

BRIGHT LIGHTS OF CONTENTMENT

TEXT: (Matthew 5:14-16, MSG)

¹⁴ “Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. ¹⁵ If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! ¹⁶ Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.

INTRODUCTION

1. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16, KJV).
2. “Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, ‘children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.’ Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life” (Philippians 2:14-16, NIV).

I. BEGIN WITH SELF

1. Always keep in mind, you have been saved to be a witness of the glory of God.
 - a. “God...reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation” (II Corinthians 5:18, NIV).
2. “First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye” (Matthew 7:5, NIV).
3. “Abandon every display of selfishness. Possess a greater concern for what matters to others instead of your own interests. And consider the example that Jesus, the Anointed One, has set before us. Let his mindset become your motivation” (Philippians 2:4-5, TPT).
4. “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you” (Isaiah 26:3, NIV).
5. “With God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26, NIV).
6. “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31, NIV).
7. “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV).

A. Model a Positive Outlook.

1. “Whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things” (Philippians 4:8, NIV).

B. Pray for the Negative Person

1. “I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:11-13, NIV).

II. HEAVENLY SATISFACTION

1. “But a good man *will be satisfied* from above (from above himself)” (Proverbs

14:14, NKJV).

A. Food

1. "That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was.
Moses said to them, 'It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat. This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Each one is to gather as much as he needs. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent'" (Exodus 16:13-16, NIV).
2. "I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. They are always generous and lend freely; their children will be blessed" (Psalm 37:25-26, NIV).
3. "Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing. The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing" (Psalm 34:8-10, NIV).

B. Water

1. "They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ" (I Corinthians 10:3-4, NIV).
2. "On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink'" (John 7:37, NIV).

C. Satisfaction

1. "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances" (Philippians 4:11, NIV).
2. "But a good man *will be satisfied* from above (from above himself)" (Proverbs 14:14, NKJV).

III. CONTENTMENT—THE BY-PRODUCT OF TRUSTING GOD

1. "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (I Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV).

A. Great Gain Through Contentment

1. "I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances" (Philippians 4:13, NIV).
2. "But godliness with contentment is great gain" (I Timothy 6:6, NIV).

B. Don't Be Anxious

1. "Do not be anxious about anything" (Philippians 4:6, NIV).
2. "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (I Peter 5:7, NIV).

C. Be Prayerful and Thankful in Everything

1. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6, NIV).
2. "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (I Thessalonians 5:18, NIV).