

Am I Content To Give Thanks?

A Happy Thanksgiving to all of you. Our study this morning takes us to Philippians 4 to investigate contentment.

I have three major points as you can see in your bulletin. They are:

I. Looking at the Particulars (i.e., some details relative to the passage & subject)

II. With Paul in the School of Contentment (We'll look at Paul's contentment.)

III. Contentment & the Gospel: Is Jesus Enough? (A way of summarizing our discussion today.)

If you are taking notes, notice we have left room for some subpoints, and I'll try to alert you to them as we go along. "Looking at the Particulars" is the longest section while the last two sections are more brief.

So, hear now the public reading of Scripture which we believe to be the very word of God without error in the originals. Starting at v. 10, reading to v. 20.

¹⁰I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹²I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

¹⁴Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. ¹⁷Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. ¹⁸I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

When I thought it would be appropriate to talk about giving thanks on the Thanksgiving weekend, my mind quickly went to the notion of contentment and then quickly to the verse, Philippians 4:11 "for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content." My logic was that when I am content, I find that the giving of thanks is more evident in my life than when I am discontent. Of course, the Scriptures, encourage us to give thanks when we are discontent as well. Think of 1 Thessalonians 5:17-19: "¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit." So to give thanks is the very will of God for us, and when we are content, it seems that thanksgiving flows more easily, doesn't it?

So where is your contentment this morning?

Are you discontented with your job, your paycheck or money situation, with your schooling, with your parents or brothers or sisters, with your wife or husband, with your business partners or clients or vendors, with your car or house, with your long-term prospects or your past mistakes, failures, or injuries inflicted by someone else?

When I ask such questions, each of us can feel rising anxieties, disappointments, fears, hurts, and

haunting questions that go to the heart of the question of am I content or just how discontent am I?

So let's address a few thoughts that can be raised by our passage.

First, let's review what contentment is.

A simple definition is: happiness with one's situation in life.

M.G., Matthew George, Easton (1823-1894) was a Scottish Presbyterian preacher and writer living in the mid-to-late 1800's. His *Easton's Bible Dictionary* was published in 1897 three years after his death.

Here's his definition: "a state of mind in which one's desires are confined to his lot whatever it may be. It arises from the inward disposition and is the offspring of humility, and of an intelligent consideration of the moral correctness (rectitude) and kindness (benignity) of divine providence, the greatness of the divine promises, and our own unworthiness as well as from the view the gospel opens up to us of rest and peace hereafter.

It is opposed to envy, avarice, ambition, anxiety, and repining (complaining)."

So as a Christian, contentment is probably how I think about my life in the moment. It is, in some respects, the honest and complete answer to that daily greeting we give each other, "How are you?"... "How are you doing?"

For several years, Marty Schofield and his family attended our church. Marty has a friendly smile, a solid handshake and an unforgettable response to the greeting, "How are you?". He always said, "I'm blessed."

That answer regularly unnerved me because I knew that was what should flow from my heart. "I'm blessed" is a God-centered response that expresses the basic facts of a Christian's biblical worldview.

"I'm blessed" is a confession of thanks that speaks from a place of contentment. Marty has given me a great gift by helping me learn to confess that which I know to be true in the daily interaction of life.

You found in your chair this morning a copy of the outline of a book by Jeremiah Burroughs, a Puritan who was a part of the crafting of the Westminster Confession of Faith. He was not a Presbyterian, but a Congregationalist. There is a little bio of him on the back of the sheet. He wrote a book called "The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment", and I came across the book many years ago. It has been a great aide to me to understand the nature of contentment. His book help open my eyes to how poisonous discontent is to my soul and how idolatrous and sinful my mumbling, whining, complaining, and expressions of profound disappointment in God are. I'll sprinkle this sermon with some of his wisdom.

Burroughs says in defining contentment: "Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God's wise and fatherly disposal in every condition."

He says "it is a work of the Spirit indoors."

So now we have some definitions on which to reflect.

Secondly in looking at the particulars, let's turn back to our passage and remind ourselves of the broad context. Paul is most likely writing from Rome around 61 AD. Under house arrest awaiting his day before Caesar as described in Acts 28, Paul is perhaps six years from his death under Nero's persecution, but he probably assumes his death is more imminent. In chapter 1, he mentions his desire to not at all be ashamed so that Christ would be honored in his body, whether by life or death (v.20). Remember, in Chapter 1, verse 21, he proclaims: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

The founding of the church at ancient Philippi in ruins today is recorded in Acts 16. Philippi was the first place in essence in Europe where Paul plants a church on his second missionary journey. Acts 16:9 tells us that the Spirit led him there by a vision. Remember the conversion of Lydia, the beating of Paul and Silas, and the earthquake which pries open the prison doors and results in the conversion of the jailer. So Paul's efforts there result in the founding of a largely Gentile church to which now he writes.

Evidently, and it is germane to our discussion, that church had sent Paul a gift in the hands of a man named Epaphroditus whom Paul was sending back to them. This church was unique in its support of his mission. We see then that this Philippian church is part of the means by which God supplies Paul contributing to his physical contentment.

One more issue with the Philippian context is relevant to us this morning. You remember also in this letter that he encourages two godly Christian women in this church to come to agreement.

Our speaker this past weekend on our retreat, Richard Pettit pointed out this passage to us as he discussed with us what biblical peacemaking is.

The next sentence after Paul exhorts the church to help solve these ladies' dispute is a familiar one. Chapter 4, verse 4:

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Wonder what in Paul's mind led him to say that... right after an appeal to solve a relational conflict?

Often, when we think about contentment, we think about our physical creature comfort circumstances... how much money we have, how our health is going, what our future prospects are. I imagine these ladies were not very content. I'm reminded that contentment is as much the state of our relationships as it is my physical or financial circumstances. I hear Paul reminding me to do certain things when anxiety rises over relationships and circumstances... talk to God, don't not involve Him, don't run from Him, don't pretend that He is not involved, talk to Him with a mindset that somehow has thanksgiving associated with it.

It is almost as if whether in a relationship or a circumstance, the giving of thanks creates thanksgiving... contentment that was not there until you began the giving of thanks, suddenly appears.

I remember many years ago when I was on WDA staff we were asked to take a full day of prayer. We gathered at a retreat center and then went outside to find a solitary place. I think the first 30 minutes we were to just be silent. And then the next hour after that, we were to write down everything we could think of that we were thankful for.

I remember that at some point in this process I started crying because I was so ashamed at how only when I was forced to begin listing all the things in my life for which I was thankful ... did they come to mind... and how I rarely live in that vast catalog of gifts and mercies and kindnesses that the Lord has given me.

Thirdly, in discussing particulars, let us remind ourselves how brutal discontent is. Often, by looking at the opposite of something, it helps us define and clarify what we are discussing. So let's ask ourselves what does the Bible tell us about discontent? How do I become discontented?

One of the first passages that came to mind was James 4:1-3:

“What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.”

I covet and cannot obtain, so I fight and quarrel.

Colossians 3:5 says: “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”

In Exodus 20:17, we hear the tenth commandment: “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.” Jesus says in Luke 12:15: “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”

So, to covet is to want something that God in His providence and mercy has decided would not be to my benefit and to His glory. Coveting becomes idolatry because I begin to worship my desires for certain things or people or situations more than caring for God or what he wants.

Burroughs on your sheet points out that discontent is often accompanied by murmuring before God... a muttering in front of God that attacks His goodness or His greatness which is sinful. In Deuteronomy 1, Moses was speaking to Israel reminding them of their actions: “²⁶ Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God. ²⁷ And you murmured in your tents and said, ‘Because the LORD hated us he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to give us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. (Deut 1:26-27)

The point is that a lack of contentment or a weak resolve to pursue it can be a real danger for us. Our fuming over our blocked desires has us muttering that God is not good... that He is not great... that He doesn't really care about my needs or my wants. We disrespect Him. We cease worship. We don't wait on Him. We replace Him with other idols who do our bidding. All from a

little discontent. Paul tells Timothy: “Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world.” (1 Tim 6:6)

Contentment is an evidence of spiritual maturity; discontent is just a deadly toxin that progressively spiritually kills.

Finally, in discussing the different facets of contentment, let me conclude our discussion about particulars by pointing out how much our theology is wrapped up in looking at contentment. Theology is the study of God and everything that relates to Him. We cannot discover about God unless He reveals Himself to us. And He has in creation, the Bible, and most fully in Jesus.

What does this have to do with contentment? Quite a bit.

We learn from Genesis 1 and 2 that in the beginning, there was contentment. We learn from Genesis 3 that everything broke when Adam and Eve sinned. Sin and death came into the world. “For the wages of sin is death.” says Romans 6:23.

But also in Genesis 3 is the proclamation of a promise that even death will die sometime in the future with the prophecy that the seed of the woman will crush the Deceiver’s head. For the believer in Christ, death has been struck a mortal blow. Death is dying.

“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:4)

“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Sounds like contentment for believers in the end.

See the flow biblically: Contentment, brokenness, Christ, Contentment again.

Years ago I was at the Pettigrew’s house and saw on their worktable all these pieces of colored broken glass. And Norma in her regular self-effacing manner said when I asked that she was working on creating stained-glass art. Of course, her finished work was beautiful.

The Bible tells us that we live in the broken glass period of eternity.

Contentment may have a lot to do with viewing the broken glass of who we are and what happens to us as a part of a greater magnificent piece of art that God is repairing and redeeming and restoring into something that almost doesn’t even resemble the pieces anymore.

I think contentment has a lot to do with analyzing my expectations of life and people and applying my theology to it... to be clear that life is now broken, not perfect, or anywhere near perfect. But that fact is not the end of the story either. Like in Narnia, a powerful, covenantal magic is afoot. The broken pieces of our lives and world are coming together in something awe-inspiring. See the broken pieces in the light of the redeeming future, the beauty of the finished whole piece.

So in the particulars, we looked at some definitions of contentment, discussed the Philippian letter context and its hints, observed the lousy roots of discontent, and let our big-picture theology remind us that our expectations always need biblical adjustment.

Let's now look at Paul in his school of contentment.

Two points here and one observation. First, the observation.

What kind of life did Paul lead after coming to Christ?

Listen to what he says in 2 Corinthians 11 as he defends his apostolic authority and his love for the Corinthians:

“²⁴Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; ²⁶on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; ²⁷in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. ²⁸And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.” (2 Cor 11:24-28)

Circumstantially and relationally, that is as hard a life as most anyone any of us have ever known, isn't it? My life is almost heaven compared to his.

And yet, He says in Phil 4, “for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹²I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

You know what jumps out at me? “I have learned. I have learned to be content.” Contentment was not something he had... until he learned it. He had to be taught by someone through all those horrible, miserable, nasty, circumstances and people. Jesus taught Paul through broken places and broken people to be content.

Jeremiah Burroughs writes:

“Contentment in every condition is a great art, a spiritual mystery. It is to be learned, and to be learned as a mystery. Paul's meaning must be, I find a sufficiency of satisfaction in my own heart, through the grace of Christ that is in me. Though I have not outward comforts and worldly conveniences to supply my necessities, yet I have a sufficient portion between Christ and my soul abundantly to satisfy me in every condition. ...

The doctrinal conclusion briefly is this: That to be well skilled in the mystery of Christian contentment is the duty, glory and excellence of a Christian.”

If you remember anything from today, let it be that contentment is a “learned” happiness, not one you just fall into at some point in your life... and that Christ is the wisest and most loving Teacher.

Also, was Paul learning contentment on his own in a Lone Ranger kind of Christian life? No. Verse 10 says: “You were indeed concerned for me.” Verse 14 says: “Yet it was kind of you to

share my trouble.” verse 18: “I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.”

The community of faith encouraged Paul in his contentment schooling. Jesus used the church body to contribute to Paul’s sanctification.

Are we contributing to each other’s contentment? Are we well-supplying one another? Are you connected to this body so that you can participate in growing in your contentment? Let’s pray that we can and that we will.

We have observed that in the midst of a crazy, broken, hectic life that Paul led, late in his life, he could say that contentment was something that he had to learn at the feet of Christ with the aid of Christ’s church.

Then finally, what does contentment have to do with the Gospel?

It has everything to do with the Gospel. The Gospel is the proclamation that Jesus’ life and atoning death were sufficient to satisfy the justice and wrath of God towards a person’s sins, isn’t it? If that person agrees with God that he or she is worthy of eternal death due to his or her sins and walks away from a dependence on their own behaviour to please God, God will save that man or woman, boy or girl.

One becomes a Christian when he or she trusts Christ’s work only for his or her acceptance before God... believing that Christ alone can make peace with God the Father.

Paul says earlier in the Philippian letter in Chapter 3:

“But whatever gain I had (that is the gain of formerly being a good Jewish person), I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, **not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith--**

The totality of what Jesus has done and who Jesus is... is enough for the Father. Jesus has made full peace with the Father for us.

So in the area of our sins, we have contentment through faith in Christ, don’t we?

So you see the question coming don’t you? Is Jesus enough for everything else? ³¹... If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?” (Romans 8:31-32).

The big statement behind, around, underneath, and on every side of the Gospel is that Jesus is enough. Often my struggle with contentment is simply a trust issue. I don’t trust that Jesus is enough. This is how I can think and act sadly.

I decide that I want certain things or I don’t want other things or I want people to behave in certain ways in my life. Since I know that God is in control of all things when my circumstances are not as desired, I have to find a way to manipulate God into making the changes I want.

Now why in the world would I think that I could get God to do what I want?

Because I have lost the Gospel truth that Jesus is enough. I have wandered into thinking and acting like my performance in some way is going to persuade God to give me better relationships or circumstances so that I will have a measure of contentment.

God does not treat me in Christ as I deserve because Jesus is enough.

And if I trusted that Jesus was enough in every aspect of life as he is in my salvation, I wouldn't be so discontent.

Philippians 4:14: "I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:20: And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen."

Who do I think I am that I can manipulate the only One who knows and can do for me all that I have, do now, or will ever need?

Tim Keller writes in the Galatians study that many of us are studying in small groups: "Luther was right. If you are obeying the law without deep joy in your acceptance in Christ, you are not loving God with all your heart. You are not obeying God for God. You are being moral so that you can put God in your debt, so he owes you a comfortable life. You are being moral so that you can feel secure in your uprightness. You are being moral in the service of self-salvation, out of the fear and pride that arise without an identity built on Christ in the gospel."

"Without a deep grasp of the gospel, we believe that salvation/happiness/blessing depends conditionally on something we are or do. Thus everyone builds their identity on something besides Jesus."

The Gospel is that Jesus is enough for everything. And when that truth grips us fully we can say with Paul... "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹²I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

In *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, Jeremiah Burroughs concludes:

"That man or woman who is never without a contented spirit, truly can never be said to want much. Oh, the Word holds forth a way full of comfort and peace to the people of God even in this world. You may live happy lives in the midst of all the storms and tempests in the world. There is an ark that you may come into, and no men in the world may live such comfortable, cheerful and contented lives as the saints of God."

Let's pray together.

Father, we give you thanks that you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are enough for everything we need. You are what we want. And we will not be content until we have You and all of You.

Content us in the now. Inspire us with a vision of the greatness of the Not Yet where we will behold fully the beauty and the splendor of the Almighty God.

May Jesus have his just reward in our contentment.

For His sake and in His name, Amen.

As we seek our contentment in Jesus let us sing to Him, Number 565, “All for Jesus” (Trinity Hymnal).

The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment : Outline of Book (pub: 1648) : Jeremiah Burroughs

1. CHRISTIAN CONTENTMENT DESCRIBED

- I. It is inward
- II. It is quiet, What this is not opposed to, What it is opposed to
- III. It is a frame of spirit
- IV. It is a gracious frame
- V. It freely submits to God's disposal
- VI. It submits to God's disposal
- VIII. It submits and takes please in God's disposal
- IX. It does this in every condition

2. THE MYSTERY OF CONTENTMENT

- I. A Christian is content, yet unsatisfied
- II. He comes to contentment by subtraction
- III. By adding another burden to himself
- IV. By changing the affliction into something else
- V. By doing the work of his circumstances
- VI. By melting his will into God's will
- VIII. He lives on the dew of God's blessing
- IX. He sees God's love in afflictions
- X. His afflictions are sanctified in Christ
- XI. He gets strength from Christ
- XII. He makes up his wants in God
- XIII. He gets contentment from the Covenant, He supplies wants by what he finds in himself. He gets supply from the Covenant
 - 1 . The Covenant in general
 - 2 . Particular promises in the Covenant
- XIV. He realizes the things of Heaven
- XV. He opens his heart to God

3. HOW CHRIST TEACHES CONTENTMENT

- I. The lesson of self-denial
- II. The vanity of the creature
- III. To know the one thing needful
- IV. To know one's relation to the world
- V. Wherein the good of the creature is
- VI. The knowledge of one's own heart
- VII. The burden of a prosperous condition
- VIII. The evil of being given up to one's heart desires
- IX. The right knowledge of God's providence

4. THE EXCELLENCE OF CONTENTMENT

- I. By it we give God his due worship
- II. In it is much exercise of grace
- III. The soul is fitted to receive mercy
- IV. It is fitted to do service
- V. It delivers from temptations
- VI. It brings abundant comforts
- VII. It gets the comfort of things not possessed
- VIII. It is a great blessing on the soul
- IX. A contented man may expect reward
- X. By it the soul comes nearest the excellence of God

5. THE EVILS OF A MURMURING SPIRIT

- I. It argues much corruption in the soul
- II. It is the mark of an ungodly man
- III. Murmuring is accounted rebellion
- IV. It is contrary to grace, especially in conversion
- V. It is below a Christian
- VI. By murmuring we undo our prayers
- VII. The evil effects of murmuring
- VIII. Discontent is a foolish sin
- IX. It provokes the wrath of God
- X. There is a curse on it
- XI. There is much of the spirit of Satan in it
- XII. It brings an absolute necessity of disquiet
- XIII. God may withdraw his protection

6. AGGRAVATIONS OF THE SIN OF MURMURING

- I. The greater the mercies the greater the sin of murmuring
- II. When we murmur for small things
- III. When men of gifts and abilities murmur
- IV. The freeness of God's mercy
- V. When we have the things for the want of which we were discontented
- VI. When men are raised from a low position
- VII. When men have been great sinners
- VIII. When men are of little use in the world
- IX. When God is about to humble us
- X. When God's hand is apparent in an affliction
- XI. When God has afflicted us for a long time

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7. THE EXCUSES OF A DISCONTENTED HEART

- I. It is a sense of my condition'
- II. 'I am troubled by my sin'
- III. 'God withdraws himself from me'
- IV. 'It is men's bad treatment that troubles me'
- V. 'I never expected this affliction'
- VI. 'My affliction is so great'
- VII. 'My affliction is greater than others'
- VIII. 'If the affliction were any other, I could be content'
- IX. 'My afflictions make me unserviceable to God'
- X. 'My condition is unsettled'
- XI. 'I have been in a better condition'
- XII. I am crossed after taking great pains'
- XIII. 'I do not break out in discontent'

Jeremiah Burroughs

Jeremiah Burroughs (b.. 1599 or 1600 – d. London, November 13, 1646) was an English Congregationalist and a well-known Puritan preacher.



Burroughs studied at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and was graduated M.A. in 1624, but left the university because of non-conformity. He was assistant to Edmund Calamy at Bury St. Edmunds, and in 1631 became rector of Tivetshall, Norfolk. He was suspended for non-conformity in 1636 and soon afterward deprived, he went to Rotterdam (1637) and became "teacher" of the English church there. He returned to England in 1641 and served as preacher at Stepney and Cripplegate, London. **He was a member of the Westminster Assembly and one of the few who opposed the Presbyterian majority (hk: regarding form of church government not other issues).** While one of the most distinguished of the English Independents, he was one of the most moderate, acting consistently in accordance with the motto on his study door (in Latin and Greek): "Opinionum varietas et opinantium unitas non sunt" ("Difference of belief and unity of believers are not inconsistent").

8. HOW TO ATTAIN CONTENTMENT

- I. Considerations to content the heart in any afflicted condition
 - 1 . The greatness of the mercies we have
 - 2 . God is beforehand with us with his mercies
 - 3 . The abundance of mercies God bestows
 - 4 . All creatures are in a vicissitude
 - 5 . The creatures suffer for us
 - 6 . We have but little time in the world
 - 7 . This has been the condition of our betters
 - 8 . We were content with the world without grace, and should be now with grace without the world
 - 9 . We did not give God the glory when we had our desires
 10. The experience of God doing us a good in afflictions
- II. Directions for attaining contentment
 - 1 . There must be grace to make the soul steady
 - 2 . Do not grasp too much of the world
 - 3 . Have a call to every business
 4. Walk by rule
 5. Exercise much faith
 - 6 . Labour to be spiritually-minded
 - 7 . Do not promise yourselves great things
 - 8 . Get hearts mortified to the world
 - 9 . Do not pore too much on afflictions
 10. Make a good interpretation of God's ways to you
 11. Do not regard the fancies of other men
 12. Do not be inordinately taken up with the comforts of the world

More biographical information on Jeremiah Burroughs can be found at this web address:

<http://www.apuritansmind.com/MemoirsPuritans/MemoirsPuritansJeremiahBurroughs.htmhs>