

Enough Is Enough (Learn How to Be Content) by Mel Capparros, OMF Literature, Manila, Philippines (2018). (34 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols.)

“This excellent, insightful book by our brother, Pastor Mel Caparros, on the biblical teaching of contentment (from the book of Philippians) is much needed in a world of demanding entitlement and selfishness, even among many Christians. Pastor Mel challenges us as believers to find our satisfaction, our contentment not in health, happiness, possessions, power, prestige, popularity, friendships, family, fame, or finances – all of which are passing – but only in the eternal Christ! My joy is to be in Him and in Him alone! Contentment is found in knowing the Lord of the universe personally and in His love and care for me! He created me, saved me through His life, death, and resurrection, and planned my life in eternity past for my good and for His glory! Yes, may His wonderful name be praised as we find our “complete contentment” in Him.” – Doug Nichols, Founder, Action International Ministries, Global Missions Advocate/Mobilizer serving internationally (especially the Philippines) with Commission To Every Nation (CTEN)

1. Knowing God Is Crucially Important.

It is in God that our soul finds our deepest contentment. The theologian, J. I Packer wrote, “Knowing about God is crucially important for the living of our lives. Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life, blindfolded, as it were, with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you. This way, you can waste your life and lose your soul.” [pages 15-16]

2. Learning Contentment.

Pastor Mel Caparros has done the Church a wonderful service by writing this book, where he faithfully points us to the Almighty God. Contentment in God is a vital lesson to learn in our radical discipleship to Jesus. The Apostle Paul says, “I have learned to be content.” Contentment is not automatic. It must be learned. A faithful disciple of Christ, Mel leads us to the secret of contentment – knowing that Christ is enough for us. Indeed, Christ is everything. And if Christ is everything, then Christ is enough. In this inspired school of contentment, Mel shares with us the key to a victorious life in Christ. It’s all about Jesus! – Pastor Edmund Chan [page 16]

3. Christ Empowering Weak Humans.

We do not need the artificial helps that only serve to fill the schedules of our boring lives but do nothing to produce a life of rest in Christ. I also share some of the vivid memories in my education towards contentment, not to glory in my triumphs, but to show how Christ empowers a weak human being like me to arrive at the place of contentment, where the soul can honestly say, “Christ is enough for me!” [page 20]

4. Rejoicing Greatly in the Lord.

If you do not have Christ, you will have no genuine joy. If you have no genuine joy in Christ, you will not be content. Paul lived in this sphere of life in Christ, therefore he was able to say, [I] rejoiced in the Lord greatly. [page 31]

5. Contentment in Mind and Heart.

Contentment is deprived from rejoicing and rejoicing is derived from that sphere of life in Christ. In effect, the sphere of life in Christ produces rejoicing and rejoicing produces contentment. Once this contentment is understood, you are well on your way to learning contentment, not just in your mind, but in your heart. [page 36]

6. Joy in God.

He is our reward! If you do not find genuine joy in God, you'll never learn how to be content. [page 37]

7. Joy in the Unchangeable Lord.

Genuine joy is not dictated by your changing circumstances; it is found in the unchangeable Lord. [page 38]

8. Genuine Rejoicing in the Lord.

When Paul spoke about rejoicing in the Lord, he was not merely pushing the idea of pursuing a godly passion; he was talking about the sphere of life that genuine believers in Christ have, which brings about genuine rejoicing. [page 38]

9. God Is Immutable.

God cannot turn a blind eye on man's sins because He is holy. He cannot take upon Himself something that is against His character. God is immutable. He cannot bend His laws to accommodate man's dire need. But He is also all-loving and so provided a way for man to be saved through His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus was both fully Man and fully the Son of God. He fully satisfied the holy demands and justice of God, paving the way for mankind's salvation. Christ became our propitiation – on our behalf, Jesus atoned for our sins. [page 40]

10. Everything We Have Does Not Accomplish Salvation.

Paul used to be extremely confident of his cultural heritage and his religious accomplishments, but then he realized that everything he was and everything he had would not accomplish salvation for him. Christ was the only way to salvation! [page 40]

11. Christ Was Fully God and Fully Man.

Paul explains to us that Jesus is no ordinary man or mere prophet. He is God, who humbled Himself to become man (Philippians 2: 5-7). In His incarnation, Jesus became both fully God and fully man. He “humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death on a cross” (Philippians 2:8). He died and rose again to be the Victorious Savior and Living Lord! Paul says, “For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11). Believe in this Jesus and you will truly be saved. [pages 41-42]

12. Every Aspect of Life Changed by God.

Peter said, “Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19). Repentance involves a change of mind and does not, in any way, refer to changing one’s self through one’s own strength or determination. That would mean that salvation is partially our work, which is totally unbiblical. Repentance is not only grieving for and confessing our sins (that would only be remorse or mere sorrow for sin and is inadequate), but it is – most importantly and necessarily – an absolute surrender to the Lordship of Christ. True repentance is a declaration that everything we are and everything we have belongs to Christ and that we are absolutely willing to have every aspect of our lives changed by God.

Biblical repentance also requires absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit for personal sanctification. True change can only come about through the power of the Holy Spirit. [page 44]

13. Contentment Is Learned.

Contentment ... is learned. It is not something that is automatically switched on when we receive Christ! No, contentment is not our “default” position; it is something we work on as we go through various circumstances. Paul learned contentment not by sitting in a classroom, but through experience. He did not learn it under Gamaliel’s teaching but during his walk with Christ. The tense of the verb “learned” connotes that “Paul’s whole experience, especially as a Christian, up to the present has been a sort of schooling from which he has not failed to master its lessons.” [page 65]

14. Grandeur and Power Are Not Part of God's Heart.

Visions of grandeur and power are not in line with the heart of God and He seeks to promote only those who are humble and content. [page 72]

15. The Holiness of God and Our Utter Sinfulness.

Sometimes, our inability to grasp the concept of grace stems from the fact that we fail to see the absolute holiness and transcendence of God . When we consider the holiness of God compared to our utter sinfulness, then we will have a deeper appreciation of grace. [page 76]

16. Grace Makes Us Content and at Rest.

Grace humbles us – it doesn't make us proud or arrogant. Grace causes us to be content and at rest with God – it doesn't make us grumblers or complainers. Grace makes us love God more – not hate Him and label Him unfair. Grace makes us worship – it doesn't make us raise our fists against God. Grace makes us understand that God has treated us and will continue to treat us *better than we deserve*. [page 76]

17. With the Cross We have No Hope or Future.

Oh, what great need for our generation to grasp the full meaning and depths of the Gospel that we may respond in true worship and intimate adoration of our Savior! May we never forget that it only through the blood of Christ that we find acceptance in the loving arms of the Father. Without the Cross we are doomed to a life with no hope and no future. [page 77]

18. Our Spirits Are Under-nourished.

Man is spirit, soul, and body. You and I know that we continually and naturally nourish the soul and the body. We feed our bodies at least three times a day, sometimes five or six times, including midnight snacks. We feed our souls (or our self-consciousness) by educating our minds through school and reading. What is largely undernourished is our spirits (or our God-consciousness), which need to be fed with God's Word. We tend to desperately seek answers concerning God and His dealings when we go through periods of lack. We are driven to the Scriptures, which feed our spirits with God's attributes and promises. [pages 84-85]

19. Everything Revolves Around Christ.

Philippians 4:13 is a famous, but sadly often used and abused verse. When one considers the "all things" in its immediate context, we see that Paul was primarily talking about being triumphant whether in prosperity or hardship, in feasting or fasting, in abundance or need. We can, however, broaden our application when we

consider the context of the whole letter. For Paul “to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21). Knowing Christ was so precious and impactful that Paul’s life turned right-side up – gains became losses, and trophies became trash (see Philippians 3:7-10). Paul was radically Christ-centered. Everything revolved around Christ. “To take [Philippians 4:13] out of that singular Christ-focused context of [Paul’s] life,” says Gordon Fee, “is to doom it to serve for lesser, more often selfish, things.” [page 92]

20. Doing All with God’s Will.

Theologian Steve Lawson offers seven helpful qualifications for us not to understand and misapply the verse:

First, this does not mean God will empower me to sin ... Second, this does not mean I can do supernatural physical feats, such as jump across the Atlantic Ocean or flap my arms and fly to the moon ... Third, this means I can do all things within the will of God ... Fourth, this does not relieve me of my responsibility to commit myself to the means of grace – God’s word, God’s meal at the Lord’s Supper, and so on ... Fifth, this does not remove my responsibility to confess [my] sin and to repent ... Sixth, this does not mean that as I can live my Christian life knowing the power of God is far greater than whatever the difficulty is that I am facing ... Seventh, God does this work in the Christian at the deepest level of their innermost being. [pages 92-93]

21. Humble Ourselves.

We must humble ourselves completely and depend only on the strength of our Crucified and Risen Christ. [page 99]

22. Abide in God’s Word.

One of the ways to abide in Christ is through His Word but how can people abide in the Word if pastors do not study the Bible thoroughly in order to impart God’s message accurately and communicate it effectively? Each believer is responsible to abide in God’s Word, but God has gifted the church with pastor-teachers who have the responsibility to rightly divine His Word so that God’s people get it right and can live it right. [page 102]

23. Not Praying, Relying on Self.

People who don’t pray are really saying to God that they can handle their problems, and that smacks of much pride and self-sufficiency, traits which God doesn’t take pleasure in. [page 109]

24. Apart from Christ, We Are Nothing.

People who are humble or want to be humble will pray because they realize that apart from Christ, they are nothing. That is the plain and honest truth. [page 109]

25. Covetousness Is the Opposite of Contentment.

It is impossible to be a giver if you are not content because the opposite of contentment is covetousness. Such a predisposition causes one to a “grabber” instead of being a “giver”. [page 117]

26. Giving Again and Again.

Matthew Henry adds insightfully, “Many people make it an excuse for their charity that they have given once; why should the charge come upon them again? But the Philippians sent once and again; they often relieved and refreshed him [Paul] in his necessities.” [page 119]

27. Sacrificial Giving.

We need to challenge ourselves to be more sacrificial in our giving. [page 121]

28. Consistent and Committed Generosity.

Consistent and committed generosity is a mark of true contentment, both of individual Christians and of the whole church! [page 124]

29. Can't Outgive God.

We can never outgive God and this truth has been proven over and over again in so many Christian lives. [page 127]

30. Doing to Others, We Do to God.

Whatever good we do to others, we do ultimately to God. [page 129]

31. Paul Recognized the Heavenly Deposit of the Philippians.

Biblical scholar Dr. F.F. Bruce says, “[Paul] is grateful not simply because they sent [the gift] to him but also because their sending it is a token of heavenly grace in their lives and, so to speak, a deposit in the bank of heaven that will multiply at compound interest to their advantage. They meant Paul to be the gainer from their generosity, and so indeed he is; but on the spiritual plane the permanent gain will theirs.” [page 137]

32. Give Generously to God's Work.

Paul understood that the blessing that comes when we practice sacrificial giving is provided to us so that we may be more generous to God's work. [page 150]

33. Our Lives Point to God.

The beginning, middle, and ending of our lives must always point to the glory of God, out of gratitude for not only our redemption, but for everything that God has done for us. [page 158]

34. Being Thankful to God.

When you know that God has treated you better than you deserve (and technically, we all deserve the fires of hell), how can you possibly still have a complaining and grumbling spirit? You will always be thankful to God because anything that happens to you, no matter how difficult or challenging, is still better than hellfire.

Nevertheless, this is not the only reason why we are thankful to God. We are thankful because He is Yahweh, the God who is all we need. He is our Provider, Protector, Healer, Teacher, Guide, Comforter, Strength, Refuge, Deliverer, Strong Tower, and Ever-Present Help. So what more can we ask, when He is our sufficiency and adequacy that fills our lives to overflowing! We are – and should consistently be – thankful to God because we know that whatever He allows in our lives is always for our own good: “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose” (Romans 8:28). [pages 160-161]