



Contentment! Contentment!

How many really happy people do you know? It is a little frightening isn't it? So many people, some claiming to be Christians, and so little joy. There is a pervasive anxiety and discontent which appears to underlie much of our society. It is a discontentment that affects all segments of social and economic structure.

In King Richard III, William Shakespeare speaks of "the winter of our discontent," which he says is "Made glorious summer by this sun of York." He alludes to the change which is brought about by one man.

Interestingly enough, there is one who can change the winter of our discontent in to a glorious summer if we will allow Him into our hearts. He is the Son of God. He said, "... I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." ([John 10:10 RSV](#)) This "abundant life" belongs to the child of God, but many have not accepted this precious gift.

Few today could claim that they have suffering comparable to that of the apostle Paul. He writes, "[For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things.](#)" ([1 Corinthians 4:9-13 RSV](#))

Yet because of his faith, he can say, "Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content." (Philippians 4:11 RSV) And this was not because he had found a way to change his circumstances. He continues, "I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want " (Philippians 4:12, RSV) He had learned the secret "in any and all circumstances."

It is a secret desperately needed in today's world. It is not complex, but it is profound! Paul tells them, and us, the secret. "I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13 NASB). So can you!