Mom2Mom
Discontentment and Self-Pity Application
TEACHER Notes

Defining Discontent (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/discontent?s=)

- Not satisfied with what one is or has
- Wanting more or different
- A restless desire or craving for something one does not have

I. ((click)) **A biblical description of discontent is "covetousness".**

A. **Covetousness is the inordinate and sinful desire to have the things that we are convinced will satisfy us or make us happy**.

(Last week's notes are in grey for context.)

We are often convinced that we know what will make us happy, and consequently we believe that God is a hoarder who keeps from us the things that will truly satisfy us. God, the omniscient, loving, and kind Father, knows better than we what will make us happy, and he knows exactly how much of those good things we can handle without becoming sinful.

Luke 12:15 And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

I Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

B. **The Bible makes it clear that the love of temporal pleasures will damage us.**

God warns us to guard against covetousness, because the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. God says that it is more important to be content with what we have, most importantly Jesus, who will never desert us or forsake us.

Heb 13:5 5 Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"

How do you apply this in your life?
((click))**Discontentment - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)**

Examples of possible applications:

- I can be on the watch for discontent and covetousness in my life.
- I can be on the watch for self-pity and self-love in my life.
- I can deal with these topics biblically instead of culturally.

How do you help your family apply this?
Examples of possible applications**:**

- I can help my children believe about themselves biblically instead of culturally.
- I can help them to be sensitive to unbiblical messages about contentment and self-love in the culture without helping them to be cynical. The world teaches us to teach our children that all they need is to love themselves more and they will be happy. The cultural messages fueling self-love and discontent are everywhere.

How does the way you apply this change across ages and stages of life?
Examples of possible applications**:**

- **Baby** - I can help my baby be happy with the toy he is currently playing with instead of needing more.
- **Toddler** - I can limit the amount of material possessions my child has even if I am privileged enough to be able to buy him more. We don't need to buy a snack or toy every time we go to the store or as a reward for required obedience.
- **Elementary** - I can encourage my elementary age children to be satisfied with what they already have. ((click))Gus Loses His Grip - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
- **Junior High School -** I can encourage my jr highers to believe rightly about themselves without buying the world's message of positive affirmations, self-hype, or self-image boosting.
- **High School** - I can encourage a use of social media that is helpful and not harmful. Many teens use social media as a means of gaining attention, popularity, or obsessing about material possessions. I can limit their use of social media for their own good and teach them how to use it responsibly (which means I'll need to be an example of that).
- **College -** I can encourage my child to resist any unbiblical message about their worth that might come to them through their education or the culture around them.
- **Adult children** I can encourage my adult children to find their contentment in something other than their possessions, especially when they are becoming grounded as adults and are just starting to make purchases.

II. ((click)) **The biblical description of self-pity is "lover of self."**

Defining Self-Pity (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/self-pity?s=t)

- The act or state of pitying oneself, especially in an exaggerated or self-indulgent manner
- Thinking sympathetically or sorrowfully about your own suffering, distress, or misfortune, often leading you to find relief or aid from your distress

A. Being a lover of self leads to boasting, arrogance, and lack of self-control.

2 Tim 3:1-5 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

I John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

B. A self-focused person will hate hard things and complain a lot.

Scripture says that God uses suffering to accomplish his good in our lives and to shine His glory. A person with a self-focus will feel sorrow for themselves when they have to go through hard things, but God tells us to think otherwise about suffering.

Deut 8:2-3 2 You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3 He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.

How do you apply this in your life?
((click))**Biblical View of Self-Esteem, Self-Love, Self-Image - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)**
Examples of possible applications:

- I can watch for self-love growing in my life, as I know that it's a tendency of humans.
- I can have a biblical view of suffering.
- I can purge complaining out of my life.

How do you help your family apply this?
Examples of possible applications**:**

- We can watch for manifestations of a complaining heart and deal with them quickly (whining, complaining, fighting, jealousy).
- We can work to have a good theology of suffering and difficulty.
    - ((click))Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)

How does the way you apply this change across ages and stages of life?

Examples of possible applications:

- **Baby** - I can teach my baby to say words so they can express their thoughts and feelings instead of just crying. I can teach them what different words are meant to express.
- **Toddler** - I can help my child understand what whining is and never let that tool produce results. A lot of times kids don't know what you mean by "whining" so you may have to demonstrate "When you talk to me like this __(demonstrate whining)___ I will not listen to you and you need to stop. But if you have a need you may ask for what it."
- **Elementary** - I can help my elementary age children to evaluate whether something is an actual need before they ask for it. I can help them to be willing to accept my decisions without arguing. I will discipline my children when they argue with me or complain.
- **Junior High School -** I can decide to never endorse rebellion or rebellious choices. I can teach my jr highers to grow in humility and self-control
    - ((click))From Pride to Humility - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Humility: The Forgotten Virtue - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Blessing of Humility - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
- **High School** - I can encourage my teens to grow in selflessness instead of self-focus and self-love
    - ((click))Selfishness - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
- **College -** I can encourage my college age kids to love others more than themselves or tying to keep everyone happy with them (which is ultimately loving themselves)
    - ((click))When People Are Big and God Is Small - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Pleasing People - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Why Do I Care? - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
- **Adult children** - I can suffer well with my suffering adult children
    - ((click))Suffering and the Sovereignty of God eBook - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Suffering: Eternity Makes a Difference - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)

III. ((click)) **We can learn to be content no matter what our circumstances are like.**

A. God has already provided all that we need to glorify and enjoy Him, and we don't need anything more. Most importantly he has given us Jesus, who will never leave us or forsake us.

Heb 13:5 5 Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"

2 Cor 9:8 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;

Psalm 23:1 The Lord is my shepherd. I lack nothing.

B. Contentment comes from seeing and believing that the only way to have true satisfaction is from building a life around what can never be taken away or destroyed.

Matthew 6:19-21 19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

C. Contentment willingly submits to God's wise and loving sovereignty in every life condition.

Job 1:20-22 Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21 He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." 22 Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.

How do you apply this in your life?
((click))**Chasing Contentment - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)**
((click))**Contentment: Seeing God's Goodness - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)**
((click))**Contentment: Joy that Lasts - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)**
((click))**Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)**
((click))**Greener Grass Conspiracy eBook - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)**
Examples of possible applications:

- I can grow in contentment no matter what is happening in my life.
- I can focus on things that are eternally important.
- I can grow in trusting God's sovereignty.((click)) Trusting God (with study guide) - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)

How do you help your family apply this?
Examples of possible applications**:**

- We can be a family that is growing in gratefulness and thankfulness.
- We can think and talk about eternally important things.
    - ((click))Glory of Heaven e-book - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Money, Possessions and Eternity - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Heaven for Kids - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Heaven - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
- We can look for reasons to trust God as a family (pointing out when he provides after we've prayed for, noting ways God has intervened to protect us, etc)

How does the way you apply this change across ages and stages of life?
Examples of possible applications**:**

- **Baby** - We can praise God for specific ways our children bless us. We can invest in their little souls because they are eternally significant.
- **Toddler** - I can teach my toddler thankful games.
- **Elementary** - We can incorporate family and individual devotions into our life, because that is how we focus on what is eternally valuable.((click)) One Year Classic Family Devotions - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
- **Junior High School -** I can help my junior highers have right views about material possessions and grow in the discipline of not needing more, better, newer stuff.
- **High School** - I can teach my teens to budget their money and spend it in a self-controlled way with an eye to what is truly valuable. I can teach my kids biblical money values.
    - ((click))Teaching Your Child about Money - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Money, Debt, and Finances - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Money, Possessions and Eternity - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
    - ((click))Managing God's Money - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
- **College -** I can encourage my kids as they start making lifestyle choices of their own to think eternally instead of culturally. I can encourage them to be wise and content as they make housing decisions instead of approaching them materialistically.
- **Adult children -** I can make Christmas present decisions with a view toward helping my kids have what they need instead of just filling their life with material goods.

IV. ((click)) **We can learn to be thankful stewards in all circumstances.**

A. Contentment allows us to adjust our own desires to fit God's purpose and conditions. Self-Pity is a significant form of complaining and arguing. When you feel sorry that you are being forced to endure suffering or discomfort, you are arguing with God that what life conditions he has given you are not good. Self-Pity charges God with neglect and mistreatment and convicts him of unlovingly hoarding what you really need for success and happiness in life.

Phil 4:11-13 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of

being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.

James 1:2-5 2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

B. We have to learn how to be content. If that is true, then we can assume that our natural (sinful) state is to be one of complaining and pessimism.

*Phil 4:11-12 11 Not that I speak from want, for **I have learned to be content** in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.*

C. **We are stewards of all that God has given us to use during our time on earth.** Contentment sees how to use the good gifts in this world without becoming obsessed with them. But those possessions are simply tools, used to accomplish his purposes while we are on earth, and one day we will answer to God for how we used all that he entrusted to us.

I John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Luke 12:33-34 Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Luke 16:10-13 10 "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. 11 If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? 12 And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? 13 No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

I Corinthians 4:2 2 Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

How do you apply this in your life?

((click))Choosing Gratitude - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
((click))Thankfulness - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)

Examples of possible applications:

- I can purposefully choose to be thankful.
- I can look for ways to be held accountable to grow in this area of life.

How do you help your family apply this?

((click))Importance of Biblical Stewardship - Faith Resources (faithlafayette.org)
((click))Stewardship Month (2020) | Faith Ministries Resources (faithlafayette.org)

Examples of possible applications**:**

- We can teach our family about stewardship.
- We can take good care of our belongings and use our money wisely as stewards.

How does the way you apply this change across ages and stages of life?

Examples of possible applications**:**

- **Baby** - I can teach my child to say thank you when they've been given something.
- **Toddler** - Some families incorporate the toddler thanking their parents for disciplining them after a spanking or time out to show that the child's heart is grateful for the opportunity to grow.
- **Elementary** - We can encourage our children to be generous givers, seeing needs and sacrificing to meet them.
- **Junior High School -** I can encourage my jr higher to tithe and budget beginning at their very first paychecks. I can encourage them to give a portion of their income away in generosity.
- **High School** - I can confront materialism if I see that in my teens.
- **College -** I can help my college age kids make good choices about debt in light of biblical principles. I can help my children to not take on any more debt than they can repay.
- **Adult children -** I can encourage my adult children to be faithful to their financial responsibilities and live on a budget that was formulated using God's word as the basis for truth.