



GOD'S WORK NOW REQUIRES CONTENTMENT

MAY 12-19, 2024

CIRCLES for the week:

(Videos and links are included in CIRCLES to deepen understanding. Sign up for CIRCLES via text or email to the church.)

13 Monday: VIDEO **Psalm 63** How do I demonstrate hunger and thirst for God? Am I longing for Him or something else?

14 Tuesday: **Psalm 107:1-9** How has Jesus satisfied your longing? Talk to God about any discontent. Ask Him to renew you.

15 Wednesday: **Ephesians 1:13-19** How do I understand and experience this HOPE? What are His riches that He has given me?

16 Thursday: **Philippians 4:8-13,19** Do my actions show that I believe GOD IS ENOUGH? Write down verses you need to stand on.

17 Friday: **Romans 15:4-13** How can I overflow in HOPE? What verse stands out? Share the HOPE of God with someone today.

★ What insights did God give you through these CIRCLE activities? How did your relationship grow deeper with Him?

DIG DEEPER - review Sunday and dig deeper with discussion questions:

★ Any "take-aways" from Sunday's message? Did anything spark a question for you? Discuss with the group.

1. **1 Timothy 6:6** says, "***But godliness with contentment is great gain.***" Discuss what that means.
2. The word "*sufficient*" in Greek means: *to be possessed of unfailing strength, to be enough, to be satisfied, to be content.* Read **2 Corinthians 9:8** and **2 Corinthians 12:9**. Share what this means to you in the context of these verses.
3. **Matthew 5:6** says, "***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled (satisfied).***" In other words, the one who was empty and craving now attains full satisfaction and total contentment. How is this kind of transformation possible?
4. What can we do to stimulate this kind of craving for God? In ourselves? In our church?
5. Read **Ephesians 1:3; Ephesians 3:19; Colossians 2:10; 2 Peter 1:2-4**. What has God given us? What has He provided?

Continued...



PRAY Scripture–

based on Psalm 42 and Romans 15:13

Father God, cause my soul to crave your Presence, as a deer pants for flowing streams. I want my soul to thirst for You, for the living God.

When my soul is downcast and in turmoil, remind me to hope in YOU; knowing I will again praise You, because You are my salvation. This Psalm reminds me that Your steadfast love commands me by day, and at night Your song is with me. You are the God of my life.

Lord, please fill me with Your hope, joy, and peace as I continue to trust You. By the power of the Holy Spirit, help me to abound in Your HOPE!

YOU are ENOUGH!

AMEN

Discussion questions continued...

6. Why is thankfulness an integral part of the Christian life? How do you choose to give thanks in difficult situations?

Philippians 4:4-9; Colossians 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:18

7. How are gratitude and contentment connected? How does discontent keep you from an awareness of God's hand in your life?

8. Read **Romans 8:28**. God specializes in turning difficult situations into glorious examples of His mercy and grace, showing us that HE is sufficient, He is ENOUGH no matter the circumstances. How has God redeemed a painful circumstance in your life for His glory? How might He want to use you to show His wisdom, power, and His presence to others?

9. Often, the cause of our lack of contentment is unforgiveness or difficulties in our relationships (family, friends, church). Our church has established steps to help us work through hurtful situations and to walk out UNITY with the help of the Holy Spirit. Read over the **RECONCILIATION AND SHARED CONCERNS POLICY** attached to this lesson. Discuss the steps.

10. In addition to thankfulness, reconciliation and unity, and remembering God's provision, how can we grow in the area of contentment in Christ? Share how you are growing in this area and what God is showing you.

LIVE IT OUT – Make specific time with God and talk to Him about your contentment level. More gratitude? Need God's perspective on your past, present, or future? Need to reconcile or pursue unity with someone? What steps is He asking you to make: _____

Miss a Sunday? Watch the service at www.paradisecma.org or go to our Facebook page "Paradise Alliance Church." For daily devotional texts, text (833)306-2345 and type CIRCLES.

RECONCILIATION AND SHARED CONCERNS POLICY

God uses the differences between us to help us grow. The choice is ours on how successful our growth is. We can work through things together and grow in humility, love and unity, or we can choose to avoid conflict resolution and harbor hurts which will divide us and keep us from being all that God intends, individually and collectively. *“All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”* (Hebrews 12:11)

Unity means that we can still move ahead together following Jesus after we have discussed, listened, prayed and taken necessary action steps in the situation that has caused tension.

Unity Procedures Based on Matthew 7:1-5, Matthew 18:15-20, Matthew 5:23-24

STEP 1: Ask God to search your heart in the situation you are facing. Listen for the direction that God is giving you. If necessary, confess to God any way that you have contributed to the tense relationship or situation.

STEP 2: Contact the person with whom you have a concern and if necessary, set up a meeting between the two of you to work through the unity process. Each person shares their concerns with a situation, and the other person seeks clarification and perspective, until all of the issues have been clearly identified and agreed upon by both parties.

STEP 3: If a quick resolution is not reached, both people take the issues to the Lord in prayer for a couple of days.

STEP 4: Both people come back together and confess anything that needs to be confessed. Next both parties agree on appropriate practical action steps that need to occur in order to move ahead in unity and love for each other. It is ok to agree to disagree, but we don't stop walking together.

STEP 5: If Unity is not reached after the first meeting, bring one other agreed upon person to help you and the other person work through the situation. If necessary, the shepherding elders of the church are available to help mediate between the two parties. These leaders need to be agreed upon by both parties.

STEP 6: If no agreement can be reached, the elders of the church will establish the best practices for both parties to “agree to disagree”, and still be able to move ahead in unity.

Be careful of gossip and/or “taking up an offense” for a friend. If someone comes to you with a concern about someone else, encourage them to follow the resolution policy and go have a conversation with that person face-to-face. If a concern is brought to your attention, your participation should not include sharing with anyone outside of the concerned parties. If you feel the need, go to the shepherding elders and they will help mediate the situation with you.