

Prints of Peace



“Radical Acceptance”



What is *radical acceptance*? Radical acceptance is a term used in *dialectical behavior therapy (DBT)*, a type of therapy developed in the 1970s. I discovered DBT last year when I was in the partial hospitalization program at Lehigh Valley Medical Center. Radical acceptance comes from the belief that our suffering is caused not only by our painful experiences, but also by our *responses* to those experiences. The way I think of it is this:

Say a person loses his job. That is painful and worrisome, certainly! Then, he spends the next few months feeling bitterness and resentment, saying, “This should not have happened to me! This is not the way the world should work! It’s not fair!” By holding on to that bitterness and resentment, the pain and suffering lasts longer, and gets worse. *Radical acceptance* would encourage this person to look at the experience, and ask a question like, “Well, who promised you the world would be fair? Who told you these things wouldn’t happen?” Radical acceptance encourages him to see his job loss simply as *something that happened*. Perhaps it *is* unfair. But nonetheless, it happened. And the only way to heal is to *accept that it happened*. We spend so much of our time insisting that things “shouldn’t” be the way they are.

Now, this doesn’t mean that we need to *approve* of things that happen! It doesn’t mean that we have to sit back and get taken advantage of! It may be that the person who lost his job should do something about it, perhaps file a lawsuit against the company (depending on the situation). But it does mean that if he wants to heal, it is crucial to *accept reality as it is*, rather than spend his time wishing things were different.

In my case, I have found radical acceptance most helpful in terms of relating to myself. I am learning to accept that sometimes I have feelings that are completely illogical, feelings that I am worthless, feelings that I can do nothing right. I am learning to stop *fighting against* those feelings, stop thinking that I “shouldn’t feel that way.” Maybe I shouldn’t – but telling myself that over and over again isn’t helpful. What is helpful is learning to accept that I have those feelings, and when I accept that, it makes it a little easier to move on and make decisions that aren’t based on those feelings. It’s a hard skill to learn. I’m no expert at it. But I have found it helpful.

I think we see calls to radical acceptance throughout the gospel readings we’ll hear in September. On September 4, we’ll hear about a builder who, before beginning to build a tower, sits down and estimates if he will be able to finish it. If not, he does not begin; he has to *radically accept* his situation. On September 11, we’ll meet some Pharisees who grumble against Jesus for eating with sinners. They can’t see that Jesus *radically accepts* people just where they are, without insisting they are different before he loves them. On September 18, we’ll meet a manager who is fired from his job, and on the way out makes some very interesting decisions – he *radically accepts* his situation and is praised for his shrewdness. And on September 25, we’ll see a vision of what happens to a rich man who does not see the world around him for what it is – his lack of *radical acceptance* leads him to misery.

I believe that God accepts the world (and its people) as we are, but challenges that world (and its people) to get

continued page 2

better. One of my favorite quotes about God's grace is this: "God loves you so much that God accepts you exactly as you are, but God loves you enough not to let you stay that way." God radically accepts us, and I believe God calls us to learn radical acceptance of ourselves, of others, and of our situations in life.

If you're interested in learning more about radical acceptance and DBT, here's a good resource online: www.verywellmind.com/what-is-radical-acceptance-5120614.

In Christ,



Pastor Scholtes



Please keep these people in prayer on the anniversary of their birth!

- Alani Blount, September 2
- Christopher Confalone, September 2
- James Neiley, September 7
- Micah Smith, September 9
- Douglas Hock, September 9
- Mary Jane Hower, September 10
- Samantha (Johns) Ring, September 11
- Sheri Oessenick, September 11
- Ronald Getz, September 12
- Melissa Frack, September 12
- Jessica Reinhart, September 14
- Thomas Amy, September 15
- Janessa Baker, September 15
- Alyce Hower, September 16
- Phyllis Bisher, September 17
- Samuel Blakeslee, September 18
- Wanda McCammon, September 18
- Levi Ott, September 19
- Justin Ott, September 21
- Kelly Hill, September 22
- Kay Parsons, September 24
- Patricia Duran, September 25
- Lauran Gillow, September 25
- Arlene Miller, September 25
- Mckenna Baker, September 25
- Mildred Clancy, September 26
- Staci Hock, September 27
- Jayden Garis, September 28
- Bruce Antonioli, September 29
- Matthew Schipps, September 30
- Amy Newhard, September 30



In-person (9:45 on Sundays)

All in-person worship services may include alterations to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, including (but not limited to) altered seating arrangements, the wearing of masks, and so forth. If you are not feeling well, please do not attend.

Online / Facebook / Telephone

Watch our worship each week at our website (popbangor.org/video-worship). Or watch it on our Facebook page (facebook.com/popbangor). You can also call in to hear our worship each week at 877-POP-2-POP (877-767-2767). New videos and audio files will be added each Monday.

RECENT PASTORAL ACTS

- Funeral: David Hower, July 20 (officiated by Larry Rissmiller)
- Baptism: Bethany Mae Reinhart, July 30

ARE YOU GETTING PASTORMAIL?

Pastor Scholtes sends out emails to the congregation almost every day. These *PastorMails* contain information about upcoming events, about recent decisions made in the church, and generally help to keep us all connected. If you are not receiving them, please send him a note at pastorMJS@gmail.com to get added to the list, or sign up at our church website (popbangor.org). They are also archived at popbangor.org/pastormail.

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Congregation Council is calling a special congregational meeting, to be held on Sunday, September 11 immediately following 9:45 am worship. The purpose of this meeting is to consider several amendments to our congregation's constitution. No other business will be conducted at this meeting. The full text of the proposed amendments is available on the counter in the church narthex, or by request by emailing Pastor Scholtes at pastorMJS@gmail.com. In plain English, the purpose of the amendments are to accomplish the following things:

- Change the definition of a **quorum** for congregational meetings. Instead of requiring a particular *number* of members to be present (currently 50 people), we will now require that there is a number of voting members equal to or greater than *10% of current baptized membership*. That way, the quorum number will change over time with the size of the congregation. (The current baptized number is 353, meaning a quorum would be 36.)
- Triple the amount of **money council is authorized to spend** without requiring a congregational meeting. Council will now be authorized to enter into contracts of up to \$15,000 above the budget, with no more than \$22,500 per year.
- Change the **timing of council terms**. Instead of council members serving from January 1 to December 31, they will now begin and end their terms on the date of the regular January council meeting. This allows for a smoother transition in early January.
- Change the way the **youth representative** works. Instead of having this position be one of the regular 12 council positions, it will become an *additional* position. This will result in a potential council of 14: 12 3-year council members, the youth representative, and the pastor. This will allow for us to function without issue in years when a candidate for youth representative is not available. (We would just be a 13-member council those years.)

Here is how amending the constitution works: we must call a special congregational meeting, at which the amendments must be approved by a simple majority vote. If they are approved, then they must come before the next Annual Congregational Meeting (scheduled for November 20, 2022). At that meeting, the amendments must be ratified by a 2/3 majority vote.

Please try to attend this important meeting, on Sunday, September 11, 2022 at about 11:00 am (right after worship).

SUNDAY SCHOOL:

We are happy to announce that Prince of Peace will be offering a weekly in-person Sunday School for children ages 2-11 starting Sunday, September 18th from 8:30am-9:30am. An information letter will be sent to parents about the start of Sunday School and will include a registration form. Any questions about Sunday School should be directed to Brenda Hughes or Kim Jennings. Information will also be posted on the Sunday School page of the church website: <https://popbangor.org/sunday-school>

SEPTEMBER 18th BLESSING During WORSHIP: A blessing will be offered during the 9:45am worship service for all children and teachers involved in Sunday School & Confirmation Class. Please consider attending worship this day to take part in the blessing.





CONFIRMATION: The Confirmation Class will be following a hybrid format of meeting weekly on Zoom on a weeknight and meeting in-person once a month. Colleen Hall and Chip Harrison will be meeting with parents via Zoom to go over expectations for the Confirmation Class. Any questions about the Confirmation Class should be directed to Colleen or Chip.

Date:	Greeters	Lay Reader	Assisting Minister	Ushers	Power Point and Camera	Acolyte	Offering Counter
Sunday, September 4	Brenda Hughes, Connie Itterly	Quincy Miller	Laraine Brands	Sherk and June Jones, Vivian Fahr	Kim Jennings	Sarah Harrison	Kathy Williams, Jim Jennings
Sunday, September 11	Sherk and June Jones	Sarah Harrison	April Miller	Sara Godsalk, Connie Itterly, Brenda Hughes	Tina Johns	Alex Scholtes	Bob Gist, Jackie Horn
Sunday, September 18	Sara Godshalk, Vivian Fahr	April Miller	Connie Itterly	Traci Rumsey, Sherk and June Jones	Antonioli Family	Isabel Baker	Chip Harrison, Jim Jennings
Sunday, September 25	Georgia and John Suranofsky	Sara Godshalk	Sarah Harrison	Bob Gist, Marlene and Butch Stana	Cathy Mullen	Landon Horn	John Suranofsky, Jackie Horn
Sunday, October 2	Traci Rumsey, Kale Baker	Kim Jennings	Marlene Stana	Brenda Hughes, Georgia and John Suranofsky	John Martocci	Alex Scholtes	Connie Itterly, Jim Jennings

Altar Guild for September: Connie Itterly, Diane Searfass,

Altar Guild for October: Cathy Mullen, Phyllis Bisher

Thank you for your willingness to serve!!! If you are unable to fulfill an assignment, please find someone to take your place and let Pastor Scholtes know of the change as soon as possible.

For last minute changes be sure to leave the message on Pastor Scholtes' voice mail (610-588-2355) or email him at PastorMJS@gmail.com.

More 50th Anniversary News...



POP's 50th Anniversary continues with a marriage renewal ceremony on **Saturday, September 24th at 6 pm**, followed by coffee and cake in the fellowship hall. Hope all married couples of Prince of Peace will have your vows renewed by Pastor Scholtes. There's a sign-up sheet in the Narthex, please write your name and phone number on it if you wish to attend the marriage renewal ceremony. Mark 10:9 What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate. Ephesians 4:2 With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Proverbs 18:22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor with the Lord.

In November this committee plans to place the following items in a time capsule: pictorial directory, 50th Anniversary brochure, current newsletter, copies of visiting pastor's sermons, future wish list, commemorative book, annual report, synod report, and a Lutheran magazine. We welcome your ideas for other items you would like placed in the capsule, there will be a basket on the Narthex for them.

Questions about any of the celebrations? See Jackie & Denny Horn, Brenda Stauffer, John Martocci, and Mary O'Meally



Thursday, September 1	Psalm 1; Genesis 39:1-23; Philippians 2:25-30
Friday, September 2	Psalm 1; Deuteronomy 7:12-26; Colossians 4:7-17
Saturday, September 3	Psalm 1; Deuteronomy 29:2-20; Matthew 10:34-42
Sunday, September 4	Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1; Philemon 1:1-21; Luke 14:25-33
Monday, September 5	Psalm 101; 2 Kings 17:24-41; 1 Timothy 3:14-4:5
Tuesday, September 6	Psalm 101; 2 Kings 18:9-18; 1 Timothy 4:6-16
Wednesday, September 7	Psalm 101; 2 Kings 18:19-25; 19:1-7; Luke 18:18-30
Thursday, September 8	Psalm 51:1-10; Genesis 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 1:1-11
Friday, September 9	Psalm 51:1-10; Genesis 7:6-10; 8:1-5; 2 Peter 2:1-10a
Saturday, September 10	Psalm 51:1-10; Genesis 8:20-9:7; John 10:11-21
Sunday, September 11	Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 51:1-10; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10
Monday, September 12	Psalm 73; Amos 7:1-6; 1 Timothy 1:18-20
Tuesday, September 13	Psalm 73; Jonah 3:1-10; 2 Peter 3:8-13
Wednesday, September 14	Psalm 73; Job 40:6-14; 42:1-6; Luke 22:31-33, 54-62
Thursday, September 15	Psalm 113; Exodus 23:1-9; Romans 3:1-8
Friday, September 16	Psalm 113; Ezekiel 22:17-31; Romans 8:31-39
Saturday, September 17	Psalm 113; Isaiah 5:8-23; Mark 12:41-44
Sunday, September 18	Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113; 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13
Monday, September 19	Psalm 12; Proverbs 14:12-31; Acts 4:1-12
Tuesday, September 20	Psalm 12; Proverbs 17:1-5; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23
Wednesday, September 21	Psalm 12; Proverbs 21:10-16; Luke 20:45-21:4
Thursday, September 22	Psalm 146; Proverbs 22:2-16; 2 Corinthians 8:8-15
Friday, September 23	Psalm 146; Proverbs 28:3-10; Ephesians 2:1-10
Saturday, September 24	Psalm 146; Proverbs 28:11-28; Luke 9:43b-48
Sunday, September 25	Amos 6:1a, 4-7; Psalm 146; 1 Timothy 6:6-19; Luke 16:19-31
Monday, September 26	Psalm 62; Amos 6:8-14; Revelation 3:14-22
Tuesday, September 27	Psalm 62; Hosea 10:9-15; James 5:1-6
Wednesday, September 28	Psalm 62; Hosea 12:2-14; Matthew 19:16-22
Thursday, September 29	Psalm 37:1-9; 2 Kings 18:1-8, 28-36; Revelation 2:8-11
Friday, September 30	Psalm 37:1-9; 2 Kings 19:8-20, 35-37; Revelation 2:12-29

Read these on your computer or on your phone! Go to DailyLectio.net, where you can sign up for daily emails, or download the app for iPhone or Android!



Update From P.U.M.P

Hello all! As September rolls around, the temperature gets cooler, leaves start to change, and we start thinking of hot chocolate or pumpkin spice lattes. Something else that is on almost everyone's mind is that school starts --and school shopping for the many things one needs to attend school, right? We just helped Slater Family Network by donating snacks and school supplies.

P.U.M.P. has mentioned there is a need for personal hygiene products, such as: toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, and bars of soap.

Let's now help with other necessities that we don't really think of right away when donating but are definitely needed. When shopping during the months of September and October let's pick up a few extra of these items and help someone feel confident as they go off to school.

We of Social Ministry thank you once again for your awesome generosity and your willingness to give to others with a glad heart. If you have any questions or need help shopping for these items, please contact the Social Ministry.

Your Invited...



Thursday Coffee Hour begins on September 8, from 10 a.m. to noon in the Fellowship Hall. Coffee, tea, and snacks are available. We meet for a time of spiritual growth, discussion, and fellowship. At this first meeting we will decide how often to meet. Pastor Scholtes has offered to lead a Bible or book study so let's decide on a topic. Please bring your ideas. Any questions, please contact Karen Karner, Janet Martocci, or Cathy Mullen.

Sunday Coffee Hours will begin in January.

SOCIAL MINISTRY PROJECT FOR SEPTEMBER:



Thanks to COVID it's been a few years since our last "layette shower", but that doesn't mean we still don't need items for when we do have one, which hopefully will be in 2023. To help prepare, we are asking for donations of the following items: gentle soap (like ivory); diaper pins (blue and pink); dark hand towel (can be purchased at Dollar Tree); baby socks, and cloth diapers. Your donations of these items will help when we do have the layette shower, they may be placed in the basket in the Narthex. If you don't feel comfortable shopping for the items, we will also accept a

monetary donation and someone from the committee will be happy to shop for you. I know we are always asking you for something, but the need is great, both local and around the world, we are doing "Gods Work With Our Hands. Hebrews 13:16 Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. Social Ministry thanks you for your continued and generous support of all our ministries and projects! Committee members: Mary O'Meally, Sherry Hock, Holly Blakeslee, Sara Godshalk (council liaison)

Thank
you

Dear Connie,

Linda and I, as well as Samantha and the family, had a wonderful time during our visit to Prince of Peace. From the moment we arrived in the parking lot we were warmly welcomed. Everyone was so kind and receptive that we felt such powerful joy well after our return home.

Thank you to one and all for the hospitality extended to us. Prince of Peace is everything amazing that we experienced from 1984-1998---and more! God is at work in you and is glorified by your faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We wish you well as you continue to celebrate the congregation's 50th Anniversary. Please convey our gratitude to the congregation council and members of the congregation. With love and appreciation,

--Pastor Samuel Zeiser



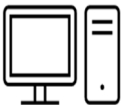
Our committees provide opportunities for us to live our life as stewards and fulfill our Purpose Statement. This month we are thankful and filled with gratitude for our:



Scholarship Committee-The Turtzo Scholarship Committee is composed of five members appointed by council for a three-year term. Their major purpose is to provide, and review completed application using the guideline to decide on the scholarship(s) to be awarded. This year Lauren Harrison was the recipient of the scholarship.



Faith Formation Committee- Their major purpose is to provide a variety of educational opportunities for all members which should include, but is not limited to: Sunday School, Catechetical Studies, Vacation Bible School or another summer learning opportunity, Adult Bible Studies, and special content workshops. The new Faith by Firelight series is the newest offering.



Communication and Technology Committee- The primary purpose of the Technology committee is to review every aspect of communication that is utilized. The website, social media accounts, newsletter, advertising, power point, sound system, bulletins, and congregation directories are the main focus of the committee.



Fun and Fellowship Committee- The primary purpose of the committee is to provide activities for our congregation, whether it would be for hospitality, fellowship, or fundraising. The committee helps to provide food for special luncheons, funeral luncheons, and private rentals. Fund raising events are held throughout the year to help off-set our budget, community activities, and for long range goals.



Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
 2445 Lake Minsi Drive (Johnsonville)
 Bangor, Pennsylvania 18013
 Office Phone: 610-588-2355

Website: www.popbangor.org
Online Coordinator: Heather Scholtes
lotsofsocks@live.com

Worship and Holy Communion Schedule:
Sundays at 9:45 a.m. — See Page 2 for details!
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- **Pastor: Rev. Michael J. Scholtes 610-588-2314,**  
**[PastorMJS@gmail.com](mailto:PastorMJS@gmail.com)**
- **Minister of Music: Martin Yazdzik**
- **Bookkeeper: Joyce Weishaupt**
- **Financial Secretary: Mary O’Meally**
- **Custodian: Brittnee Evans**
- **Parish Nurse: Justine Cesari, 610-730-7895,**  
**[cesarijustine1080@gmail.com](mailto:cesarijustine1080@gmail.com)**
- **Administrative Assistant: Annette Buss**  
**Admin. Asst’s Office Hours:** Monday, Tuesday,  
 Wednesday, Friday 9am–Noon Thursday: 1 to 4 pm  
 Admin Asst’s email: [poplcbangor@gmail.com](mailto:poplcbangor@gmail.com)

**Congregation Council Members:**

- |                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Connie Itterly -President | Jackie Horn– Treasurer |
| Traci Rumsey -V-President | Tina Johns -Secretary  |
| Scott Schipps             | Georgia Suranofsky     |
| Kathy Williams            | Chip Harrison          |
| Dave Karner               | Brenda Hughes          |
| Sara Godshalk             | Max Manicke-Youth Rep. |
| Pastor Michael Scholtes   |                        |

**OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT**

*We, the people of Prince of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church, will actively seek and serve Christ in all people.*

Would you like to place an article in the monthly newsletter? Highlight your ministry? Post a Thank you? Make an announcement?

**EARLY SUBMISSIONS ARE APPRECIATED!**

**October 2022 Newsletter is: September 13th at Noon**

*You may email your submissions to [poplcbangor@gmail.com](mailto:poplcbangor@gmail.com)  
 Or give a handwritten items to **Annette Buss***

**\*\*Items received after the deadline will go into next month’s newsletter.\*\***

To everything there is a season,  
 A time for every purpose under heaven.

-Ecclesiastes 3:1



BibleVerseImages.com



# SYNOD NEWS

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA



*Camp  
Noah*

STRONGER  
*Together*

*So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives. And every animal, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out of the ark by families... God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth."*

*(Genesis 8:18-19; 9:12-13)*

Following the flood – a disaster horrific in scope and cause – God brought forth a time and a place, where healing and renewal could begin. Camp Noah is a ministry, carrying on in God's covenantal promises of care and life, especially for families and especially for children whose loved ones may no longer be there to protect and nurture them. The "ark" that gets built, comes in the form of congregations and volunteers, along with professionals in counseling and in faith, who create a safe and supportive environment – where, for a day or a week, children can gather to run and play, draw and paint, sing and listen, pray and build new connections of love and care, new trust that God loves them and that the future can be better, brighter and bolder than the past. Christ is the rainbow and the rock, that provides new colors to paint and safe waters to drink and to splash in, without fear of drowning in grief and despair. As the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, we are honored and grateful to take part in this life-giving ministry, offering our resources, our time and our spaces, to make a bright new day for these kids, these families, and "for all future generations."

+ Bishop Christopher deForest

Have you ever felt overwhelmed and unable to cope with a situation? There have been times during covid that many have felt that way—worry about those who were sick—concerned for families who had lost someone. It was hard enough for adults—but what about children? Camp Noah is a Lutheran camping organization run out of Minnesota that provides weeklong camp experiences for children who have experienced traumatizing natural disasters like tornados, floods, hurricanes—and covid. This past summer, just such a camp was held in Oley, PA. Camp Noah provided a week of fun and engaging experiences through books, crafts, music, art, and games that allowed kids to express their feelings and concerns regarding covid. One young camper said, “this camp has been a blessing.” And it was! Everyone involved—including adult volunteers—felt the healing presence of God among them! Thank you to the many congregations whose Mission Support dollars to the Northeast Pennsylvania Synod provided grant money to help fund Camp Noah. It really was a blessing to all!

+ Pastor Julie Osterhout,  
Trinity Lutheran-Wernersville



# Graceful Generosity

Published to help you grow as a steward of God's grace.

## The Deceitfulness of Money

From beginning to end, the Bible emphasizes God's ownership of all things. *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"* (Genesis 1:1). God is the creator and owner of the universe. He has created us and owns us. Not only has he created us, he has also redeemed us from our sins. Because of whom God is and what God has done and continues to do, he deserves to be honored and glorified. Even though he is almighty God, he seeks a loving relationship with each one of us.

That relationship is greatly jeopardized by a common attitude toward money: greed. Wanting more money and possessions and holding on to them tightly can become such an obsession that life exists only for the purpose of acquiring more and more. In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus described the various kinds of people who respond to the Gospel. Jesus stated that some *"seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants"* (Matthew 13:7). He explained, *"The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the Word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful"* (Matthew 13:22).



Money and possessions can deceive us into believing that nothing is more important than to

own things and to enjoy the things money can buy. Of all the things that Satan can use to separate us from our relationship with Jesus, money may be his most effective tool.

The fact that Jesus referred to money and possessions in more than 2,100 Bible verses indicates that he is very concerned about our attitudes toward and our relationships with money. Jesus spoke often about money and possessions because he knew the influence and power money can have over our lives. He was very interested in helping people understand that money can never provide us with real satisfaction in life. Richard Halverson wrote, "Jesus Christ said more about money than any other single thing because money is of first importance when it comes to a person's real nature. Money is an exact index to our true character. Throughout Scripture we find an intimate correlation between the development of a person's character and how he or she handles money."

**"Give me five minutes with a person's checkbook, and I will tell you where his heart is."**

Billy Graham

## The Joy of Contentment

In contrast to materialism, contentment is a state of mind that does not desire more than what one has. A contented person is satisfied with what he has. The goal of a Christian is to be content regardless of his financial condition. Discontentment is a spiritual problem. It affects rich and poor and everyone in between. Discontentment can eat away at our souls and rob us of the joy the Lord wants us to have in Christ. A contented person sees the world from

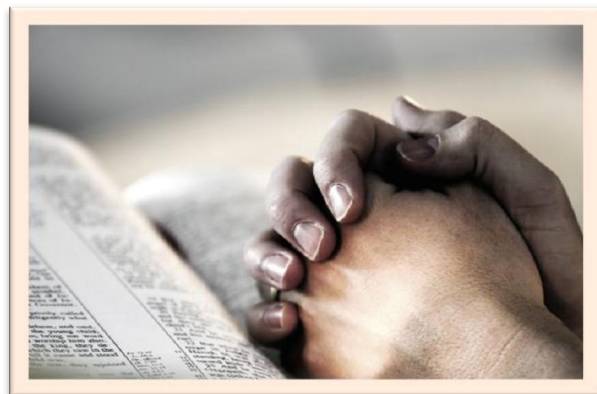
a different perspective than a materialistic person views it.

In the “have it now and enjoy life” society in which we live, contentment is no longer a goal. In this culture, the goal in life is self-gratification. Our society strives after material things that provide temporary happiness. Comfort is more of a goal than is contentment. Unfortunately, when all we care about is ourselves, we are never satisfied, because we keep telling ourselves we need and deserve more. We convince ourselves we should have more cars, bigger houses, better clothes, a classier neighborhood, a higher salary.

The writer of Hebrews wrote, “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you’ ” (Hebrews 13:5). If we love money and the things of this world, we will never be content. Money and possessions can’t buy contentment. Only in Christ can we find lasting contentment. The Apostle Paul’s contentment came from knowing and trusting in Jesus. “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 4:12-13).

Paul had learned the secret of contentment. Paul was in prison when he wrote those words in Philippians, and he had been at the point of death several times. If anyone could have said he was in need or want, it was Paul. In fact, Paul’s message on contentment should make many of us uncomfortable.

How could our circumstances be as bleak as his? We know that Paul suffered from a physical problem, was stoned, beaten, and went without food. Yet he gave God thanks for everything. He was content whether he had abundance or nothing. Because Paul was content regardless of his circumstances, he is a magnificent example of contentment. Through Paul, we see that, when we depend on Christ for everything, we can accept any situation here on earth, knowing that God won’t abandon us.



What was Paul’s secret? How did he find contentment in all those circumstances? His contentment came from Christ Jesus himself. He found contentment in the fact that he was forgiven all of his sins and sinful behavior. He was assured that Christ was with him constantly. He knew that God was always there to see him through and that God would never give him more than he could handle. He knew that Christ Jesus died on the cross for him to give him life every day on earth and eternal life in heaven. He knew that Christ would rescue him from every trouble and sustain him in every trial along the way. He experienced Christ’s promise, “*My grace is sufficient for you!*” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

***Blessings on Your Stewardship Journey!***