

Have you seen the new commercials for McDonald's Big Mac? I don't know why McDonald's has decided to feature the old Big Mac this summer, but it reminds me of a time when the Big Mac was just about the biggest burger you could get at a fast food restaurant. How times have changed! Just about every chain now has a burger twice or three times the size of a Big Mac.

But who really needs a burger that big? In my seminary days an older pastor took me out for lunch one day - we happened to go to McDonald's. I ordered first, and since he was treating I thought I would "limit" myself to a small Filet-o'-Fish combo meal. As I recall, the total bill for our meal turned out to be \$5. Four dollars and change went toward my meal; about half a dollar went toward his regular hamburger and cup of water. I felt quite humbled to see this older pastor contentedly dining on his hamburger and water while I washed down my fries with a Coke.

I think it's safe to say that this older pastor had learned the secret that the apostle Paul described to the Philippians: "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (4:12,13).

We would all like to be content. But too often our thoughts about contentment center around what needs to change or what we need to obtain in order to be content. "Just a little more money, then I'll be content." "Just a little more free time, then I'll be content." But in the meantime, we feel discontent as we compare our lives and our financial situation to others'. We need more things. We need bigger things. I mean, why settle for the 1/3 pound burger when there's a 2/3 pound burger on the menu?

Look what Paul describes: contentment "in any and every situation." In poverty or wealth. In sickness and in health. In stressful times and relaxing times. Contentment is a blessing that is ours not because God promises to change our circumstances the way we might want him to, but rather because God allows us to see his loving hand guiding us no matter what we are experiencing. "I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

According to God, we don't need the combo meals and monster burgers of life to be truly happy. We need only the blessings he already gives us and the grace to see his love in each of those blessings.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, every day I have reason to thank you. Forgive me for ignoring all of the little things you do for me each and every day. Thank you for the air I breathe, the food I eat, and this world in which I live. Thank you for friends and family members who love me. Thank you most of all that you have made me your child through your Son's sacrifice, and that I have an eternity of perfection to look forward to. Because of all you do, help me be content with whatever situations you see fit for me to endure in this world. In His name, Amen.

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