

CALM MY ANXIOUS HEART



Overview:

Adapted from Linda Dillow's book, learn how to move past a temporary feeling of happiness to a steadfast satisfaction that comes from within.

Lessons:

1. A Life of Contentment
2. Contentment In The Face of Trials
3. Contentment In Who We Are and What We Do
4. Content In Relationships and Possessions
5. Worry, Faith and Trust



A LIFE OF CONTENTMENT

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TALKING POINTS

Contentment isn't about a temporary feeling of happiness. It's a steadfast satisfaction that comes from within.

- Contentment is a state of peace separate from our circumstances. J.I. Packer says, "Contentment is essentially a matter of accepting from God's hand what He sends because we know that He is good and therefore it is good." Philippians 4:12
- The key to our contentment lies in our perspective. Our perspective is limited. God's perspective is limitless. Jeremiah 29:11, Isaiah 40:28-31
- The more we read God's word, and apply it to our lives, the more our lives will be filled with God's perspective. And, the more we understand his perspective, the more content we will become. 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 3:8-9

DISCUSSION

1. *Do you know someone who doesn't have much yet seems at peace with their life? To what would they attribute their peace and happiness?*
2. *Think about the definition of contentment. Have you ever experienced a time when you were scared but had a peace about the situation? Explain.*
3. *Read Isaiah 40:28-31 J.I Packer says that we can trust God because he is good. Do you believe that? Explain.*
4. *Read Philippians 4:12. What do you think Paul's secret to contentment was? How does our perspective change our outlook on life? Give an example of how your attitude affected the way you experienced something.*
5. *Why is it that we tend to learn more from the harder things in life than from the good things? How has God used a challenge in your life to strengthen you?*
6. *Read 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 3:8-9. How does God's word help us in life? How will learning more about God's ways help you face future struggles?*

NOTES

CONTENTMENT IN THE FACE OF TRIALS

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TALKING POINTS

If we want to experience contentment in the face of our trials, we need to do our part and let God do his part.

- Our part: Don't worry but pray with thankful hearts. God wants us to think about his perspective first. Philippians 4:6
- God's part: He will give us peace. When we turn to God in our time of struggle, he promises to be there and to grant us peace. Philippians 4:7
- Here are some practical things we can do to overcome worry to find contentment.
 - Stop and pray specifically for the thing that is bringing worry
 - Memorize Philippians 4:6
 - Remember the things God has already done in your life for which you are thankful
 - Choose to focus your thoughts on the positive things

DISCUSSION

1. *On a scale from 1-10, how often do you worry? Where would your friends and family place you?*
2. *Think about a situation that is bringing you angst. What do you fear the most regarding that situation*
3. *Read Philippians 4:6. Why is worry an unhelpful response? How does prayer help us? How does being thankful for the past help us for the future?*
4. *Read Philippians 4:7. What does God's peace feel like to you? Why do you think we're promised peace and not something else?*
5. *Read Philippians 4:8. Why does it matter what we choose to think about?*
6. *How can the 4 practical steps help you to find contentment in your current trial?*

CONTENT WITH WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

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TALKING POINTS

The Bible says that God fashioned each of us together just the way he wanted in order to create a unique piece of art designed for specific purposes.

- God created you just the way he wanted you. He didn't make a mistake when he made you tall or short or a red head. The Bible says that he fashioned each of us together just the way he wanted to create a unique piece of art designed for specific purposes. Psalm 139:13-16
- We need to embrace our story. We need to accept the roles God places in our lives whether it's wife, widow, single, mother, rich, or poor. God has already written our story and has equipped us with the traits and tools to fulfill our purpose. Jeremiah 29:11

DISCUSSION

1. *In your opinion, why are women typically dissatisfied with their appearance? Why are women so adept at the comparison game?*
2. *Read Psalm 139:13-16. Identify all that this passage says about how God created you? How should this change the way you view yourself?*
3. *Share some of the significant storylines or roles of your life. How have you seen God prepare and equip you for those roles?*
4. *Read Jeremiah 29:11. Identify some of the highlights of your life. How did those events benefit you as a person? Identify some of the lowlights of your life. How did those events shape you as a person?*
5. *What do you need to start doing to find contentment in who you are and what you do?*

CONTENT IN RELATIONSHIPS AND STUFF

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TALKING POINTS

True contentment can't be found in people or possessions. Only God can bring us true fulfillment and happiness.

- We will never find contentment if we only focus on the imperfection in others. We will be miserable if we expect perfection from imperfect people.
- Forgiveness is a necessary step in healing a relationship. Extending forgiveness is what frees us to move on from the junk to a place of healing and reconciliation. Colossians 3:12-13
- A.W. Tozer said it like this: "Within the human heart things have taken over. God's gifts now take the place of God, and the whole course of nature is upset by the monstrous substitution. We have mixed up what we serve and what we use. Sadly, many serve things and use God." Exodus 20:4

DISCUSSION

1. *What happens when we put too much stock in our relationships? Why is it dangerous to expect perfection from others?*
2. *What are some of your imperfections that get in the way of having healthy relationships?*
3. *Read Colossians 3:12-13. List all the qualities you should possess. How could these qualities change your relationships? Why is forgiveness so freeing?*
4. *What are your most prized possessions? Why are those things so important to you?*
5. *Re-read the quote from A.W. Tozer. How have you been guilty of worshiping your stuff instead of God?*
6. *Read Exodus 20:4. What are some practical things you can do to start prioritizing God over everything else?*

NOTES

WORRY, FAITH AND TRUST

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TALKING POINTS

Worry is a waste of energy yet we all do it anyways. Find out a better way to live your life.

- The truth is, worry adds no value to our lives. It has no power to bring about productive change. All it does is choke out hope and proper perspective. This is why Jesus tells us not to worry. Matthew 6:31-33
- Faith is the antidote to worry and the bridge to true contentment. Faith is releasing any control we think we have and letting God lead the way. Psalm 18:2
- God is the all-knowing creator of everything. He has the power and the desire to work all situations in our lives for our good. Romans 8:28

DISCUSSION

1. *What does worry look like to you? How has the long shadow of worry held you back in your life?*
2. *Read Matthew 6:31-33. Jesus says that worry is what unbelievers do who don't know God. How should that challenge us as believers?*
3. *Define faith in your own words. Why is faith important to overcoming worry?*
4. *Read Philippians 4:6-7. What are some of the areas where you need to trust God more? What are some practical things you can do to stop worrying and start trusting God?*
5. *In the past, how have you judged God based on your circumstances? How did that affect your relationship with God?*
6. *Read Psalm 18:2. Identify all the things this verse says about God. Why is he worthy of our trust?*

NOTES



Lined area for writing notes, consisting of 25 horizontal lines.