

“MONSTERS INSIDE OF ME” DISCONTENTMENT

OPEN:

- ❖ Do you ever play the “if only” game?
 - If only I had more money in the bank...
 - If only I had a better spouse (husband/wife)...
 - If only my children would behave...
 - If only I had a better job I enjoyed...
 - The “if onlys” in life are endless.
 - We try to convince ourselves...if only circumstances in life were different, we would be happy.
 - Have you noticed...the grass looks greener in the neighbor’s yard?
- ❖ Ever since the beginning of creation there has been someone somewhere unhappy with their position in life.
 - It started with the angel Lucifer (the brightest star, highest ranking angel)...he was not satisfied with the position God gave him. (Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14).
 - Discontentment caused him to lead a rebellion against the Most High and God kicked him and 1/3 of the angels out of heaven.
 - Ever since that dark day, Satan has been stirring up discontentment in the heart of man.

- In the Garden of Eden, he sowed seeds of discontentment, he made Eve think God was holding back something good from her... **“has God said”...He knows when you eat of the tree it you will be like God...(Genesis 3).**
 - ✓ The seeds of discontentment bring forth the bitter harvest of disobedience...Adam and Eve were kicked out of “paradise.”
- ❖ And so it is...thousands of years later... “man” longs for something different...something different.
 - If we are young, we want to be older...if we are old we want to be younger.
 - If it’s old, we want something new. If it is new, we want something newer.
 - If we have a \$100, we want \$200. If we have \$200, we want \$500.
 - If we live in an apartment, we want a condo. If we have a condo, we want a house. If we have a house, we want one with a pool.
 - If we have a job, we dream of a better job, more money, closer to the house, better office, better boss, more benefits.
 - If we are single we dream of being married, if we are married (you finish it).
- ❖ Push back...is it wrong to have dreams and want to better your life?
 - The ability to see what isn’t but what could be often motivates leaders to attempt to change the culture...it can spark creativity or innovation. So no...ambition can be healthy, but it can also lead us down the wrong path.
- ❖ What are the signs that discontentment is dragging us down spiritually?
 - 1) **Envy** – We are unable to rejoice at the success of others.
 - 2) **Uncontrolled Ambition** – Win at all cost, no matter who gets trampled in the process.
 - 3) **Critical Spirit** – We make hurting, cutting, negative remarks about others.

4) **Complaining Spirit** – We blame others for our problems and do not take personal responsibility. We are not thankful for what we have; constant complaining and whining.

5) **Outburst of anger** – We go on the attack...speak “hate-filled” words to others because our expectations are not met.

➤ The discontented person says: I deserve better...this poisonous spirit drags others down around them.

- Ben Franklin: “Contentment makes a poor man rich; discontentment makes a rich man poor.”

- Discontentment is a “cancer of the soul”...it eats away our joy, corrodes our happiness and infects our spirit...we cannot be happy because we will not be happy.

✓ Such a person is miserable today and they will be miserable tomorrow.

❖ The Apostle Paul offers some help as he addresses some of the problems in the church at Corinth.

Text: 1 Corinthians 7:17-24

1) YOU ARE WHERE YOU ARE BY GOD’S ASSIGNMENT. (PRO PRESENTER SLIDE)
BULLETIN OUTLINE)

Vs. 17 NLT – Each of you should continue to live in whatever situation the Lord has placed you, and remain as you were when God first called you.

Vs. 20 (NLT) – Yes, each of you should remain as you were when God called you.

Vs. 24 (NLT) – Each of you dear brothers and sisters, should remain as you were when God first called you.

❖ Paul offers two examples: circumcision and slavery.

- Circumcision was extremely important to the Jew...it was the visible mark of their covenant relationship with God.

- ✓ The Judaizers were demanding that the Gentile believers be circumcised if they were to be accepted.
- ✓ On the other hand, some Jews who trusted Christ, in an effort to disassociate with Judaism, were asking questions and seeking a way to be uncircumcised.
- Neither matters in the context of serving and living for Christ.
 - ✓ Live the life God has assigned to you.
 - ✓ You don't have to become a "cultural Jew"...God determines our race, sex, skin color...by virtue of our physical birth.
 - ✓ Stay the way God made you and in the place God put you.
 - ✓ Don't cut and run, but be who God made you and show the change God has made in your life right where you are (unless you are living in sin).
- ❖ The second example: slavery
 - ✓ Paul's instructions do not suggest God was okay with slavery, but that it was a way of life in that culture.
 - ✓ There were 100 million slaves in the Roman Empire...more slaves than free people.
 - ✓ Many of the slaves would hear the Gospel and respond favorably.
 - ✓ Paul tells them if they can gain their freedom great...but if not serve right where they were...better to be a slave on the outside and a freeman in your heart because you know Christ then to be a freeman on the outside but a slave to sin on the inside.
 - ✓ Serve God even in difficult times...don't use your slavery as an excuse not to serve Christ.
- Serve God where you are until God calls you somewhere else.
- Seek God first is the key to knowing God's will.

- Don't wait for God to change your circumstance before you happily serve Him...serve Him where you are (who knows you honor Him and He might change your circumstances).

Text: 1 Corinthians 7:25-28

2) **CHANGE** IS NOT WRONG, BUT IT IS NOT ALWAYS AN IMPROVEMENT.
(PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)

- Because of the “present crisis” (vs. 26) this may be a reference to the upcoming persecution that would happen in 10 years? Some calamity was occurring.
- ✓ In light of this, he advises them to stay as they are.
- ✓ Don't make any drastic changes...changing ships in the middle of a storm is not a good idea.
 - To the married he says, stay married. To the single, stay single.
 - If you choose to marry it is not wrong but marry only a believer.
 - Just know...marriage will not solve all your problems, bring you closer to God or fulfill all your dreams.
 - Don't get me wrong...marriage is noble and honorable (**Hebrews 13:4**), but it's not the answer to a fulfilled life...only a Christ-centered life can do that.
- ✓ Hint: if you are miserable as a single, how can you be sure you will be happy after marriage?
- ✓ The happiest married people are generally those who were also happy while being single.
- ✓ Changing your marital status doesn't guarantee a change in your happiness, your contentment or your satisfaction with life.
- ✓ Discontented singles aren't usually the best candidates for a happy marriage.

Text: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

3) YOU'RE A **VISITOR** ON EARTH, NOT A **PERMANENT** RESIDENT. (PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)

- **Vs. 29** – the time that remains is very short.
- **Vs. 31** – don't become attached to the things of this world...why? Because this world will soon pass away.
- ✓ No one lives forever...you are going to live on the other side of eternity a lot longer than you're going to live on this side.
- ✓ Our time in this world is brief, let's make it count.
 - **Vs. 29** – your marriage is important, but it's not the most important relationship in life...your relationship with Christ is.
 - **Vs. 30** – Don't weep for the believer who dies so much that it appears you don't believe in heaven. Don't laugh so much that people think you don't believe in hell.
 - **Vs. 30** – live in the world, work in the world but don't let the world rule your life. Be careful that the things you possess don't end up possessing you.
- Enjoy life, live it to the fullest, take advantage of every moment but don't over indulge yourself and lose your focus on what really matters.
- ✓ The old Gospel song says: "this world is not our home, we are just passing through."

Text: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

4) THE MOST IMPORTANT THING...GIVE YOUR **UNDIVIDED** **DEVOTION** TO THE LORD. (PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)

- Those who are single are free from certain distractions (responsibilities) that married people have.
- ✓ Those who are married must give attention to the need of their family.

- It's only right that a husband care for his wife, and that a wife concern herself with the needs of her husband.
- He is not saying that singleness is more righteous than marriage or that being married is less godly...you can serve the Lord either way.
- It's just a reality check...a good marriage requires time and energy.
- Whether you marry or not leave that up to God...serve the Lord whatever your marital status and leave your future in His capable hands.
- If you are married, give thanks to God for your spouse, build them up spiritually and serve God together.

CLOSE:

- ❖ Don't whine and complain about your situation in life.
 - You are where you are by God's sovereign choice.
 - You can serve the Lord where you are right now.
 - You can glorify the Lord in your present situation.
- ❖ So,
 - Bloom where you're planted.
 - Let God define your life, not your earthly circumstances.
 - Don't expect change to make you happy.
 - Never forget, you won't be here forever.
- ❖ Jesus Christ is my Lord, I will love Him and do what He says regardless of the circumstances I find myself in. Obedience on the toughest days allows me to show Him how much I love Him.

- ❖ Contentment isn't a position, place or possession, but it's an attitude of gratitude that you constantly cultivate.
 - When you have time, check out [Philippians 4:10-13](#).
- ❖ Some of these thoughts were from Ray Pritchard.

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Message Notes
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