

Suffering for the Glory of God

Week 1: The Problem of Suffering and the Bible's Answer

The wisdom of God and a call to trust

Week 2: God's Revealed Purposes for Suffering

How God can use suffering for our good and His glory

Week 3: The Future of Suffering

The importance of heaven and hell for a suffering Christian

Week 4: God's Grief over Suffering

The empathy of a suffering God

Week 5: Unbiblical Reactions to Suffering

Temptations to find hope in what is passing away

Week 6: Fighting for faith, Part 1

Struggling for faith in God's sovereignty and goodness

Week 7: Fighting for faith, Part 2

Helping others fight for faith in the local church

Week 8: Sharing Their Burdens

A biblical perspective on the relief of physical suffering

Week 9: Suffering as Witness

Making the most of your suffering for the glory of God

Week 10: Applying the Framework

Suffering through illness

Week 11: Suffering for the gospel

Biblical wisdom for the persecuted

Week 12: The Secret of Contentment

Finding joy in Christ in any and every situation

Week 13: Panel Discussion

Questions? [Email addresses of teachers]

Core Seminars—Suffering for God's Glory **Class 12: The Secret of Contentment**



Finding joy in Christ in any and every situation

Introduction

I. Contentment – What it is...

Philippians 4:10-12 “¹⁰I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹²I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.”

1. *What it is* – “...that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God's wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.”
2. *What it is not* –
 - i. *It is not anti-ambition*
 1. *Paul had ambition*
 2. *But...Paul attacked selfish ambition*

ii. *It is not indifference to circumstances*

Acts 16:37-39 "...They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens...Let them come themselves and take us out."

1 Corinthians 7:20-21 "Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called...But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity."

II. Contentment – *How to find it...*

1. *By experience*

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 "⁷So, to keep me from being too elated by the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. ⁸Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. ⁹But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness..."

2. *By doing the work in front of you*

Philippians 2:12-13 "¹²Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you, to will and to work for his good pleasure."

3. *By listening to truth rather than emotions*

4. *By being truly satisfied in Christ*

Philippians 4:12-13 "...I have learned the secret of being content...I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

Philippians 3:8 "Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ"

John 7:37-38 "...If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"