



Contentment: A Godly Woman's Adornment

Lydia Brownback

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This On-the-Go Devotional assures women that contentment is not some fleeting ideal but a reality that God enables them to live out daily.

Any woman who buys into the lie of "You can have it all" or who thinks she can only be happy "if..." experiences an abiding frustration: what she wants remains just out of reach, always. No matter how good she has it, no matter how good the good times may get, there's always something missing. And ultimately, she misses out on happiness too.

But God desires something far better and more lasting for his daughters. And he's delivered the secret in his Word, assuring women that real satisfaction is found in living for and longing for the right things. Those truths and promises are at the heart of this On-the-Go Devotional for women. Each lesson in Contentment is conveniently self-contained and comes complete with Scripture and a paragraph or two of teaching to direct women away from fleeting distractions and toward a true, enduring satisfaction.

On-the-Go Devotionals "Skillful devotionals for those who face the challenge to 'fit it all in.' Biblically rigorous and deeply perceptive. Godly insights from a godly sister."

Elyse Fitzpatrick, author of *Because He Loves Me: How Christ Transforms Our Daily Life*

"A ready resource for keeping our thinking focused on God himself. The devotionals helped me understand my fear or discontent and our Heavenly Father's provision."

Barbara Hughes, author of *Disciplines of a Godly Woman* and, with her husband, *Disciplines of a Godly Family*

"Lydia Brownback calls Christian women to lift their eyes upward and find security, rest, and peace in a sovereign God whose promises never fail!"

Nancy Leigh DeMoss, author and *Revive Our Hearts* radio host

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Marie says

Excellent book! Now I'm giving them as gifts.

This little purse-size book packs lots of wisdom - so easy to read and powerful. I'll be re-reading it multiple times I'm sure.

Madison H. says

A very helpful read. Personally didn't think it was quite as good as "Trust" but it is still a really wonderful devotional.

Abigail says

"The primary reason God withholds certain blessings is so He can fill those empty places with Himself."

"Our unhappiness does not spring from what we lack. It springs from our desire for what we lack."

"All God does in our lives and everywhere He leads us has one overarching purpose, which is to deepen our relationship with Him and to further His glory through us."

"No matter what we are dealing with, God is there overseeing, loving, providing."

"Christ is the secret of contentment."

Natalie Vellacott says

A series of short devotionals encouraging contentment through trusting God in every circumstance. There were some really helpful ones but others that I felt were overly simplistic and with too many generalisations. For example, the author says that if a person is single, God will provide friends, family, fulfilling work and a church family to fill the gap. I know single people who don't have any of these things. I believe it is part of the fall that Christians will struggle in this life. The author says this as well, but there is a contradiction between the devotions.

I don't agree that happiness and contentment are the same thing or that Christians are meant to be fulfilled and satisfied all of the time even if it is in God. The author quotes Piper's hedonism principle which I also disagree with.

Despite these criticisms, the book may help some to focus on God and to try to get some perspective if they are struggling so I recommend it.

Heather says

The short chapters and the simple style of this book make it easy and enjoyable to read. As I flipped through the book I see a number of things that are underlined which means there were a number of things that were helpful to me. In general, the teaching of the book is sound. However, there are a few things that trouble me.

In the introduction and in the last chapter of the book she says that contentment and happiness are one and the same if we interpret them Biblically. She doesn't give a basis for this claim and I cannot find one in Scripture. This may not seem like such a big deal, but when the whole book is about contentment, it is important to define it accurately and I cannot account for why she makes such a claim. The word happiness isn't used in the KJV, but the word happy is used a couple of times and Vine's translates it as "blessed, happy." It's from a word meaning large. It is most often translated blessed as in the Beatitudes. The word contentment is defined by Vine's as "satisfaction with what one has" and is once translated contentment (1 Timothy 6:6) and once translated sufficiency (2 Corinthians 9:8). I don't see how the words can be said to have the same meaning or that they are used interchangeably in the Bible. Happiness is a much stronger emotion involving great blessing, contentment involves recognizing that one has enough. Food and clothing are cause for contentment (1 Tim. 6); inheriting the earth and seeing God are cause for happiness (Mt. 5).

Her main point is that neither happiness nor contentment can be found in things, but must be found in Christ and that is very true. But if we lose the meaning of words, we lose the foundation for everything in the Bible. If people can give whatever meanings they want to words, the Bible will end up meaning everything, or, more accurately, nothing. I'm not so much concerned about her treatment of contentment as I am her treatment of the word of God.

She does something even worse with Scripture in the chapter titled Satisfaction Guaranteed where she says that when Jesus says "blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness", he really meant we should hunger and thirst for himself, for Christ. The problem with this is that if he had meant that, he could very easily have said that but he didn't. It seems reasonable to assume that he said what he meant. Strong's says that the word used here means "equity of character or action" and comes from a word meaning justice. Vines says that as it is used here in Matthew 5 it is speaking "of whatever is right or just in itself, whatever conforms to the revealed will of God." Lydia Brownback said that it wouldn't be very appealing if we thought he was talking about a list of do's and don'ts and so she gives it her own meaning. But Psalm 119 makes it very clear that the Christian does love God's law and hungers and thirsts for it. This shouldn't be as surprising or as unthinkable as she makes it out to be. Yes, we should desire Christ, and there are places that speak of that, but this verse is speaking of desiring righteousness, to be righteous and to live in accordance with the law. That's how Christ lived and a true love for Christ as he really is should love the way he lived and want to live like him.

Though most of the book is fine and even helpful, I am disturbed that in places she jettisons the obvious and clear meaning of God's word for a meaning that evidently fits in better with what she wants to believe. This is something we all are guilty of sometimes but that doesn't make it any the less dangerous. We should be both willing to see it in ourselves and willing to point it out in others because the cost of molding God's word to suit our own ideas is way too high.

Dan says

The small, but potent devotionals, really drive home the importance of contentment. Why we suffer from discontentment may stem from several reasons but ultimately it has its roots in being dissatisfied with God.

What this devotional aids in doing is focusing the reader back to the Giver of contentment. By so doing, the reader is drawn into reflection of just how great God is and why we must find our deepest longings in Him.

mRose says

Wow I was surprised. I have never read a devotional with substance, but surprise surprise this was different. I really felt like the Lord was speaking to me through this and maybe it was just me because the Lord is working in my life about Contentment. Anyway, I thought the words were insightful and the book worthwhile. For me and my continue discontent problem, I would purchase this. Great re-read. ...OH, I almost forgot there was one thing that really stood out as WRONG in my eyes and that is the author seems to define contentment as the SAME thing as Happiness. I don't believe the Bible states that. But really I ignore stupid stuff because I find very few Christian authors really get it right, sadly. Even C.S. Lewis has a handful of "what?! that doesn't make any sense." But for people easily influenced, you may not want to read this since she's not 100% in tune with the Bible.

Courtney says

This is a little gem, which I'd saved on my Kindle for a rainy day--this past few months, I'd really needed a fresh word on this subject, and Brownback's scripture-based devotionals were just the ticket. 'Our unhappiness does not spring from what we lack--it springs from the DESIRE for what we lack'. This is so true--there's always just one more thing. Always. God does not withhold happiness from us--we do it to ourselves. If the desire to feel satisfied is there, He is the only thing that will ultimately fill it, no matter how hard we try. In fact, He makes empty places just so He can come and fill them. Loved this quote too: "Whatever we long for but lack is an area in which God will reveal Himself to be more than adequate for us." So many great things to ponder in this book--like Ahab, who despised all of his blessings just because of one small thing he couldn't have (how many times do I do that, God?); Naomi, who lamented over how good the past was-- but "hope is always ahead, never behind"; and Hannah, who in committing her lack of children to the Lord, was set free to place the burden completely on Him. Beautiful, deep devotional, would highly recommend.

Jeanie says

This is such a needed book. Our culture breeds non-contentment and so this is like a breath of fresh air. A spring brook, a fine symphony. I liked so many things about this book because it speaks to heart that longs for God. Not just my heart, but all of creation longs for the creator but because of sin, we gravitate to the wrong things. Contentment is a state of mind, but it is also what we believe, what we believe will lead to obedience, and obedience will lead to a God filled joy that brings contentment. It all comes down to trusting his goodness. Sounds easy but we are always spinning our wheels, looking for the easy fix, or not being

intentional. Contentment is a choice. She lays out the reason for mis contentment and the solution which is always Jesus and being satisfied in Him. Sometimes we want a guarantee that things will work out and we don't find our satisfaction in trusting God's best for us. Contentment takes a investment in people and our time knowing who God is and just hearing him. Jesus is more concerned about our relationship with him than about what we do for him. Always remember when our relationship is right, our lives will flow out Jesus in all that we do. The Christian life is not serving. The Christian life is Christ!

Anna Josephine says

At first I saw the title and thought, ew another cheesy quicky devo for christian "chicks" but this series is totally amazing. really addresses the complexity of life and struggles and worries. totally solid and always challenging me to rely on God and revealing all the lies i've built into my thought processes.

Tori says

I started this book with a group of other women as a weekly study. Schedule conflicts made the study eventually fall apart, and I finished it on my own. It's a fantastic devotional, done either in a group or on your own. Each short (one or two pages) chapter is written in a very easy to apply and understand way, and yet the information contained is very convicting, thought provoking, and deep.

Kim says

Convicting and encouraging book...

"Happiness, not the fleeting kind - the occasional good day - but the bound-out-of-bed-glad-to-be-alive kind, comes from running toward where God is ultimately taking us. The real source of all our unhappiness is due to the fact that we are running elsewhere. If we would just run in the right direction - toward Christ and his ways, toward the kingdom of God - we would find the happiness we are so desperately seeking, because that is the only place where it can be found."

Kimberlee says

I read this book to prepare for an upcoming women's church retreat by this author and with this theme. This book contains multiple short lessons based on Scripture that center around the theme of contentment. It is an excellent reminder to Christian women as to where to seek happiness and security. It is well written and contains both examples and Bible study. I am looking forward to the retreat as well as to giving this book as a gift to other friends.

Rachel says

A dear friend gave this to me as a gift, and I am so glad she did. If you are looking for a great devotional to purchase for a (female) friend, I highly recommend this one.

D Lee says

Very Good devotional!

This is a very insightful devotional book. A great companion as you study Scripture. Very encouraging and thought provoking. I recommend it.
