

Introduction: What would it take for you to be happy?

The problem: The horizon is always moving.

Two historical solutions:

1. Conquer, achieve, and acquire until satisfied.

2. Desire less and less until it doesn't matter.

The Question: How can we be happy and satisfied...today?

The Answer:

Philippians 4:10-13

The Occasion: A “Thank You” Note

“I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.”

Philippians 4:10 (NIV)

“I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.”

Philippians 4:11 (NIV)

“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.”

Philippians 4:12 (NIV)

“I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.”

Philippians 4:13 (NIV)

The Conclusion: Happiness is not a thing to be achieved, but a _____
to be discovered.

How?

Four principles – Four practices:

Principle #1 – Genuine happiness is not dependent on our circumstances.

➤ Practice = _____ Philippians 4:10

Principle #2 – Genuine happiness is an attitude we learn, not a thing we achieve.

➤ Practice = _____ Philippians 4:11

Principle #3 - Prosperity does not have the power to give us happy; nor poverty the power to take it away.

➤ Practice = _____ Philippians 4:12

Principle #4 - Only Christ has the power to give us a happiness that transcends all life's variables.

➤ Practice = _____ Philippians 4:13

Conclusion:

Contentment is not passive acceptance of the status quo, but the positive assurance that God has, and will, supply all of one's needs, and the consequent release from unnecessary desires or worry.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it so difficult to be genuinely content? What factors in our world make this so? What factors in our hearts make this so?
2. Why are both historical positions toward happiness doomed to failure?
3. Walk through each of the Principles and Practices and discuss how they relate to your present circumstances and attitudes about being happy and content.
4. What action step will you take to reflect obedience to God's provision for your genuine happiness?
5. Take time to pray for one another in your group. Ask God to help each one embrace His game plan and timing, for a life of contentment, satisfaction, and happiness.