



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: **Cultivating Contentment**
Speaker: **Sherin Swift – Connections & Equipping Pastor**
Scriptures: **Philippians 4:10-20**

Thanks for Their Gifts

¹⁰ I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

¹⁴ Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. ¹⁵ Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; ¹⁶ for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. ¹⁷ Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. ¹⁸ I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

²⁰ To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Pastor Sherin continues our sermon series “You Can’t Serve Two Masters” by reflecting on contentment. How can contentment help us follow Jesus more closely?

Sermon Questions:

1. The ads we are bombarded by are constantly sowing discontentment and cultivate a sense of discontentment. Have you noticed such an impact on your life from viewing social media or advertisements?
2. Where is it hard for you to say “enough” in your life? Ex. where you live, what you own, experiences, etc. How did your family of origin practice or not practice a culture of contentment?
3. Pastor Sherin mentioned that contentment is cultivated as an inward discipline, that is not based on outward circumstances. From prison, the apostle Paul writes this letter talking about contentment and being fully satisfied. Brainstorm as a group - what practices could help cultivate contentment in our lives? What could it look like to steward wealth and live out of contentment? What might contentment look like in thought, word, deed, in your inner being?

4. The costs of feeding our discontentment often is paid by many we may not see - i.e. Those unjustly working mining for minerals so that we can have our gadgets. Contentment is a way to live justice in this world and contain the power and pull of money within boundaries. Talk through this and discuss incorporating practicing simplicity in your life as a way to cultivate contentment. In Richard Foster's book, *Celebration of Discipline*, he names 10 practical ways to practice simplicity. Is there one you sense an invitation from God to try this week?
 - First, buy things for their usefulness rather than their status.
 - Second, reject anything that is producing an addiction in you.
 - Third, develop a habit of giving things away.
 - Fourth, refuse to be propagandized by the custodians of modern gadgetry.
 - Fifth, learn to enjoy things without owning them.
 - Sixth, develop a deeper appreciation for the creation.
 - Seventh, look with a healthy skepticism at all "buy now, pay later" schemes.
 - Eighth, obey Jesus' instructions about plain, honest speech
 - Ninth, reject anything that breeds the oppression of others.
 - Tenth, shun anything that distracts you from seeking first the kingdom of God.

5. Read Proverbs 30:7-9 and Deuteronomy 8:17-18 together and share what you notice. Consider closing in prayer using these passages to frame your prayer.