26-1101a Transcript

26-1101a - *Contentment, Steve Cain*

Bible Readers: Kevin Woosley and Roger Raines

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Contentment

1st Reading (0:04 - 0:54): Kevin Woosley **Philippians 4:10-13**: (0:04) Good morning. (0:06) First scripture reading is out of the book of Philippians, chapter 4, verses 10 through 13. (0:17) Starting with verse 10. (0:18) But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now, at last, your care for me has flourished again. (0:26) Though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. (0:29) Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am to be content. (0:37) I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. (0:40) Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. (0:49) I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (0:53) Amen to that. (0:54)	**2nd Reading** (0:59 - 1:41): Roger Raines **Proverbs 30:7-9**: (0:59) The second scripture reading is from the book of Proverbs. (1:03) Proverbs 30, 7 through 9, and I'll be reading from the New American Standard Bible. (1:10) Two things I ask of you. (1:13) Do not refuse me before I die. (1:16) Keep deceptions and lies far from me. (1:19) Give me neither poverty nor riches. (1:22) Feed me with the food that is my portion. (1:25) That I am not fool and deny you, and say, Who is the Lord? (1:31) For that I am not in want and steal, and profane the name of my God. (1:39) This concludes this reading. (1:41)

Transcript (0:04 - 30:59), Preacher: Steve Cain

(1:46) Well, I don't know exactly how to start this out, because I want to tell you, (1:52) I really feel that the Holy Spirit is with us this morning. (1:56) The message that I have for you this morning is not one that I prepared for myself.

(2:03) I started out preparing one, and along the way thoughts started coming to me, (2:12) which I credit to the Holy Spirit. (2:15) And I want you to realize that what I'm going to say in this lesson today (2:21) are basically those things which I thought about being prompted by, I believe, the Holy Spirit. (2:28) I want to talk about contentment.

(2:31) Do you understand what contentment is? (2:35) According to the Webster Dictionary, it is a state of happiness, satisfaction, and fulfillment. (2:46) I love Paul. I love everything that he writes for us, (2:51) and especially when he talks about his own personal experience.

(2:59) Paul is an individual that definitely, in the Philippian letters, (3:03) he's talking about how he came about his contentment. (3:08) And I want to preface this by saying, if you're not content, content, not tempt, content, (3:18) it's not God's fault. (3:22) God does everything in His power to look after you, to meet your needs, and to make sure you are fulfilled.

(3:34) And if you're not, it's not His fault. (3:40) You need to be thinking in terms, making internal thoughts about why you're not content. (3:49) Like I said, it's not God's fault that you're not content.

(3:54) Paul points out, and I don't have this scripture, but Paul points out that God took him from

his mother's womb. (4:04) I think that implies the fact that the minute that Paul was born into this world, God took over his care, (4:13) looking after him, meeting his needs, and if that's the case, He's done the same thing to each one of us. (4:22) Every child that is born, God personally starts taking a look and looking after and meeting its needs.

(4:35) And I think that's an awesome concept. (4:41) You may not think that He was looking after you, but He met your needs all the time. (4:47) As you were coming up, as you were growing, and He continues to look after you, even in adulthood.

(4:55) Jesus points out to us in Matthew, the sixth chapter, when He's talking about the Sermon on the Mount, (5:01) He's talking about how we need to make sure that God is looking after us. (5:08) Take a look at Matthew, the sixth chapter, because He points out to us there about how that God is looking after us. (5:21) He says, do not worry, starting with verse 25.

(5:26) It says, therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, about what you will eat or drink, (5:32) or about your body, what you will wear. (5:34) It is not life. (5:36) Is not life more than food and the body more than clothes? (5:42) Look at the birds of the air.

(5:44) They do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. (5:53) Are you not much more valuable than they? (5:56) Can any one of you, by worrying, add a single hour to your life? (6:02) And why do you worry about clothes? (6:05) See how the flowers of the field grow? (6:08) They do not labor or spend, and yet I tell you, (6:11) that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. (6:17) If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, (6:22) and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will He not much more clothe you, you of little faith? (6:30) So do not worry, saying, what shall we eat? (6:34) Or what shall we drink? (6:35) Or what shall we wear? (6:37) For the pagans run after all these things, and your Heavenly Father knows that you need them.

(6:45) But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (6:53) Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, (6:57) for tomorrow will worry about itself. (7:01) Each day has enough troubles of its own.

(7:07) In other words, God is looking after you, even as an adult, (7:11) from the day you were born to the day to now, until you're taken up. (7:19) God is looking after you. He's meeting your needs.

(7:23) So the thing is, if you're not content, it's not God's fault. (7:32) So as we reflect upon that, Paul knows that God has been looking after him all this time. (7:39) One of the points that I like to always bring out, and it's the one that you are very familiar with, (7:46) is found in 2 Corinthians, the first chapter.

(7:50) We're going to be looking at verse 8 in particular. (7:52) And if you haven't figured it out, I'm reading from the New International Version. (7:59) Paul is on a trip.

He's on a journey. (8:02) And as he's going along, he finds himself in a situation that he has absolutely no control over. (8:11) He tells us right there in this passage that he is really threatening over his life (8:19) and the safety and well-being of the people who are with him.

(8:23) He says, I'm going to explain to you why I did not get to you on time the way I expected to. (8:31) And he's pointing out in verse 8, (8:34) We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. (8:42) We were under great

pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, (8:47) so that we despaired of life itself.

(8:52) Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. (8:59) So he really is in threat for his life. (9:03) He's concerned.

(9:05) He hasn't learned a lesson yet, but he's about to learn a lesson, (9:10) because that's why he says God allowed him to experience this particular situation. (9:15) As we pick up with what he says in verse 9, (9:21) Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death, (9:25) but this happened that we might not rely on ourselves, but on God who raises the dead. (9:33) He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again.

(9:38) On him we have set our hope that [He] will continue to deliver us. (9:44) He will continue to deliver us. (9:47) As you help us by your prayers, then many will give thanks on our behalf (9:53) for the gracious favor granted to us in answer to the prayers of many.

(10:00) Paul realizes that his contentment is relying entirely upon God. (10:08) Not that he's relying on God to meet his needs, because he already is. (10:14) What he's got is to rely on God and to let God do his thing.

(10:21) God is looking after him, and he says that that's exactly why God allowed him to experience what he's experiencing. (10:30) And perhaps that's exactly the reason why God is allowing each and [every] one of us to experience what we experience, (10:38) so that we might become reliant on God and recognize the fact that God definitely is in control of our lives, (10:46) and he meets our needs as we need him. (10:50) I love the prayer that Scott just gave concerning his aunt.

(10:56) It expressed the very things that I was expecting to say, too. (11:04) He's looking for those things. (11:07) So, contentment.

(11:09) Contentment is something that we need to be able to just naturally have. (11:17) [Just] being content. (11:18) What kind of contentment are we really needing? (11:24) Let me give to you this illustration that just came to me while preparing this lesson.

(11:34) Think in terms of children. (11:38) We have a young man with us. (11:42) Let's just think in terms of young men and women and our children.

(11:48) As they are in our care and as they're growing up, before they get ready to leave the house, (11:54) what kind of cares do they have? (11:58) They're content. (12:00) That's the sign of content. (12:02) You know, I was thinking in terms before I used this illustration about cows.

(12:07) You see cows out in the field. (12:11) They're laying down. (12:12) They're just sitting around going like this, and they're just chewing a cud.

(12:15) They're ruminating. (12:20) They're just chewing a cud. (12:22) They're content.

(12:23) What was it? (12:28) The ["milk from contented cows,"] came from ["contented cows give better milk,"] or something like that. (12:32) I can't remember exactly how the phrase goes. (12:35) They're content.

(12:37) So are our children. (12:39) How about you when you were growing up? (12:42) Were you concerned about whether or not the folks could make the rent? (12:46) Were you concerned whether or not your folks could feed you? (12:53) Were you concerned about whether or not you

were going to go to school (12:57) or whether or not you were going to be able to go to a movie? (13:00) Were you not concerned? (13:02) You had no cares in the world. (13:06) Those are the signs of being content.

(13:10) God is saying to you, you can be content. (13:19) Paul understood when he wrote those words about contentment. (13:24) I'd like to go back and revisit that passage in Philippians, the fourth chapter, (13:30) as we look at that particular thing and see what Paul is talking about.

(13:37) Yes, he had that experience in 2 Corinthians. (13:43) He had that experience of having to wait for God (13:45) instead of putting it all on himself. (13:49) He needed to rely on God, and so he learned a lesson, (13:56) and he's trying to help us to appreciate the fact (13:58) that he carried that lesson with him into adulthood.

(14:05) As we look at the fourth chapter, starting with verse, what is it, 15 or 10, (14:16) I've rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. (14:23) Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. (14:28) I'm not saying this because I am in need, (14:32) for I've learned to be content.

(14:36) What's that word? Learned. (14:39) I've learned to be content. (14:41) It is something that we experience, that we place on God, (14:46) and we experience His help.

(14:48) You actually experience it? (14:51) He experienced it, and he got to the point where he learned to rely on God. (14:59) He put it on God. (15:01) He says, I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances, (15:07) and he means that, whatever the circumstances.

(15:10) Verse 12, I know what it is to be in need, (15:16) and I know what it is to have plenty. (15:19) I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, (15:26) whether well fed or hungry, (15:28) whether living in plenty or in want. (15:32) I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.

(15:37) What is he saying there at the last? (15:41) I hear that last phrase, I have learned. (15:44) I can do all things through Him who gives me strength. (15:48) What is he saying? (15:51) I can put all my cares and concerns on Him.

(15:55) I've learned to do that, (15:57) because God has given me strength to be able to do that, (16:01) and God will give you the same strength to be able to do that too. (16:06) To learn to rest on Him. (16:13) I have learned to be content.

(16:18) It's a lesson. (16:20) It is an experience. (16:24) But as we reflect on Paul's contentment, (16:27) there's one more thing that is involved in his contentment, (16:33) and that's his relationship with God.

(16:39) Can you imagine if God had just left him on the road of Damascus (16:45) and did not tell him to go in and ask for Ananias, (16:48) who would tell him words about [how] to be saved. (16:51) Can you imagine what would happen if God did not do that? (16:55) There was a purpose in that. (16:58) What was the purpose? (17:00) Here is Paul.

(17:02) He is very vigorously going out and persecuting the churches (17:09) and the Christians and having them bound up. (17:12) And some of them are even being imprisoned and put in and killed. (17:16) Can you imagine that all of a sudden Jesus appears to him (17:20) and he is made aware that

Jesus is real.

(17:24) He's made aware that Jesus is, (17:26) Hey, I'm wrong all this time, and look at what I've done. (17:35) Can you imagine if God had not told him to go on into, (17:40) or Jesus had not told him to go on into Damascus? (17:43) Can you imagine what kind of burden would be on this man the rest of his life (17:48) when he realized, hey, I've been wrong all this time, (17:52) and look at all these people I've been killing. (17:55) Look at all these people I've been putting in prison.

(17:57) Oh, his conscience. (18:02) Up until then, he was in good conscience, wasn't he? (18:05) He will tell you, in all these things, I did this in good conscience. (18:12) I did.

I was doing this in all good conscience. (18:16) But now, oh my, oh, what am I going to do? (18:23) How can I make amends? (18:25) What can I do to correct what I've been doing? (18:31) Can God ever forgive me for what I've been doing [to] him? (18:36) That's the word. (18:37) Can God forgive me? (18:42) Jesus knew that he could forgive him (18:44) because that's the reason why he came and died on the cross with us, (18:47) to reconcile us to God.

(18:54) And God was extending to him the right hand of fellowship. (18:58) All he has to do is to come to him through Jesus (19:01) and acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. (19:08) And then God forgives him.

(19:15) God will forgive him. (19:17) That'll take care of his conscience, won't it? (19:22) Oh, to have a nice, clean conscience, (19:25) to be able to come before God and say, (19:28) God, would you look after my aunt? (19:31) Would you look after my son? (19:33) Would you look after my daughter? (19:35) Would you look after my parents? (19:40) What if you don't have a clean conscience? (19:43) What if you haven't been given the avenue to which to go to? (19:50) You wouldn't be able to do that in your conscience, would you? (19:55) Because we have a way of violating God. (19:58) We have a way of angering him.

(20:02) And we do it either by language or by action or by whatever. (20:08) We're defying him every time we do those things. (20:12) How can we be reconciled to him? (20:15) Where is our clear conscience? (20:18) We can't have a clean conscience or a clear conscience (20:22) until we know that we're right in the sight of God.

(20:27) We have to be right with God. (20:30) So how can we be right with God? (20:34) God is saying, (20:36) Accept my son as a propitiation for your sin. (20:42) Accept my son who willingly went to the cross and died for you, (20:49) died for me, died for us all.

(20:54) He's willing to apply his righteousness to you. (20:59) He's willing to do that. (21:02) If you'll just acknowledge him and become his disciple (21:06) and to acknowledge him as the Lord and Christ (21:09) and be baptized and put him on in baptism.

(21:12) And that's exactly what was offered to Paul. (21:16) And he went on into Damascus (21:20) and he sent [Ananias], people to go and seek out the prophet, the teacher. (21:31) And if it had not been for him to come in and say, (21:34) Paul, God has forgiven you.

(21:37) Rise and be baptized for the remission of your sins. (21:42) Paul did. (21:46) That's how he can live in complete, total contentment.

(21:56) How about you? (21:58) If you need complete and total and to finish it out, (22:03) I'd like to

extend to you the opportunity to do so. (22:05) While together we stand and sing the song of encouragement. (22:08)