

HOW CHRIST TEACHES CONTENTMENT

Jeremiah Burroughs. The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment (p. 86). Monergism Books. Kindle Edition.

2. THE VANITY OF THE CREATURE.

"That is the second lesson in Christ's school, which he teaches those whom he would make scholars in this art: the vanity of the creature, that whatever there is in the creature has an emptiness in it. 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' (Ecclesiastes 1:20; 12:8) is the lesson that the wise man learned: the creature in itself can do us neither good nor hurt; it is all but as wind.

"... My brethren, the reason why you have not got contentment in the things of the world is not because you have not got enough of them—that is not the reason—but the reason is, because they are not things proportionable to that immortal soul of yours that is capable of God himself. Many men think that when they are troubled and have not got contentment it is because they have but a little in the world, and that if they had more then they should be content."

Matthew 16:26 (ESV) ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?

Ecclesiastes 5:10 (ESV) ¹⁰ He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.

Isaiah 55:2 (ESV) ² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

John 4:13–14 (ESV) ¹³ Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

What will satisfy a person's heart?

3. A THIRD LESSON WHICH CHRIST TEACHES A CHRISTIAN WHEN HE COMES INTO HIS SCHOOL IS THIS: He teaches him to understand what is the one thing that is necessary, which he never understood before. You know what he said to Martha.

Luke 10:41–42 (ESV) ⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things,⁴² but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

"No matter how poor I am, I may have what is absolutely necessary: thus Christ instructs the soul."

"When the heart of a man has nothing to do, but to be busy about creature-comforts, every little thing troubles him; but when the heart is taken up with the weighty things of eternity, with the great things of eternal life, the things of here below that disquieted it before are things now of no consequence to him in comparison with the other—how things fall out here is not much regarded by him, if the one thing that is necessary is provided for."¹

What is the one thing that is necessary?

¹ Jeremiah Burroughs. The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment (p. 94). Monergism Books. Kindle Edition.

4. THE SOUL COMES TO UNDERSTAND IN WHAT RELATION IT STANDS TO THE WORLD. By that I mean as follows, God comes to instruct the soul effectually through Christ by his Spirit on what terms it lives here in the world, in what relation it stands. ... God has set me in this world, not as in my home but as a mere stranger and a pilgrim who is travelling to another home, and that I am here a soldier in my warfare, I say, a right understanding of this is a mighty help to contentment in whatever befalls one.

"... the truth is, we are all in this world but as seafaring men, tossed up and down on the waves of the sea of this world, and our haven is Heaven; here we are travelling, and our home is a distant home in another world.²

Psalm 119:19 (ESV) ¹⁹ I am a sojourner on the earth; hide not your commandments from me!

1 Peter 2:11 (ESV) ¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

2 Timothy 2:3 (ESV) ³ Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

Where in the world can we find what it truly good?

5. CHRIST TEACHES US WHEREIN CONSISTS ANY GOOD THAT IS TO BE ENJOYED IN ANY CREATURE IN THE WORLD. ... though there is a vanity in the creature in itself ... yet there is some goodness in the creature, some desirableness. Now wherein does this consist? It consists not in the nature of the creature itself, ... but ... in its reference to the first being of all things: this is a lesson that Christ teaches. If there is any good in wealth or in any comfort in this world ... it has reference to God, ... that by these creatures somewhat of God's goodness might be conveyed to me, and I may have a sanctified use of the creature to draw me nearer to God, that I may enjoy more of God, and be made more serviceable for his glory in the place where he has set me: this is the good of the creature.³

James 1:17 (ESV) ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

1 Chronicles 29:10–14 (ESV) ¹⁰ Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: "Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. ¹¹ Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. ¹² Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. ¹³ And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. ¹⁴ "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you."

1 Timothy 6:17 (ESV) ¹⁷ As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

Psalm 107:8–9 (ESV) ⁸ Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man! ⁹ For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

Psalm 103:1–5 (ESV) ¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! ² Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, ³ who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, ⁵ who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalm 100 (ESV) A Psalm for giving thanks. ¹ Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! ² Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! ³ Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. ⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! ⁵ For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

How can a blessing from God that is given by money in this world, or other blessings in this world become a reason to worship God?

² Jeremiah Burroughs. The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment (p. 95-96). Monergism Books. Kindle Edition.

³ Jeremiah Burroughs. The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment (p. 99). Monergism Books. Kindle Edition.