

More Than Enough: The Macedonian Model of Generosity

"...an outpouring of pure and generous gifts."
2 Corinthians 8:2b (Message Translation)

Monday, July 20, 2026

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The Church Business Administration Network

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The Macedonian “Condition”: *Rock Bottom, but Overflowing with Joy*



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Changing the Image of Philanthropic Generosity

One key factor EVERY successful stewardship ministry is Changing the Image of Philanthropic Generosity. ALL believers regardless of economic status or condition in life can be a philanthropist and giver generously to the Lord.



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The Condition of the Macedonian Philanthropists



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The Macedonian “Condition”

- Greek Translation: “a great testing of affliction” and “a severe test consisting of afflictions” that proves someone’s worth or genuineness.
- *Thlipsis* – pronounced “*thleep-sis*” meaning distress and pressure. Found nine times in 2 Corinthians referring to the harassment that God’s people experienced at the hands of the world.
- The severe trial that the Macedonian churches experienced left them in a condition of *extreme poverty*, “down-to-the-depth poverty”, “rock bottom” poverty.



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“Rock Bottom” Yet “Overflowing with Joy”

² In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.
2 Corinthians 8:2



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The Macedonian Condition: “Rock Bottom” Yet “Overflowing with Joy”

2 Corinthians 8:2 (NIV)

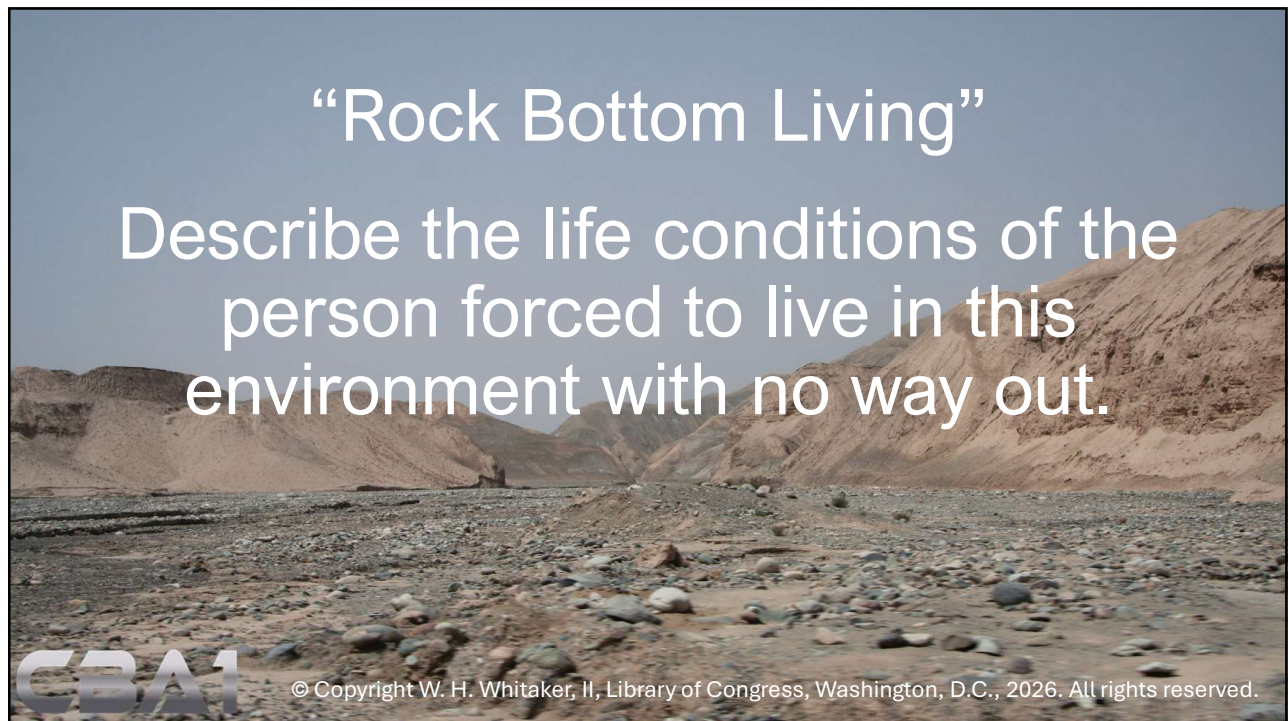
*“In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.”
(NIV)*

“Fierce troubles came down on the people of those churches, pushing them to the very limit. The trial exposed their true colors: They were incredibly happy, though desperately poor. The pressure triggered something totally unexpected: an outpouring of pure and generous gifts.” (Message Translation)

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“Rock Bottom Living”

Describe the life conditions of the person forced to live in this environment with no way out.



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“Rock-Bottom” Living

Name life events
that can sometimes
cause churches
and followers of
Christ to hit
“Rock-Bottom”.



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“Rock Bottom” Yet “Overflowing with Joy”

*How can you hit “rock-bottom”, but still live in
God’s overflow?*

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2 Corinthians 8:1-7

(Message Translation)

¹ Now, friends, I want to report on the surprising and generous ways in which God is working in the churches in Macedonia province.

^{2a} Fierce troubles came down on the people of those churches, pushing them to the very limit.

^{2b} The trial exposed their true colors: They were incredibly happy, though desperately poor.

^{2c} The pressure triggered something totally unexpected: an outpouring of pure and generous gifts.



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2 Corinthians 8:1-7

(Message Translation)

³ I was there and saw it for myself. They gave offerings of whatever they could—far more than they could afford!

⁴ —pleading for the privilege of helping out in the relief of poor Christians.



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2 Corinthians 8:1-7

(Message Translation)

⁵ This was totally spontaneous, entirely their own idea, and caught us completely off guard. What explains it was that they had first given themselves unreservedly to God and to us. The other giving simply flowed out of the purposes of God working in their lives.

⁶ That's what prompted us to ask Titus to bring the relief offering to your attention, so that what was so well begun could be finished up.

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2 Corinthians 8:1-7

(Message Translation)

⁷ You do so well in so many things—you trust God, you're articulate, you're insightful, you're passionate, you love us—now, do your best in this, too.

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Macedonian Generosity

- Not the absence of “trouble”.
(see 2 Corinthians 8:2^a)
 - *Name different types of trouble Christians sometimes experience.*
- Occurs in the presence of various types of “poverty”.
(see 2 Corinthians 8:2^b)
 - *Describe types of “poverty” other than financial poverty that Christians sometimes experience.*
- Generosity is the result of “spiritual joy” and not “financial wealth”.
(see 2 Corinthians 8:2^c)
 - *Macedonian Generosity is done by those who “will” and not those who “can”.*



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Steps to Macedonian Generosity

#1 Give “yourself” to the Lord BEFORE you give your money to the church. (8:5).

#2: Give even when you are in a condition that the Bible calls “fierce troubles” and “*a great trial of affliction*” (8:2a).

#3: Have *abundant joy* even though you are afflicted. (8:2b)

#4: Be “liberal” in your giving despite your economic status and being in “*deep poverty*”. (8:2c - 3)



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Steps to Macedonian Generosity

#5: Give freely and willingly in spite of your financial woes (8:3).

#6: Be opportunistic in your generosity asking and looking for opportunities to contribute to the blessings of others (8:4).



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The Macedonian's
Philanthropic Generosity

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Philanthropist

- A person who seeks to promote the welfare of others, especially by the generous donation of money to good causes.
- Someone who donates substantial resources, often including time and expertise but always including substantial financial resource, to a particular cause, area or social issue. They do this in a way that is focused, sustained and designed to support meaningful change within a given issue or problem.



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Philanthropy

What does a philanthropist look like?

What type of job do they usually have?

How much money do they usually have?

What does a philanthropic church look like?



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Your Church as a Macedonian Model of Generosity

August/2026
“Inreach” Teaching Month

Use the *Give Mitely* lesson from the July 6th
Servant Leaders’ Classroom and tonight’s
Macedonian Generosity lesson to teach **Your
Church** how to increase giving and ministry
participation in the 4th quarter of 2026.



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Give Mitely “Inreach” Stewardship

2027 Ministry Offerings

*I would like to pledge my time & talent to God
through the following ministries:*

Church Officers Positions

- ☐ Music Committee
- ☐ Church Clerk
- ☐ Trustee
- ☐ Sunday School Superintendent

Evangelism & Outreach Ministries

- ☐ Food Pantry Ministry
- ☐ Missions/Evangelism Ministry
- ☐ Newsletter Ministry
- ☐ Social Justice Ministry

Food Service Ministries



Spiritual Development Ministries

- ☐ Bible Study Set-up (Laptop, LCD Projector, Hand-outs, etc.)
- ☐ Children’s Church Ministry*
- ☐ Sunday School
- ☐ Sunday School Teachers
- ☐ Curriculum Team
- ☐ Intercessory Prayer
- ☐ Couple’s Ministry
- ☐ Men’s Ministry
- ☐ Singles Ministry
- ☐ Sunday Nursery *
- ☐ Women’s Ministry

Stewardship Ministries

- ☐ Stewardship Team
- ☐ Helping Hands Volunteer Ministry

I do not see my ministry interest listed, but would like to serve in the following ministry areas:

- ☐ Ministry Area: _____
- ☐ Ministry Area: _____
- ☐ Ministry Area: _____

***Nine (9) month active membership in My Church and background required for leadership in these ministries.**

Contact Information (One form per person.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Give Mitely “Inreach” Stewardship

Membership Talent Offerings

I would like to offer my talents as a service to God and My Church. My talents are:

- ☐ Accounting/Bookkeeping
- ☐ Acting, Drama, and Theater
- ☐ Architects
- ☐ Arts & Crafts
- ☐ Auto Cleaning/Detailing
- ☐ Bible Study
 - ☐ Curriculum Writing
 - ☐ Set-up (LCD, Laptop, etc)
 - ☐ Youth Teaching
- ☐ Carpenters

- ☐ Exterminating
- ☐ Electrical
- ☐ Fire Protection
- ☐ Floor Care/Carpet Cleaning
- ☐ Home Improvement
- ☐ Painting
- ☐ Plumbing

Floral Designs/Gardening

- ☐ Food Service/Catering
- ☐ Graphic Design & Calligraphy
- ☐ Greeters, Host/Hostess
- ☐ Health & Fitness
- ☐ Interior Designers/Decorators
- ☐ Internet/Website Services

My Church Name

My Gift Offerings
for Christ Jesus

January 1–March 31, 2027

*What can I give to Jesus for
all He has done for me?*



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The Spirit of Macedonian Generosity 2 Corinthians 8:8-12

⁸ **I am not commanding you**, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet **for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.**

¹⁰ And here is my judgment about what is best for you in this matter. Last year you were **the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so.**



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The Spirit of Macedonian Generosity

2 Corinthians 8:8-12

¹¹ Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means.

¹² For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.



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Your Church

as a Macedonian Model of Generosity

September/2026
“Commitment Month”

I commit to unreservedly serving God and fulfilling God’s Will

- ___ “First Fruits” Givers to start consistently giving the amount God has called you to give on a weekly/monthly basis.
- ___ “Disciples” to start attending Sunday worship and Bible Study in **Your Church** on a weekly basis.
- ___ “Evangelists” bringing 1 visitor/new member to **Your Church’s** Sunday Worship and Bible Study on a monthly basis.



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Your Church

“Give Mitely” Plus Offering Months
October – December/2026



Donate \$1
-a-Day
to CBA1



Give 1 Prayer
-a-Week
for CBA1



“Touch” 1
Church/Organization
-a-Month
to Attend CBA1

² He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. ³ So He said, “Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all... (Luke 21:2-3)

¹³ ...I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. (John 14:13-14)

⁷ The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, “Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.” ⁸ So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. (1 Kings 19:7-8)



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Your Church

“Give Mitely” 2027 Commitment Months
November & December/2026

Your Annual Giving Goal	Weekly Giving	Monthly Giving	Quarterly Giving
\$ 500.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 42.00	\$ 125.00
\$ 750.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 63.00	\$ 189.00

...decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. “For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.”

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NLT)



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The Macedonian Spirit of Generosity

Generosity requires that our desire to bless others be stronger than our desire to satisfy self. Whenever we don't give to God it is because we have made what we want more important than what others need.



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When the time comes for you to give back to the Lord, there is a spiritual battle that is waged within your spirit. On one side is “*The Desire to Satisfy Self*”. On the other side is “*The Call of God to Bless Others*”.

Which one most often prevails in your spirit?
Which one most often prevails amongst most believers?
How can believers move from *The Desire to Satisfy Self* to *The Call of God to Bless Others*?



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Contentment: The Call of God to Bless Others

A peaceful happiness. Being pleased and fulfilled. No feeling of emptiness nor a lack or need for more. Being happy with what you have.

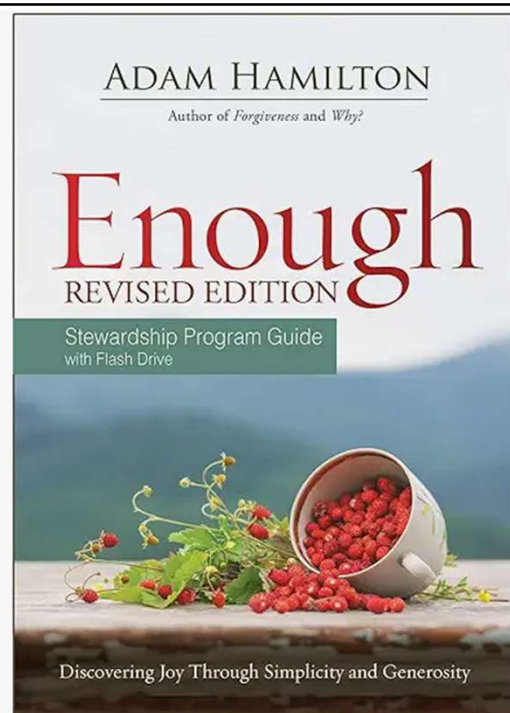


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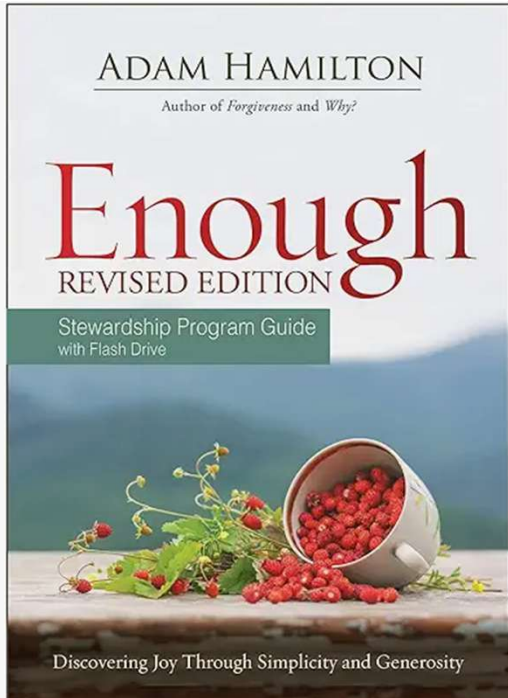
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"It is right to be contented with what we have, but never with what we are. In other words, it is a positive motivator to be discontent with our moral character, our spiritual life, our pursuit of holiness, our desire for justice, and our ability to love. These are areas in which we should continue to grow and improve."

(pgs. 66-70)



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Chapter 3

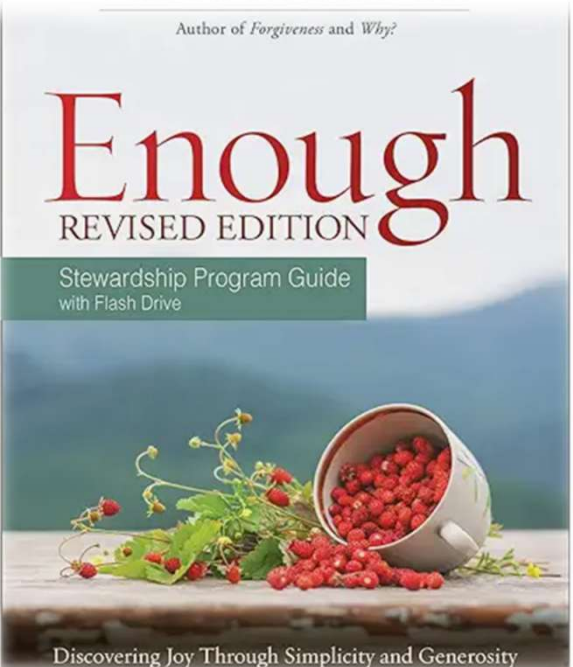
How to Cultivate Contentment

1. Remember that it could be worse.
2. Ask yourself, “How long will this make me happy?”
3. Develop a grateful heart.
4. Ask yourself, “Where does my soul find true satisfaction?”

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How to Simplify Your Life

1. Set a goal of reducing your consumption and choose to live below your means.
2. Before making a purchase, ask yourself “Do I really need this?” and “Why do I want this?”
3. Use something up before buying something new.
4. Plan low-cost entertainment that enriches.
5. Ask yourself, “Are there major changes that would allow me to simplify my life?”



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From Where Contentment Come?

A Christian's joy does not depend on circumstances or things. Christian joy comes from a relationship with God that is stronger than our relationship with people and things. It is our relationship with Christ that enables us to have joy apart from either poverty or prosperity.



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What is the Secret to Being Content?

Contentment is not complacency, nor is it a false peace based on ignorance. The complacent believer is unconcerned about others, while the contented

Christian wants to share his/her blessings.

Contentment is not an escape from the battle, but rather an abiding peace and confidence in the midst of the battle. "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" ([Phil. 4:11](#)). Two words in that verse are vitally important—"learned" and "content."

[The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament](#)

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Philippians 4:11

¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need, for **I have learned to be content** whatever the circumstances.

The Greek word for “learned” in vs. 11 is *emathon* which means to arrive at a fact of understanding.

The “learning” comes from experience, often with the implication of *reflection*.

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Philippians 4:12

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.

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Philippians 4:12

12b ...I have learned the secret of being content...

The Greek meaning for “learned” in Philippians 4:12 is to be instruct, taught, and disciplined. To learn a lesson.

Someone taught Paul the secret of being content!



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Philippians 4:12-13

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.

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The origin and root word for “learned” means
“self-reliant” and “self-sufficient”.

Paul is “self-reliant” in Philippians 4:12
because of his relationship with Christ in
Philippians 4:13.



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What Contentment is Not

It is not...

- Complacency
- Stagnancy
- Being oblivious truth and reality
- False reality
- Inability to care about others
- A lack of desire to live better



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Content vs. Complacent

Content = Thankful, happy, and at peace with where you are. Content does not mean that you have no desire for improvement and growth in your life.

Complacent = Satisfied with where you are. It neither means that you are thankful nor does it mean that you desire better.



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Discontent

- A lack of contentment; dissatisfaction with one's circumstances.
 - Disappointment, dissatisfaction, disgruntlement, grievances, unhappiness, displeasure, bad feelings, resentment, envy.



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Content, Discontent, Complacent Side-by-Side

Content

- Peaceful
- Happy
- Pleased
- Gratified
- Fulfilled
- Happy
- Cheerful
- Glad

Discontent

- Dissatisfied
- Disgruntlement
- Grievances
- Unhappiness
- Displeased
- Bad Feelings
- Resentment
- Envy

Complacent

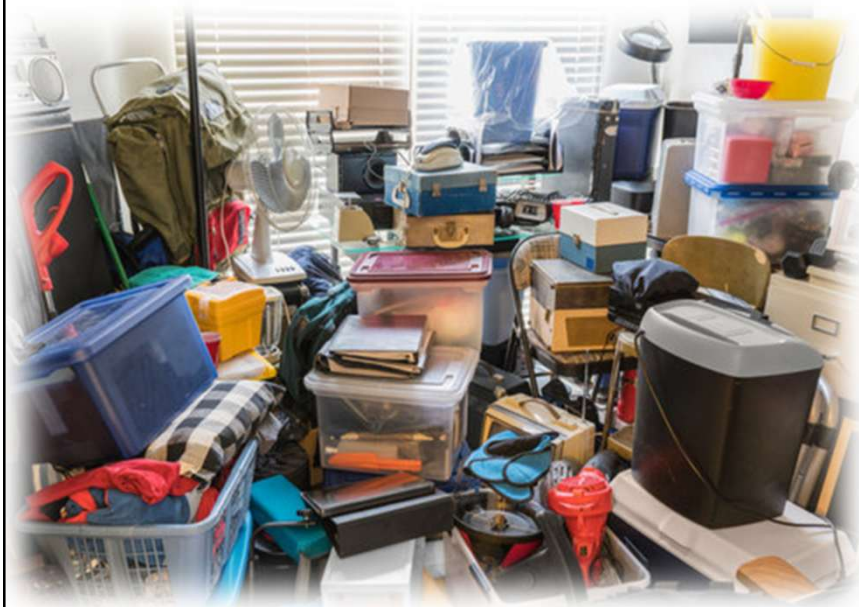
- Having or showing excessive pride in oneself or one's achievements.
- Self-satisfied, Self-Congratulatory, Self-Regarding, Conceited, Gloating, Triumphant, Proud.



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The Result of Discontent



No room for
anything other
“Self-
Satisfaction”.

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The Result of Discontent

You “crowd out” the ability to help others [and to be helped by others] by spending all you have on yourself.



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What is the Secret to Being Content?

The verb “learned” means “learned by experience.” Paul’s spiritual contentment was not something he had immediately after he was saved. He had to go through many difficult experiences of life in order to learn how to be content. The word “content” actually means “contained.” It is a description of the man whose resources are within him so that he does not have to depend on substitutes without.

[The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament](#)

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The “Spiritual Equilibrium” of Being “Content”

- ✓ You are equally unaffected by blessings and the burdens of your life.
- ✓ **You remain the same no matter what circumstances you are facing.**
- ✓ Contentment can only be taught by Christ and learned by those who walk with Christ.
- ✓ **The Secret? “Things” and situations don’t matter. Your relationship with Christ is all that does matter.**



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How to Be Content In Every Situation

Start living your best life right now “in spite of...”!
 "Dream as if you'll live forever, live as if you'll die today."

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Start living your best life right now “in spite of...”!

If today were your last day of life, would
God be satisfied with what you have
given to Him?

If today were your last day of life, would
you be satisfied with what you have
given to the Lord?

Since God has still given you time, what are
you going to do different with the gifts and
blessings God has given you?

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