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## EMBRACING THE CALL

# You & Titus 2 Newsletter

APRIL 2021

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## *A Lesson in Contentment*

Contentment problems aren't always easy to diagnose. One reason might be our tendency to focus on the symptoms we are experiencing rather than the sin of discontentment that may be at the root. I must confess that this is an area of my sanctification process that God continues to refine!

Paul described the secret of contentment as a lesson he had learned.

Philippians 4:11-13 ESV

11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. 12 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. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

I recall a day I took a step forward in learning about the secret of contentment. I was getting ready for church while fretting over a situation that was not working out to my satisfaction. Maybe you have had a similar circumstance. I was drying my hair like I always do, just about standing on my head trying to get some extra body in my fine hair. I remember the next moment like it was yesterday. As I flipped my hair back over my face, I quoted Philippians 4:19, "And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." The words literally came out of nowhere, and I had no idea why I had thought of that verse. I concluded that it had no relevance to my "justified" fretting, so I simply continued to fret!

Later that morning, I stepped down from singing with the praise team and took my seat like always. I lifted my head, and on the large screen, in bold print, it read, "And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." As the sermon began, I felt as if I had been hit with a two-by-four. He would supply every need according to His riches and not my goals or plans. Why didn't I embrace the reality that His way was ultimately so much better.

I was discontent with my circumstances based on my own desires, not God's provision. He promised to provide for my needs, and I was acting much like a spoiled child at the candy rack of a checkout line. I had only applied Philippians 4:19 to my physical and financial needs. For the first time, I understood God gives His loving attention to my "every need." I was looking at my situation according to my limited understanding and my misguided desires. Simply put, I was discontent with circumstances that God had allowed and thoroughly understood. Why was I fretting about something out of my control? I was only responsible for my Christ-like response, which was not happening. The sin of discontentment was at the root of my struggle, deceptively hidden under my focus on the situation. God knows the details of my life and how they fit in the grand scheme of His will. He knows how He wants to use me and my testimony for His purposes. He knows the eternal consequence of every event. He knows how to supply my every need and not just sufficiently but abundantly according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. That's a lot of riches!! Could I be satisfied with that? Absolutely, but sometimes it is difficult to understand. But, I can trust that my circumstances are never bigger than my Father's faithfulness.

When you are tempted to be discontent, there are three things I'd like you to remember. First, you are in the process of sanctification. God is working in you for His glory, and you can only be satisfied in your soul when you learn to be content with God's provision in Christ Jesus. Second, you can do all things through Him who strengthens you (Philippians 4:13). Paul isn't talking about just the easy stuff (go back and read Philippians 4:13 in context). Third, if you have made Jesus the Lord of your life, it is all about His glory. Others are watching how you handle circumstances and it impacts how they view your faith. The situation you are fretting over may be the testimony you find most rewarding in eternity.

## Learning About Contentment

Apart from trusting God's provision as we obey His Word, there will always be something that can steal our peace. Contentment in God's plan requires the spiritual aptitude of trust. It can significantly impact every area of life. Yet, it is one of the hardest things to teach and train in the lives of younger women in a culture that is constantly promoting discontentment. Can you imagine what could happen for God's glory if every Christian woman in your church family could sincerely say, "I trust God with all of my life, and I am content in Christ."

The following Scripture passages and discussion questions can provide a conversation starter about a life of authentic contentment in Christ.

Proverbs 3:5-8 ESV

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

Isaiah 26:3 ESV

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

Discussion Questions:

- According to Proverbs 3:5, where should your heart put its trust? How do you think obedience in this would impact your contentment?
- You are told not to lean on your "own understanding." Why do you think it can tempt you to question the good and gracious provision of God?
- How can you determine if your root problem is discontentment by filtering your circumstances and thoughts through what Scripture says in Proverbs 3:6-7?
- Who gives "perfect peace" according to Isaiah 26:3? What is our responsibility so that we might enjoy God's peace?

## Trainer's Prayer List

Pray that they will beneficially love their husbands

Pray for their purity

Pray for their work at home

Pray that they will beneficially love their children

Pray for their hearts to show kindness

Pray for their self-control

Pray for wisdom in following their husband