses by _____

I will be accountable to _____

Steps I plan to follow: _____

Ask God to help you to remember; and as you undertake to memorize His Word each day, may your heart and mind turn to Him **praying**, “Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law” (Ps 119:18).

***Marian** served for 17 years with her husband, Dr. William E. Townes, in the former Belgian Congo and Central African Republic. When they returned from Africa in 1972, she taught at Inter-City Baptist Elementary School and was the principal there for 12 years before her retirement. She is currently actively involved in several ministries teaching women at Inter-City Baptist Church. Marian and her husband, Dr. Townes, have four children.*