

A PURPOSE FOR THE NEW YEAR

The Secret of Contentment

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Philippians 4:11-13 **I have learned how to be content** with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. **I have learned the *SECRET* of living in every situation**, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. (*New Living Bible*)

CONTENTMENT = An attitude which produces an ability to operate in any circumstance, regardless of the situation; an ability to overcome, to experience fulfillment “in every situation”.

It is a _____.

- not obvious
- not natural
- a privilege

It is _____.

- An acquired virtue
Proverbs 1:5 Let the wise listen and learn yet more, and a person of discernment will acquire the art of guidance.
(*New Jerusalem Bible*)
Proverbs 4:5 Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth.
(*New American Standard*)
- Results of a process of experience

PAUL’S TESTIMONY of the process of learning the secret of contentment . . . PHILIPPIANS

I. The SECRET of _____.

Philippians 2:1-8 Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to take advantage of. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a servant and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. (*New Living Bible*)

- **Mark 10:45** It's the same way with the Son of Man. He didn't come so that others could serve him. He came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people. (*God's Word to the Nations Version*)
- **James 4:10** Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will lift you up. (*New Jerusalem Bible*)

II. The SECRET of the _____.

Philippians 3:7-14 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, . . . that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, . . . I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (*New Living Bible*)

- **Habakkuk 3:17-19** Even though [I lose everything], yet I will rejoice in the LORD! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation! The Sovereign LORD is my strength! He makes me as surefooted as a deer, able to tread upon the heights. (*New Living Bible*)
- **Matthew 13:45** Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant on the lookout for choice pearls. When he discovered a pearl of great value, he sold everything he owned and bought it! (*New Living Bible*)

III. The SECRET of _____.

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!
(*New Living Bible*)

- **Habakkuk 3:17-19** Even though [I lose everything], yet I will rejoice in the LORD! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation! The Sovereign LORD is my strength! He makes me as surefooted as a deer, able to tread upon the heights. (*New Living Bible*)
- **Nehemiah 8:10b** Don't be dejected and sad, for the joy of the LORD is your strength! (*New Living Bible*)
- **Galatians 5:22** But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, . . . (*New Living Bible*)

Philippians 4:5-7 Let your gentle *spirit* be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which exceeds anything we can understand, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
(*New Living Bible*)