

Part 54: The Freedom in This Present Moment

Begin with a time of stillness and centering, and then a time of sharing.

Living in the present moment, trying to be ourselves fully, where we are now, is a way of exploring how we could be living.

Because so much in our lives is dependent on external circumstances, we can easily be seduced into thinking that when the externals are right, **then only** will we be able to enjoy life. Equally, we may say that because of what has happened in the past, we cannot enjoy life or be where we would want to be now.

This is a sure recipe for losing our lives. If we do not live this present moment to its fullness because of what has been or what still has to be, we do not live.

This moment is all we have in our lives. It is only now that we are living, only now that we can live.

This is easy to see in a child, who can only live for the 'now'. Waiting for an hour or a day before something can be done has no meaning for them. They live totally in the present tense. This is how we are needing to learn to live in relationship, relishing and making the most of every present moment.

God loves us in this moment, as we are, with all of Godself. Where are we, now?

To find peace in the present moment, we need to be content with ourselves as we are and where we are now. Contentment is that quality of acceptance and savour of oneself and the situation as we find it. It is the openness and desire to find and experience all that is of life in the moment.

When we can be fully present as we are in this moment and be open to receive all that we are and all that is here with us of gifted and graced life, then we will know contentment.

This is easy in an ideal situation where all is well, but as things become less than ideal so they begin to drag on our acceptance. If they continue to deteriorate, feelings of distaste and disapproval rise up in us which end with our withdrawal from or rejection of the present moment experience.

The thief of the present moment is the deception of the next moment. 'It will be better', so we leave this moment in search of fulfilment in the next. When we get to the next, we find that it, too, is less than acceptable and so we move on, we hanker for another time or place or person to be with.

Paul, who went through much in his life, says in Philippians 4:11 '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 everything through him who gives me strength.'

When we accept and allow each moment for what it is, we acknowledge that God is Lord of all life and nothing is outside his influence. Being responsive and open to him, irrespective of whether things are feeling good or not, bears out our love for God not only when God is giving us good things, but always.



Hebrews 13:5 says 'Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." '

Paul says 'But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it'. (1 Timothy 6:6–7)

This speaks mainly of material contentment, but the principles hold with contentment generally.

Can we hold all that is in our lives with a light touch and receive all that God brings to us in each moment? Can we find that contentment and peace in each moment that the world cannot know because it does not know the Creator and Sustainer of its life?

Reflect on your experience of different moments through the day.

Journal and share as usual.

At home, continue to explore your reactions to each moment.



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