**Lessons from a Lockdown**

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**Day 15**

**Philippians 4:10-19**

I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 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 all this through him who gives me strength.

Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. Do I greatly rejoice when people express their concern for me or try to meet my needs? Have I shown and expressed gratefulness for the help of others?
2. What does it mean to be content? Am I content? Is there anything I am not contented with?
3. Have I learned to be content? What is the secret to being content?
4. Do I share in the troubles of others? Am I a giver or a taker?
5. How have I met the needs of others during the lockdown? What more can I do?

***Insight:***

Paul was grateful for the concern the Philippians had for him. He knew that they were concerned but they had no opportunity to show it. Are we convinced that our brothers and sisters are concerned about us?

Paul said that he learned to be content whatever the circumstances. He learned the secret of being content in any and every situation. Contentment is defined as “a state of happiness and satisfaction.” So Paul felt happy and satisfied whatever the circumstances, whether he was hungry or full, whether he had enough money or none at all. Do we have this kind of contentment?

This lockdown has caused many of us to have less than what we are used to. Some of us lost jobs, businesses, profits, clients, customers and ways we were earning a living. There are shortages of basic things we need and we may not have enough money to buy the things we need. We have less opportunities to get the things we need because we are limited to our immediate surroundings. We also have less fellowship and other forms of social contact. The lockdown has caused us to have less. But are we still content?

Paul learned to be content. Contentment is something we learn. We learn it by meditating on the Word of God and praying. We learn contentment through experience. What we are experiencing right now because of this pandemic should teach us contentment. Are we more content now than we were before?

Paul was able to endure anything because of his conviction that it is God who gives him strength. If God is our strength, we can endure anything. Our focus during these tough times must be to make sure that God is our strength. While we make sure have enough food and water, we should also make sure we have enough spiritual strength to last until the crisis ends. We need to pray more and meditate on the Bible more. We don’t know if the days ahead would be easier or harder than today. So, we need to grow in our spiritual strength in case our situation becomes more difficult.

The Philippians were concerned about Paul’s needs. They probably had their own concerns. But they made the effort to meet the needs of Paul. In fact, they met his needs on previous occasions. They did not assume that other Christians were meeting Paul’s needs. They did what they can and sent Epaphroditus to give Paul their gifts. What can we do to continue to give?

Because of the rules now in effect, it is more difficult to give money or food and other basic needs to each other. It is also more difficult for some to hear messages or join online service because of lack of internet access. But let us find ways to help each other. Let’s learn new ways of doing things. Let us be creative and resourceful. Remember that the help we give to our brothers and sisters is “a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.” Whatever good we do for each other is something we do for God.

Out situation today is less than ideal. But we don’t need to wait for the perfect situation before we can be an encouragement to others. Let’s do what we can today.

Let the lockdown teach us contentment and concern so that we can meet the needs of others.