



TEEN TREE OF LIFE

The Secret of Contentment

Part 3

October 31, 2021

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called Rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1 JOH 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

We learned last week that people who are spiritually dead (and in turn controlled by Satan) have no hope of contentment. Because the desire for contentment is ingrained in all of us, we search and search for a way to try to find it. And Satan uses this ingrained desire of ours to find contentment to get us out of God's Plan for our lives.

Do you know what a world view is? It's how you look at the world, how you think it operates, why things happen the way they do, and what your purpose is. Satan has actually devised his own various world views so that the spiritually dead can try to make sense out of their existence and in doing so, attain a fake contentment. These world views are put in place to get our focus off divine viewpoint. Too often too many Christians live, act, and think in practical terms like non-Christians do. With that in mind, let's look at the major world views, and then you can examine yourself to see if you are operating under a system other than God's.

Deism is a world view that is defined as the belief in the existence of a god who created the universe, based only on reason and on evidence in nature, and not on any supernatural revelation. (Supernatural revelation is the knowledge of God and spiritual matters which can be discovered through supernatural means, such as scripture or miracles.) Deism became popular with the rise of rationalism in the early 1700s. The belief that there was a God was still held, but He was now seen as impersonal. The belief was that He created everything and then left it alone – that God was not involved. Man's hope for contentment is in figuring it all out and making it all work by himself. **THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES** expresses the ultimate futility of this point of view.

Solomon's writing in **ECCLESIASTES** offers the Christian an opportunity to understand the emptiness and despair that those who don't know the True God struggle with. Those who don't have a saving faith in Christ are faced with a life that will ultimately become irrelevant. If there is no salvation, and no God, then not only is there no point to life, but no purpose or direction to it, either. The world apart from God, is frustrating, cruel, unfair, brief, and utterly meaningless. But with Christ, life is just a shadow of the glories to come in a Heaven that is only accessible through Him.

The second world view is **naturalism**. This is a major world view in our own society. In this view, God is removed and only nature exists. This is the philosophical basis of evolution. Evolutionary thought has invaded many areas of education in this day and age. Naturalism puts the meaning of life only in the here and now. It teaches that contentment will come from circumstances, so you need to live for yourself with that in view, and then you'll be happy. **ECC 2:3-11 (The Message Bible)** describes Solomon's attempt at this type of life. He used all of his resources in attempting to make his life as pleasurable as possible: ***I said to myself, "Let's go for it—experiment with pleasure, have a good time!" But there was nothing to it, nothing but smoke. What do I think of the fun-filled life? Insane! Inane! My verdict on the pursuit of happiness? Who needs it? With the help of a bottle of wine and all the wisdom I could muster, I tried my level best to penetrate the absurdity of life. I wanted to get a handle on anything useful we mortals might do during the years we spend on this earth. Oh, I did great things: built houses, planted vineyards, designed gardens and parks and planted a variety of fruit trees in them, made pools of water to irrigate the groves of trees. I bought slaves, male and female, who had children, giving me even more slaves; then I acquired large herds and flocks, larger than any before me in Jerusalem. I piled up silver and gold, loot from kings and kingdoms. I gathered a chorus of singers to entertain me with song, and—most exquisite of all pleasures—voluptuous maidens for my bed. Oh, how I prospered! I left all my predecessors in Jerusalem far behind, left them behind in the dust. What's more, I kept a clear head through it all. Everything I wanted I took—I never said no to myself. I gave in to every impulse, held back nothing. I sucked the marrow of pleasure out of every task—my reward to myself for a hard day's work! Then I took a good look at everything I'd done, looked at all the sweat and hard work. But when I looked, I saw nothing but smoke. Smoke and spitting into the wind. There was nothing to any of it. Nothing.*** How's that for a description of a useless life? Think about how many people out there who are living their lives with this attitude.

Another world view is **nihilism**. This world view is the child of naturalism. It boldly recognizes that naturalism gives no ultimate meaning to life. The fruit of your labor feeds you, but not soon after, you're hungry again. There's no satisfaction in anything. Life is an absurd accident – so there's no point in trying to satisfy yourself. And then you become complacent and unhappy and your response to all of it is, "I quit." It's a dangerous place in which to find yourself and the only way to get out of it, or to avoid it altogether, is to have a relationship with God!

The next world view is **existentialism**. This philosophy also views life as absurd because life ends in the grave, but you need to live out your life and make your choices anyway. Contentment and meaning come from doing your own thing and not subjecting yourself to the world, because it's considered to be stupid anyway. When

you're an existentialist, you become indifferent to others. If you think that life will finally be satisfying when no one can tell you what to do, and you are the captain of your own ship and the master of your own fate, then in practical terms, you are an existentialist.

Pantheism is another world view that has taken a strong foothold in our society. This is the view of Eastern mysticism in which physical life is relatively unimportant, so only the bare essentials are taken care of. In this view, contentment comes not from having or doing, but from being. The goal is to become one with universe, thereby becoming nothing yourself. In this world view, becoming nothing is the state of Nirvana. Peace and tranquility are gained by withdrawing from the world through meditation and solitude. As one person put it, you have achieved ultimate success when you are no longer involved with the problems of life and you have become like a rock with a smile painted on it. LOL!

Another world view is called **humanism**. This philosophy has become the latest step in this progression of world views. Rather than losing yourself in God (pantheism), in this view you must realize that you already have the unlimited power to reach a state of understanding where everything is wonderful. By going deeper into yourself, tuning into your deeper conscience, you will find meaning to life within you. Ultimately, man becomes his own god. This view finds a home with many secular psychologists, and philosophers.

The last world view, we're going to look at is the only one in which real contentment can be found – **Christianity!!** With this world view, there is a Real and True, Infinite, Personal Creator Who is God. He has revealed Himself in both what He has created and what He's shared in the Bible. He loved us while yet sinners and has provided a means to take care of our sin problem through The Person and Work of Jesus Christ. Through faith in Christ, we can be brought back into a personal relationship with Him. Life makes sense living for God's Purposes in everything, for both the present and eternity. Life is about serving The Lord.

If this last world view is not what you hold to in both belief and practice, you will never be content. You will never be able to experience the fullness of life and still live above its circumstances. Is your world view solidly Christian, or is it mixed with other world views? This has to be corrected before you can apply the secret of contentment.

But what is the secret? It's not needing something from your circumstances. It's not about being sufficient in yourself as if you were completely independent and able to do it all on your own. That's the quest of existentialism and humanism. Paul explained the secret with this simple statement: ***I can do all this by the power of Christ. He gives me strength.*** (PHI 4:13 New International Reader's Version) Because Paul walked in faith with Jesus Christ, he was content. This is because he used his knowledge of God's Word and applied it in trust of God's Great Character and Promises. You cannot be content by yourself, but you can be content when it is you and Jesus Christ together, for our God can overcome any circumstance, and when you are walking with Him, He goes through the prosperity and the adversity with you.

We have to do what Paul did if we want the Power of God in our lives and be fully content. We must be believers and know God and remember who He is and what He has done. We must trust and obey Him. The result of this is that we cannot shy away from the troubles and trials of life. We must face them head on with submission to the commands, principles, and precepts of God's Word.

We must bow to Our Sovereign God regardless of circumstances and rejoice. Our attitude has to become one of "Lord, thank you that I'm here," not because you like the circumstances, but because He is with you. Remember that as a Christian, you are buried with Christ and are now living in the Power of His Resurrection. You no longer have to live life being controlled by your circumstances. The Lord is in charge, and you belong to Him. Walk with Him and He will see you through anything that happens to you. Your attitude must be one of seeking The Lord's Will and being thankful for the opportunities He gives you to demonstrate your love for and trust in Him. If you take your eyes off Him and put them on your circumstances you will fall into murmuring and complaining which will block His Power in your life. And you will never know the secret of contentment.