

Unpacking the Apostle Paul's Secret to Being Content in All Things

Recently, I was having a frustrating season. God was silent. Storm clouds had rolled into my life and clouded my vision. One day, I cried out to God for help and He spoke, "Shut up and be content!"

Well, that got my attention. I was so happy to hear His voice! I also got the message; "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10a).

As I meditated on the word the Lord had spoken, the Holy Spirit reminded me that Paul learned to be content. I immediately went to Philippians 4:11b: "I have learned in whatever state I am to be content."

I began to read and meditate on Philippians, feeling that the Lord wanted to speak to me from these Scriptures. Paul was in prison. Paul had been greatly persecuted. How could he be content confined in a prison?

One day I read, "But this one thing I do." That caught my attention. If this was one thing Paul did, surely I must need to do it! I read on, "Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead" (Phil. 3:13).

I pondered this verse, asking the Holy Spirit to bring revelation to me. As I was thinking, *Lord, how do I forget? The devil is constantly reminding me of every wrong thing I have done*, the Lord immediately spoke to my heart, "Remember."

Remember?

He spoke again, "When you remember, you are choosing your thoughts." If you are not choosing your thoughts, then the devil is filling your mind. Your mind is the battlefield and will keep you in constant confusion and frustration if you allow your thoughts to run rampant.

God knew the importance of remembering as He led the children of Israel out of Egypt into the promised land. He would always tell them to build a memorial. Why? So they would remember how He had delivered them! Psalm 78:40-42 tells us, "How often they provoked Him in the wilderness *and* grieved Him in the desert! Yes, they tested God over and over, and provoked the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His power, nor the day when He delivered them from the enemy."

When they were walking on dry land through the Red Sea, I can imagine them saying, "I will never forget this!" Yet when their stomachs started growling, they did not remember His power and the day He redeemed them. They limited the Holy One of Israel.

Remembering gives you a grateful heart, a heart of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is the force that moves the mountain. God loves to hear a faith-filled prayer from a grateful heart. It opens the windows of heaven. Thanksgiving turns your heart towards God and prepares the way for a miracle.

Walking the runway of life is not easy. There are always bumps and detours in the road. As you focus on the greatness of God and keep your mind on Him, you will have the strength to walk in peace and experience miracles in your daily life. So, remember to forget.

Joyce Tilney *is the founder of Women of God Ministries, teaching women today from women of yesterday. She is an author and Bible teacher. Her new book, The Real Woman Grows Roses from the Thorns of Life, will be available in April.*