

Being Thankful And Contented

With every day bringing what seems to be an endless parade of poor economic news, too many people are worried about the rainy day of tomorrow that they fail to see the sunshine of today. In spite of the negative outlook regarding the economy, there is still much for which we should be grateful and thankful as a nation and people that have been blessed abundantly by the Lord. As we are about to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday, let us never lose sight of Who is the Source of all of our blessings.

The Apostle Paul certainly had his share of woes. All one needs to do to learn the truth of this is to read the 11th chapter of 2 Corinthians to find out how immensely Paul suffered. He had much in his life in which he could have complained. In spite of this, though, Paul was able to keep things in proper perspective and write the following while being bound in chains:

“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. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 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. I can do everything through Him Who gives me strength.” (Philippians 4:10-13) Paul was grateful for their gift to him but he wants the church to know that he had learned how to be content in every circumstance. He wanted them to understand that his sufficiency is in the Lord and not in their ability to provide for him. What a valuable lesson Paul was giving the church in Ephesus, and to us by extension today. Contentment is not controlled by outside events. Contentment does not come from having an abundance of material possessions. Contentment and inner peace, ***“the peace that passes understanding”*** (Philippians 4:6), comes from the knowledge that we have a loving, gracious and merciful Savior, and this knowledge will invigorate our entire being, leading us to have a positive attitude about life. As Paul tells his young protégé, Timothy, in 1 Timothy 6:6-11, ***“If one is godly and content, there is great profit! We brought nothing into the world and we can’t take anything out of it. If we have food and clothes, we will be satisfied with these things. But the people who want to be rich fall into temptation, a trap, and many foolish desires that hurt them. These things drown men in ruin and destruction. Loving money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people want money so badly that they have wandered away from the faith. They have so painfully wounded themselves. But you, O man of God, run away from these things. Follow after faith, love, endurance, what is good, godly, and gentle.”***

May the Lord bless you and yours as you give Him thanks for all of His blessings!