



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

# Links Players

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## Contentment

I can do all this through Him who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:13, NIV)

I hate to use a golf analogy here, so be patient. I don't believe God will give you those extra 30 yards you desperately need on your drives or convert your yips to steady hands to make you content. How about that for a truthful start? Didn't the verse say we could do all "this?"

How about the spiritual realm and our life with Jesus? Can we do all things through Christ who strengthens us?

It is good to look at the context here. In the verse before Philippians 4:12, Paul includes a list of life situations that he refers to as "I can do all this." This refers to contentment in various life circumstances.

Paul is content with humble means and prosperity. He calls it the secret of both having abundance and suffering need, and Paul really did know suffering.

Contentment is a beautiful thing. It means we trust, no matter what. Trust in abundance and also trust in suffering need.

We can do this. We can be content with Christ. We will never be content without Christ.

Contentment is not about accomplishing great things, especially in the eyes of this world, but it is about accepting our situation and God's will in the midst of our difficult circumstances, resulting in trusting God even more.

Contentment is that beautiful trust while we are briefly on the top of the mountain and also in the muck and mire of the struggles in the valley. We can be rich when we have little and poor when we have everything.

The author, Barbara Johnson, says, "In every life, we have mountaintop experiences and valley experiences. I am convinced that we learn more in the valleys because that is where the fertilizer is." I have selfishly learned to be content when all is well, and my needs are being met. The Apostle Paul saw it differently and is an example of contentment in the storm. In 2 Corinthians 11:24-27, he says, "Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I

was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent adrift at sea. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers at sea, dangers among false brothers; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.”

That is quite a list, but He tells us to accept all this with contentment. He has learned contentment through experience.

I conclude with a story and a lesson. A good friend recently went on a mission trip to Nigeria to care for people dying of aids. He did not know what to expect, so he took a devotional book to read to them. Most were Christians who had contracted the disease in many different ways. He wanted to be useful and helpful.

What he experienced changed his life. He said, “I thought I would help these poor people who were going through such a rough time. I discovered that they helped me. They showed me how to die well and be content in the most brutal situations. Those who knew Jesus were getting ready for the great reunion and demonstrated their trust with contentment.”

Our life is full of all this. I am striving to be content in all this through Christ, who strengthens me. I am learning to accept His plan, no matter what! I am convinced I cannot do all this on my own.

**Prayer: All these things mean everything, from having abundance to suffering lack. Thank you, Lord Jesus!**

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Randy Wolff

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