**The Secret of Being Content**

**The Word**

Read together Philippians 4:10-13

**The Big Idea**

Through all the circumstances of life, Paul invites us into a practice of contentment that comes from dependence on Christ and drawing on our relationship with him.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. On Sunday we talked about different areas of life where we can experience plenty and need. In what area of your life have you struggled with discontentment? A lot was said on Sunday about discontentment. What did you relate to and what would you add to that based on your own experience?

2. Paul had to “learn” contentment through experience. Can you share a time in your life where you learned to be content through experience over time? What were the most important perspectives and lessons through that time?

3. Paul’s contentment came from a radical dependence on Jesus: “I can do all these things through him who strengthens me” (v. 13). Practically speaking, what do you think that would look like for you at this time in your life?

4. Is there anything specific you feel called to do or embrace as a result of Sunday’s message?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. The Context (v. 10)

 A. The Philippians have sent a financial gift through Epaphroditus (v. 17)

B. Paul wants to communicate to them that 1) he is grateful for their generous gift and 2) he doesn’t need the gift because he has learned to be content no matter what

II. The spectrum of human experience (v. 11-12)

A. Paul articulates the full spectrum of human experience from times of plenty, wealth, and abundance to times of poverty, need, and want

B. Each of us finds ourselves at different points in that spectrum in different areas of our lives (financial, relational, health, opportunity, freedom, etc.)

III. Discontentment

 A. Discontentment lies at the very heart of the fall of Adam and Eve

 B. In OC in 2018 in a land of plenty, many live with hearts full of discontentment

 C. Discontentment is often comparative and relative to other people’s situations

D. Discontentment is harmful to the human heart: It robs us of joy, it is insatiable, it affects are relationship with others and our relationship with God

IV. Paul’s secret of contentment

A. Contentment is being satisfied with what you have. It’s living joyfully with life exactly as it is, not as could be

B. Paul had to “learn” contentment (v. 11-12). It didn’t come automatically to him but had to be learned through experience

 C. “I can do all of this through him who strengthens me”

 1. Paul’s secret is a radical dependence on Jesus in all circumstances

2. The 1st century Stoic philosophers found contentment through self-sufficiency and drawing on their own inner resources. Paul turns that notion on its head as he finds contentment through Christ-sufficiency and complete dependence on him.

D. Jesus was everything for Paul (see Philippians 1:21 and 3:8)

1. If you make Jesus your treasure and your satisfaction than you can experience contentment no matter the circumstances because what brings your heart contentment can never be taken away

2. If you make something else your treasure and satisfaction (wealth, job, health, relationships, etc.) then your heart is in danger of losing contentment.

E. Finding contentment in times of poverty and need (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

Times of need provide us with opportunities to learn that Christ’s grace alone is enough

F. Finding contentment in times of plenty (1 Timothy 6: 17-29)

1. Times of plenty provide us with an opportunity to not become arrogant or fix our hope on things, but to put our hope on God.

2. Times of plenty provide us with opportunities to be grateful for the many blessings God is bringing into our lives (instead of feeling guilty for them)

 3. Times of plenty provide us with an opportunity to be generous to others

V. Conclusion

 A. Practice living in the “enoughness” of Jesus’ grace and his provision

B. He may not always provide all that we want, but we can be content that he is enough and will provide us with enough