



BETTER

Chasing Contentment

#npbetter

Week 6

6 of 12

July 12, 2020

Bottom Line: Trusting in God is the key to contentment.

Icebreaker: What's currently the worst commercial in your opinion? Best? Funniest?

Key Verse: *In the few days of our meaningless lives, who knows how our days can best be spent? Our lives are like a shadow. Who can tell what will happen on this earth after we are gone?* Ecclesiastes 6:12 NLT

Solomon keeps hitting on the fact that we don't find satisfaction in the places we believe we will. In chapter 6 he addresses specific things we pursue for contentment: "If I get this I will be happy." All of us are susceptible to the "if only" disease. "If only I had..." "If only I could..." "If only they would..." It goes on and on until it kills every aspect of joy in our lives. Discontent and envy hold hands. Combined, they are deadly. Discontentment is not being happy with what I have. Envy is coveting what someone else has.

We live in a day that gives us maximum opportunity for discontentment. We see everything, and every day there is more, better, bigger, newer. Prosperity and "blessings" are seen (even taught by big name preachers) to be the sign of God's favor, and adversity is a sure sign of God's displeasure. Solomon says that is not so. He says you can attain amazing prosperity and not even be able to enjoy it. He doesn't simply state his case, he asks very realistic and pointed questions and makes us uncomfortable.

He presents a convincing case that discontent will never be cured by **money, intellect, popularity, or planning**. We will chase the wind, relentlessly pursuing more. His life was full of those things and they let him down. Now Solomon points the way to satisfaction and curing discontentment. **Discontent is cured by embracing God's destiny for you.** God knows the future. He knows what is best for you. He is never surprised, never caught off guard. God is always calling us to be better than we were the day before, but God has placed you exactly where you need to be in order to be the influence He has called you to be. **Trust God.** And work with God. The grass isn't greener on the other side of the fence. It's greener where you water it. Don't spend your life looking past where God has you now. Love and grow where you are, not because the circumstances are perfect or you trust the people, but you do trust God and His intentions for your life.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most from the message?

Solomon asks, "Are wise people really better off than fools?" What do you think? How do you think the New Testament perspective of Paul (Eph. 1:15-23; 5:15-16) adds to or conflicts with Solomon? Reflect on how and why.

Where are you most tempted to be discontented and envious of someone? Why do you think so?

Comparison is deadly—in marriage, in possessions, in relationships. It destroys any possibility of contentment. Reflect and discuss.

Do you think living a modest life with modest resources and relationships is generally better than living over the top? Explain.

Have you thought about your funeral? What do you think it will be like? How will people remember you?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

We must ask realistic questions, or we will lead shallow, even dangerous lives. How do you ask realistic, wise questions and grow from the insight without becoming cynical?

How do you embrace God's destiny for you without taking responsibility for your decisions?

God has placed you exactly where you need to be in order to be the influence He has called you to be. As you look at your placement, do you see any hints as to what He has in mind? How might you take full advantage of your current opportunities?

Solomon said, "The more words you speak, the less they mean." Discuss.

What is the practical evidence of trusting God? How does trusting God take away envy and jealousy?

How would you explain Paul's secret to contentment? (Philippians 4:11)

NEXT STEPS

1. Memorize Philippians 4:11-13 or print it so you can read it daily.
2. Thank God each day for putting you where you are at this time and place.
3. Ask God to help you keep your mind and eyes open for the opportunities in your time and place to influence others.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: Trusting in God is the key to contentment.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: Luke 12:15

Tuesday: 2 Corinthians 12:10

Wednesday: Psalm 23:1; John 10:11

Thursday: 1 Corinthians 7:17

Friday: 1 Corinthians 7:30-31

Don't let the conversation stop here, keep talking it over with others throughout the week.

(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next meeting.)