

Holy Dissatisfaction

Did you feel guilty on Thanksgiving—the day of all days to  express heartfelt gratitude to God—because you aren't TOTALLY content? Perhaps you offered up the obligatory thanks for family, home, job, health and the hearty meal as you sat around the holiday feast, but inside, you were aware that your heart is not quite full to the brim with satisfaction—and you aren't sure what to do about it.

What could possibly be wrong?

There are many natural reasons for discontent, of course. Perhaps the most common is setting our eyes on something other than God—allowing our fleshly desires to take the place of hunger for Him. The solution for this is simply repenting and refocusing our priorities, putting God first and trusting Him to provide all we need.

But I believe that discontent is sometimes part of God's plan for bringing us more fully into our destinies. He creates within us a “holy dissatisfaction” regarding our circumstances to cause us to question where we are in our spiritual journeys, where we are going and how He wants us to get there.

I experienced this type of dissatisfaction several years ago when I was a homeschooling mother of two grade-school-age boys. My roles as wife, mom and teacher certainly kept me busy—and were fulfilling to a point. But as my relationship with God grew more intense, I became aware that I was created for an additional purpose beyond what I was doing, and restlessness developed in my heart. A longing I could not explain gnawed at me throughout the day, causing me to feel frustrated and unfulfilled.

On the surface, it seemed as if I had much to be grateful for; but deep down I hungered for more. I wanted God to activate more of the gifts He had given me than I was currently

employing and to use me in a wider sphere of influence to make a difference for His kingdom. I wasn't sure what the answer to my heart's cry would look like, but I knew God had one.

When He revealed it to me in the form of freelance writing and editing and ultimately a full-time position as an editor for a national Christian magazine, I was elated! Suddenly, the discontentment and restlessness waned, and I was filled with a sense of purpose such as I had never experienced before.

I think the early disciples must have felt the same way I did when Jesus first called them. They had spent their lives as fishermen, catching and selling fish to feed their families and earn a living. It was necessary work and served an important purpose; but it had few eternal implications.

Then one day Jesus came along and said to them, "'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men'" (Matt. 4:19, NKJV). Wow! What a proposition! He didn't offer them simply a job; He offered them the opportunity to partner with Him in bringing God's kingdom to Earth.

Peter and Andrew didn't hesitate for even a second to respond to Jesus' call. The Bible says "they IMMEDIATELY left their nets and followed Him" (v. 20, emphasis added).

James and John had the same response. When Jesus saw these two brothers in a boat with Zebedee their father, "He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him" (v. 22).

Unlike the disciples, I do not have the liberty to forsake ALL to follow Jesus. Undoubtedly that is why God has not asked me to. My roles with my husband and children are still a priority, and I try to use every opportunity I have to love them, care for them and influence them for Him.

Now, however, I do it as a part of the call on my life, not the entirety of it. As a result, the holy dissatisfaction I

once felt has been greatly reduced. I don't believe it will ever go away completely—nor do I want it to—for it is the sign to me of God's continuing to compel me along the path of destiny.

Today, if you have been struggling with a similar dissatisfaction, don't beat yourself up over it; thank God for it! Ask Him to show you how He is using it to take you a step further into purpose. When He answers, do as the disciples did: Immediately follow Him!