



SESSION #1 THE FOUNDATION OF CONTENTMENT: THE CHARACTER OF GOD

- A. **God is sovereign.** God plans and carries out His perfect will, over the smallest and largest parts of creation fully, and He does so without failure or defeat.

Daniel 4:30-37 – *“Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?” “O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you, and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom He will.” Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hair grew as long as eagles’ feathers, and his nails were like birds’ claws. “At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, For his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, ‘What have you done?’ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble.”*

Isaiah 45:6b-7 -- *I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the LORD, who does all these things.*

- B. **God is self-sufficient.** He possesses within His own life as God everything that is good.

Acts 17:24-25 -- *The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.*

Psalms 50:7-15 -- *Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against you. I am God, your God. Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you; your burnt offerings are continually before me. I will not accept a bull from your house or goats from your folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all*

that moves in the field is mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine. Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and perform your vows to the Most High, and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.

- C. **God is all-knowing, or omniscient, and all-wise.** He knows all things; He understands all things perfectly, and He uses this complete knowledge in the best ways.

Psalm 147:5 -- *Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.*

Isaiah 40:13-14 -- *Who has measured the Spirit of the Lord, or what man shows Him his counsel? Whom did He consult, and who made Him understand? Who taught Him the path of justice, and taught Him knowledge, and showed Him the way of understanding?*

Psalm 131:1-2 – *O LORD, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me.*

- D. **God is love, and He gives good gifts.**

1 John 4:10 -- *In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

Romans 8:32 -- *He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?*

James 1:17 -- *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

Matthew 7:11 – *If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!*

Cycle of contentment: we need – God provides – we thank Him – God is glorified.

Psalm 16:5-6 -- *The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.*

E. Conclusion.

When hard times come, and they will, let's determine to judge the hard times BY the character of God, and refuse to judge the character of God by the hard times.

"[One of the marks of Christian maturity which a believer should seek is] an acquiescence in the Lord's will founded in a persuasion of his wisdom, holiness, sovereignty, and goodness . . . So far as we attain to this, we are secure from disappointment. Our own limited views, and short-sighted purposes and desires, may be, and will be, often over-ruled; but then our main and leading desire, that the will of the Lord may be done, must be accomplished. How highly does it become us, both as creatures and as sinners, to submit to the appointments of our Maker! And how necessary is it to our peace! This great attainment is too often unthought of, and overlooked; we are prone to fix our attention upon the second causes and immediate instruments of events; forgetting that whatever befalls us is according to his purpose, and therefore must be right and seasonable in itself, and shall in the issue be productive of good. From hence arise impatience, resentment, and secret repinings [i.e., complainings] which are not only sinful, but tormenting; whereas, if all things are in his hand, if the very hairs of our head are numbered; if every event, great and small, is under the direction of his providence and purpose; and if he has a wise, holy, and gracious end in view, to which everything that happens is subordinate and subservient;--then we have nothing to do, but with patience and humility to follow as he leads, and cheerfully to expect a happy issue . . . How happy are they who can resign all to him, see his hand in every dispensation, and believe that he chooses better for them than they possibly could for themselves."

From *Letters of John Newton* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1960), 137.

Hebrews 13:5-6 -- *Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"*

Contentment is being satisfied in God, His character, His works, and His ways.