

Sunday, August 21, 2016

“I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.” (Philippians 4:11-12)

“Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is certain* we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be *therewith* content.” (1 Timothy 6:6-8)

“*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*” (Hebrews 13:5)

A few months ago, I came across a book by the Puritan writer Jeremiah Burroughs called “The Rare Jewel Of Christian Contentment.” I will tell you that it was particularly helpful to me, because I have struggled with contentment, which I know is true for many of you as well. A lot of what I’m going to say today and, Lord willing, next week, is heavily influenced by that book. This week, I’ll be talking specifically about what contentment is, how we can be content, how Christ teaches us to be content, and why it’s an excellent thing. Next week, I plan to discuss why it’s a great evil to be discontented, some things that aggravate the sin of discontentment, and common excuses people use when they’re discontented. From Philippians 4:11-12 (quoted above), we can learn a few things. First of all, contentment is something that must be learned. It’s as if Paul is saying that he didn’t know the art of contentment at the beginning, but by the grace of God, he has now learned it. We can also learn that this idea of contentment is a mystery. When he says “I am instructed”, the word for “instructed” is derived from the word that we see translated “mystery” throughout the New Testament. It’s a mystery; it’s a hidden thing. The idea is that he has been taught fully about this mystery, and he has learned the lesson. Whatever state he’s in, whatever befalls him, wherever he finds himself, he has learned to be content. Now the word for “content” means to have a sufficiency in yourself. And the idea is that you are satisfied in your own heart that you have a sufficient portion of the grace of Christ. If you have learned to be content, you understand that God has made an everlasting covenant with you, you have an interest in Christ, and that is enough to satisfy you no matter what condition you’re in. And this is why we have Paul saying elsewhere that we are “as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” (2 Corinthians 6:10).

Contentment is the business of the heart. It’s not enough to not complain outwardly; you must also have a silent soul. In Psalm 62:1 when we read “My soul waiteth upon God”, the word there for “wait” means “to be silent.” Most people have enough self-control to keep quiet about their complaints for some time, but a discontented, turbulent soul will eventually bubble forth.

Contentment is not opposed to the following things:

1. We need to have a good sense of the affliction. We can't pretend the affliction is not there. We can't be exercised by an affliction if we aren't allowed to acknowledge it.
2. We can make an orderly making known of our complaint to God and loved ones. But not clamorous complaints. How else can we pray to God or help one another?
3. Lawfully seeking relief as long as we submit to God that it will be by His means and on His timeline.

It is, however, opposed to the following:

1. Murmuring against the hand of God.
2. An unsettled and unstable spirit, and distracting, heart-consuming cares that take our attention away from duties towards God and the relationships He has put us in. We ought to answer as Nehemiah answered Sanballat in Nehemiah 6:3 – “*I am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?”
3. Sinking discouragements and despair.
4. Sinful shiftings and shirkings to get relief and help. Like Saul going to the witch of Endor.
5. The rising of the heart in rebellion against God. This can happen even in the saints, especially under severe or lengthy afflictions.

When I'm talking about contentment, I'm talking about the frame of your spirit. The general tenor of your spirit should be to be content. Some people can be temporarily contented by hearing comforting words, but if your soul is not disposed to being content, that will not last. It must be habitual – you can't just be content once or twice, and you can't only be content when you happen to be in a good mood. Furthermore, the judgments of your heart have to be in line with the will of God, that is, you must be fully satisfied in your own judgment that whatever state you're in is by the hand of God and it is the best thing for your current condition of heart and mind. Note that even when you have that understanding, there still may be a lot of heart work left to do. If any of you have been in a situation where you know full good and well that it is the hand of God, but you are still discontented and you don't quite understand why, Psalm 42 would be a good psalm for you to read.

I am also making a distinction between people who are naturally disposed towards being content and those people who are content by the grace of God. When you look around you, you'll see people who, by their nature, will suffer silently or will have a “stiff upper lip” or will have a strength of natural reason so that they can talk themselves into being content. You will also see people who, by their nature, will let it all hang out. The former group of people may

appear to be content under trying conditions, but if it's not a godly contentment, it doesn't matter. Those people, without grace, are just as content when they are cursing God and sinning against Him. The contentment that comes by grace causes us to sanctify the name of God in every state that we are in. It means we freely submit to God and take pleasure in His disposal. We keep under His authority, majesty, sovereignty and power, and we see the good in every situation, and are pleased with it, because it is the hand of God. We should look at every state we're in through the lens of the sovereignty of God, understanding that He knows how to order things better than we ever could, and for all we know, we could have (and probably would have) been undone without it.

And it's not enough to be content in just some circumstances. We must be content in every condition. If we are in the depths of some affliction, one thought that we may tend to have is "any affliction would be better than the one I'm in right now." But you have to be content in the particulars of your own affliction. Likewise, we have to be content in whatever the time or continuance of the affliction, which God has appointed. We are not the disposers of the type or of the length of any condition we're in. Remember Paul:

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

Similarly, we must be content in whatever the variety and changes of our conditions are. It may be your experience that afflictions often don't come as singletons. That is, there may be one right after the other, and many simultaneously. Think of Job. You may have mighty upheavals in many areas of your life, like your livelihood, your health, your wealth, your name and reputation, your family and loved ones. These are areas that the devil zeroes in on and attacks, and we've often been warned about the danger of transition times. One sign of a contented spirit is that while you're in a sea of turmoil and vicissitudes, you remain steadfast and firm in your trust of God and are just as content now as you were before.

Finally, contentment is not the same as complacency. There are probably some things that need to change in your life, and you can't say that you're not going to do anything about it because you're happy and content with how things are now. For example, if you aren't serving God as you should be (and none of us are), there is work to be done there.

To summarize these last several points, Burroughs says, “Contentment is the inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, freely submitting to and taking pleasure in God’s disposal in every condition.” And “the doctrinal conclusion briefly is this: that to be well skilled in the mystery of Christian contentment is the duty, glory and excellence of a Christian.”

There is a great mystery in contentment. It’s a mysterious thing that a carnal heart can’t understand. And the way to contentment for a Christian is something that the world is wholly unacquainted with. How can we be sensible of an affliction, endeavor by lawful means to remove it, but yet be content with it? How can we have gracious joy and gracious sorrow at the same time? One mystery is that we can simultaneously be the most contented people, and yet the most unsatisfied people, on earth. By that I mean that we are supposed to be content with such things as we have, but we would be unsatisfied with all of the riches in the world. All the riches, honor and power of all the kingdoms on earth are not enough for our portion – we must have God. Having the peace of God is a great blessing for us, but that is not even enough – we must also have the God of peace (Philippians 4:7-9). We are thankful for the blessings of God but we are not completely satisfied with them alone – we need to also have the cause and source of those blessings.

**“Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.*”
(Psalm 73:25)**

So how can we, as believers in Christ, be content?

1. Subtract from your desires to make your desires and your circumstances equal. The root of contentment is having your circumstances and your heart even. For example, if God has put you in a position where maybe you don’t have as much money as you used to have, reduce your desires to match what God has been pleased to give you.
2. Add the burden of your sin to your heart. If your afflictions seem particularly burdensome, adding the burden of your sin will make those afflictions less burdensome. For example, if God has taken something from you, consider how you abused that thing when you had it and have angered God. Whatever condition you’re in, it’s a lot better than what you deserve.
3. We don’t remove the affliction so much as we change the affliction. What a natural man looks upon as an evil, we see as a spiritual benefit. A godly man will never get worse from an affliction; by grace, our afflictions are turned into great mercies.
4. Think about the duties required in your current circumstances, rather than dwelling on how you want your circumstances to be. Thinking of other circumstances (whether it be

your previous circumstances, or some other circumstances that you are coveting) is a dangerous temptation. You covet other circumstances, and you believe that you'll be content if only you could get what you want. Then if you get those circumstances, you are oftentimes just as far away from contentment as you were before. Looking at Acts 13:36, it says "David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on asleep." The word there for "will" means "counsel." The idea is that after David, in his own generation, had served the counsel of God, he fell asleep. And the counsel of God includes whatever circumstances He has been pleased to put you in. We likewise have a duty to serve the counsel of God in whatever generation we find ourselves in. Whatever circumstances you're in, God put you there by the wisdom of His counsel, so serve His counsel.

5. Make your will the same as God's will. This goes beyond a bare submission to His will, because a person can begrudgingly submit to something. I'm talking about understanding that whatever falls out in your life, you know it's the will of God, so bring your own will in line with that. "He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah." (Psalm 47:4).
6. Purge out the lusts and covetousness that dwell in our own hearts. For a worldly man, the only way he is going to be content about anything is if he can bring something in from the outside. But we need to get rid of things that are on the inside. "From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members?" (James 4:1).
7. Dwell upon the blessings of God. A godly man will find contentment in whatever he has, and in fact, oftentimes, when we have less, we are more content than when we had more. He often blesses us the greatest in the small things. Whatever we have, we should see it as a token of God's love for us. Whatever we have should be sanctified to us for good, meaning that whatever we have, we not only have it, but we see the blessing of God along with it. We see every little bit that we have as an earnest for all the glory reserved for us. Every comfort on earth is a forerunner to heaven, just as every earthly affliction for the wicked is a forerunner to hell. "Better *is* a little with righteousness than great revenues without right." (Proverbs 16:8).
8. Don't just recognize the blessings of God in the "good things," but see His blessings in all of His afflictions as well. "All the paths of the LORD *are* mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." (Psalm 25:10).
9. Remember the sufferings of Christ. He suffered in life and at His death for us. He subjected Himself to those evils to take away the curse that goes along with afflictions.

For example, are we demonized and marginalized and otherwise spoken evil of? So was Christ. Are we threatened, and jeered and scoffed at? So was Christ. Do we have some affliction of the body? So did Christ. And what are we compared to Him? Remember, He suffered all of those things to take the curse away from us, so even when afflictions befall us, they are not a curse.

10. Remember that we get our strength from Christ. “Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.” (Colossians 1:11). If you are under some affliction, don’t rest until you can make sure that this promise is made good in you. It’s not enough to just endure an affliction; prayerfully seek God to give you strength with all might, according to His glorious power, so that you are patient and longsuffering with joyfulness.
11. Make up all of your wants in God Himself. If we can really say “The LORD *is* my portion” (Lamentations 3:24), it won’t matter if we lose everything on earth; all of our losses will be made up in Him. What are all of these things on earth compared to God? Sometimes He will take things away from us because we’re wasting our affections on them when we should be turning our affections to Him. In Genesis 33, when Jacob met Esau with gifts, Esau initially turned him down and said “I have enough” (v. 9). Jacob responded back and ended by saying “I have enough” (v. 11). The difference is in the original language, because when Jacob said it, he was saying “I have all things.” It ought to be a great shame to us that Esau, a reprobate, can say “I have enough,” when we are discontented with what we have. Our answer should be “I have all things” because we have God.
12. A gracious heart gets contentment from the covenant that God has made with him. There is no condition that we can find ourselves in that we don’t have some promise or other in the scripture to help us. (Keep in mind that when applying a promise to yourself, God is still at liberty to chastise you as He sees fit because of your sins.) Remember that the kingdom of God is within us – “behold, the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21) – that is, there is such a manifestation of God in our souls that it is enough to content us. A man who is filled with those good things – the everlasting covenant and promises of God – will be a content man. A man who is constantly complaining has reason to fear for his soul because it’s a sign of an empty, graceless heart.

When we talk about the covenant, let’s look at 2 Samuel 23:5 – “Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire, although he make *it* not to grow.” My house might not be as I would have it, but what helps in

everything is the everlasting covenant. My house may not have the same blessings as other houses, but I have an everlasting covenant. I find disorder from time to time in my heart and in my house, but the everlasting covenant is ordered in all things. There is uncertainty in earthly things, but this everlasting covenant is sure. I may have salvation from temporal things, but my eternal salvation is in this covenant, and that is enough for me – that is all my desire. I may not grow and prosper as others, but I have my desire. One sign of grace is that any affliction will send you running to the everlasting covenant, like a scared child to a parent – nobody has to tell the child to do that; it's in his nature.

We also have particular promises all throughout the Bible. Sometimes we focus on these particulars, and forget that they are connected to the everlasting covenant, and thereby we miss a great deal of comfort. Often these promises are fulfilled in some spiritual way, and not necessarily as literally as we may think. I go to Luke 21 when I think about that: “*some of you shall they cause to be put to death... But there shall not an hair of your head perish.*” (Luke 21:16,18). Here are a few promises:

“When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” (Isaiah 43:2)

“There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.” (Joshua 1:5)

And Hebrews 13:5, which I quoted at the beginning as a reason for you to be content, references Joshua 1:5. The difference is, in the Greek, there are 5 negatives. It is as much to say “I will not, I will not, I will not, I will not, I will not leave you.” Every time you read the scripture and come across a promise, lay your hand on it and say, “this is part of my inheritance. This promise is for me.”

13. A Christian has contentment by realizing the glorious things of heaven to him. One drop of the sweetness of heaven can take away all the sourness and bitterness of all of the afflictions in the world:

“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

14. He has contentment by praying to God, opening and letting out his sorrows and fears to Him. Other men may lash out at people to make themselves feel better (we are all prone to it), but the people of God find peace and contentment in prayer.

Moving on, there are many lessons that Christ teaches us in His scripture that we must learn before we can be content. “They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.” (Isaiah 29:24).

1. The lesson of self-denial. You have to learn this lesson, or you have no business claiming the title of a “Christian.” You must learn that as a sinful creature, you are nothing (Galatians 6:3). You deserve nothing except Hell (Romans 6:23). You can do nothing (John 15:5). You are so vile that not only are you devoid of good, but you corrupt anything that enters your heart. In fact, you aren’t just devoid of good – you are contrary to good. If God has been pleased to cleanse you and give you gifts, the moment He would leave you to yourself, you would spoil and corrupt those gifts.

If you learn this lesson of self-denial, you will be abased in your own eyes (Matthew 23:12). You will account every affliction as little (that is, less than what you deserve), and every mercy as great (that is, undeserved). A discontented man is troubled because he doesn’t have what he wants; a self-denying man wonders that he has so much. A selfish man is only glad at the things he likes; a self-denying godly man delights in those things that suit God’s ends – he denies his own ends and is content at God’s ends. No man is as content as a self-denying man, and no man was as self-denying as Christ. If the King of Glory will come in the flesh and abase Himself and set that wonderful example for us, how much more should we abase ourselves when we have no right or claim to any good thing, except through Christ?

2. The lesson of the vanity of the creature. (Read Ecclesiastes). There is nothing in this world that can satisfy a godly man – it is all emptiness. A hungry soul who knows about eternity cannot be satisfied by the things of the world any more than a hungry man would be satisfied by opening his mouth and eating the wind. Your lack of contentment is not because you don’t have enough; it’s because you don’t have enough of the right stuff.

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you,

even the sure mercies of David.” (Isaiah 55:1-3)

3. The lesson of the one thing that is necessary. It is not necessary to have an abundance of worldly things. It is, however, necessary for me to be saved, to have my sins forgiven, to have God as my portion, etc. I may have many comfortable and pleasant things...but none of those are necessary. When your soul is taken up in the things that are necessary, it will not be so much troubled by other things; when your heart takes up the weighty matters of eternity vs. dwelling in creature comforts, the things on earth are not so important.

“And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:41-42)

4. The lesson of how your soul stands in relation to the world. We are here on earth as pilgrims, strangers, travelers, soldiers. We all know the verses (like 1 Peter 2:11 and 2 Timothy 2:3-4), but don't just repeat them rotely. Consider it – God has put us here temporarily. David used this as an argument to take his mind away from the things of the world and focus on better things:

“I *am* a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.” (Psalm 119:19)

When we leave our homes to go on a trip, things are usually not as comfortable, and we don't have as much, but we expect that and are content with it. Traveling simply is not comfortable - we desire to go home. We should look at our lives in the world in the same way. We are, as it were, only lodging here for a night. So, please don't get too worked up and discontented about the things that you don't have in this world – we will be leaving and going home shortly.

Likewise, we are in spiritual warfare, as soldiers of Jesus Christ. A worldly soldier goes through hardships and discomfort and danger, but it's expected, because that's part of being a soldier. In our warfare, though, we are combating much more dangerous enemies - the enemies of our souls and our eternal welfare. Unlike a worldly soldier, however, we know that victory is certain because it is through Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57).

5. The lesson of knowing your heart. We all know that “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9), but we also know that besides God, only the spirit of a man knows the things that are in him (see 1 Corinthians 2:11 and 1 Kings 8:38). The more you study your heart, the more you

understand where your discontentment lies – it is doubtless because of some corruption or disorder of your heart. The better you know your heart, the sooner you can quiet yourself when you start going down the path of discontentment. You will also have a better understanding of what best suits your condition. If you understand that your heart is inclined towards being prideful, for example, you will understand that whatever affliction that you're going through that has knocked you down a few notches is perfectly suited to you.

6. The lesson of the burden of a prosperous outward condition. Many men consider the glitter of prosperity, but they think little of the burden. There is a burden of trouble (1 Timothy 6:10). If you were more prosperous in worldly things, consider the problems that you would have in family, possessions, and dealings with men. You may think that rich men are happy, but you don't know about their troubles.

There is a burden of danger. The lure of prosperity invites the devil in with all of his temptations, which is a very great danger. Remember, it's hard for a rich man to enter heaven (Matthew 19:24). We see this danger in holy things, too. The children of Kohath had a high honor – they dealt in the holy things of the temple, and they had the first lot (Numbers 4:4, Joshua 21:10). But they had a more dangerous, heavier burden. They had to bear the holy things on their shoulders – all the other Levites used wagons and oxen (Numbers 7:6-9). And they had to make sure that they understood what their service was, because if they messed up, it was a death sentence (Numbers 4:17-20).

There is a burden of duty and account. The more you have, the more your duty is to serve God, and the greater the account you must give (see Luke 12:48). Don't get me wrong – if God has prospered you and put you into a position where you are able to serve Him in ways that other people may not be able to, that is a very honorable thing and a blessing for you, but it nevertheless has a burden associated with it. On the flip side, if you are discontented or covetous about that, consider that God might have put you into your current circumstances because you are not able to carry the burden.

7. The lesson of what a great and dreadful evil it is to be given up to one's heart's desires.

**“But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: *and* they walked in their own counsels.”
(Psalm 81:11-12)**

Often times the greatest curse that God can give is to give you the thing that you are coveting after. Like Amnon and Tamar in 2 Samuel 13, or when God sent the quails in Numbers 11. God will sometimes give one of His people up to their own desires for a

time as a chastisement, but if you see a person given wholly up to his heart's desires, that is one of the darkest signs of reprobation. Think about that the next time you are murmuring and rebelling against God and using unlawful means to try to change something that you are discontented with.

8. The lesson of the providence of God. He is sovereign and His providence is universal – even a sparrow doesn't fall to the ground without Him (Matthew 10:29). Your discontentment will not change the providence of God (Job 18:4). Your ignorance of how you fit in to the providence of God will not change the providence of God. There is an infinite variety of works in providence, and they are all ordered by God. Countless wheels, and wheels within wheels, making up one ultimate work of God. The one wheel that you might be discontented with and want to stop could affect a million other things that you can't begin to understand.

If you are discontented, it may be because you are ignorant of how God deals with His people in providence. In the ordinary course of things, His people will go through times of afflictions (1 Peter 4:12). Often when God intends the greatest mercy on one of his little ones, He brings them into the lowest conditions first. Think of Joseph coming out of the dungeon to be the 2nd in the kingdom, or David being hunted like a partridge in the mountains before becoming king, or even His own Son who was made perfect through sufferings (Hebrews 2:10).

The final thing I'm going to go over today is the excellence of contentment.

1. When we are content, we come to give God the worship that is due Him. The word for "worship" in Greek means to crouch down, like a dog before his master. We should bow down before Him and be content with the things He has given us and the circumstances He has put us in. And I am talking about soul worship – internal worship of God, which is worth more than any external worship (like coming to church). You can't come to church and then leave and be discontented the rest of the week.
2. In contentment, there is much exercise of grace. Meaning that when you are content, there are a lot of other graces involved, like faith, humility, love, patience, wisdom, and hope. Someone who is strong in grace will have a strong spirit, and will go steadily and possess their souls in patience. A strong soul doesn't whine and complain as others, but continues to bless God. There is nothing quite so comforting and glorious as seeing one of God's people living quietly and happily and contented, especially in the midst of adversity. Micah 5:5 says "this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land." What it means is that Christ will be the peace when the enemy comes on the scene. It's easy to have peace in your heart when there are no enemies around, but

those who have Christ in their heart can have peace even in the face of adversity.

3. By contentment, the soul is fitted to receive mercy. Often times God will deal with us in the same manner that we deal with children. If a child is throwing a fit, you won't give him what he wants, even if you already intended for him to have it. Likewise, God may withhold mercy from you until you are content and humble yourself. Isaiah 30:7 says "their strength is to sit still." That is, "you will not be delivered until you sit still."
4. Contentment makes us fit to do service to God. Unsteady, disturbed hearts are not fit to serve God. Usually if God will have us do a good service for Him, He first quiets our hearts. See, for example, Jeremiah 15:18-21 – "If you return...I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall, etc."
5. Contentment delivers us from an abundance of temptations. Burroughs says "the devil loves to fish in troubled waters." And we probably all know by experience that that is true. Being discontent is the root of a lot of sin. It's one of the things the devil looks for as he seeks whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). He looks where you are discontent and then tempts you. For example, are you discontented about being poor? The devil may tempt you to take unlawful means to get rich.
6. The abundant comfort in a man's life that contentment will bring. Nothing brings comfort like contentment. You don't have to depend on any creature for comfort because we depend on God. We know that everything we have and every condition we're in is for our own good as a result of the love of God for us (Romans 8:28). Contentment does not consist in getting what we desire, but rather in God fashioning our spirits to our conditions. There is more comfort in being content than in getting the things that you are discontented about not having. Some men think, "if I have this, then I can have that; and if I have that, then I can have the other, and so on, and then I will be content." But why not just be content now? Without a contented heart, you can get the thing that you desired, but you'd still be discontent about other things. Contentment will get you rest, joy and satisfaction in God, and is a great comfort and blessing upon the soul.

Lord willing, next week I will continue and discuss the evils of a murmuring spirit, aggravations of the sin of murmuring, and the excuses of a murmuring heart. I love you. Amen.