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# POINT OF VIEW

Have you ever taken out your bad attitude on someone who didn't contribute to it? Why do you think this phenomenon occurs?

From where do your expectations of life come? How do they fit within God's promises?

What difference in contentment do you feel between knowing God is pleased with you and getting what you crave?

**2 Corinthians 6:10** – As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

## I) Our Emotions...

It feels good to feel good. God made us emotional so that we would experience His goodness in our full being. Our bodies feel good, we experience pleasure. Our bellies are full, we experience contentment. Our future is secure, we experience tranquility. That wasn't good enough for us. We craved some other feeling and sought it in disobedience. Our emotions have been careening based on that lack or its illegitimate fulfillment since. Jesus reconnected our ability to emotionally respond to God. He didn't disconnect the world's effect on us. He gave us the freedom to unplug them. Freedom to choose. To whom do we want to hand the keys to our emotions?

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♦**Others have it better**: Satan assaults us with ideas about our worthiness. We deserve more than we have, more than our lazy cousin, more than our terrible boss. Or maybe we don't. Maybe we are the loser who deserves less, deserves ridicule and torment. It hurts when struck with these fiery arrows. We feel sorry for ourselves because others have it better. Our flesh presents us "as sorrowful (2 Corinthians 6:10)," in our mind. By default, this goes straight to our heart, stimulating sorrow, sadness, anger, frustration, envy... Consciously or not, this is disappointment in God.

♦**I am loved**: Jesus comforts us with a different point of view. The evidence of our worth is His willingness to suffer with and for us. Suffer in the flesh. He could endure that because He never lost the emotional connection with His Father. He knows that He is loved. He has everything He needs to thrive in the purpose of God. So do we. The world says I am mistreated, "yet always rejoicing (v10)," my heart can respond to Jesus by knowing I am loved.

## II) Our Contentment...

How do we know we are loved? Intellectually, we might believe that once upon a time a man named Jesus lived humbly and died painfully for my bad attitude today. Emotionally, it is hard to feel the effects of this. It is too abstract. Something more immediate is the faculty to obey God's law and the resulting feeling of joy. Even a little joy from choosing generosity, self-control, patience, and the like is an awakening to His love. That joy, the indescribable emotion that springs from being our best selves, wants to be our contentment.

♦**Others have more**: The world opposes our joyful response to God's approval. It is determined to coerce us into responding to it alone. The more we respond to God, the more frequently and profoundly we will see that others have more. More wealth, power, beauty, charisma, friends, fun. Our animal instincts will respond in sadness, jealousy, and shame. We will be tempted to view ourselves "as poor (v10)," in comparison. Jesus gave us the ability to intercept this temptation and replace it with the truth. A truth that will heal our heart.

♦**I have all I need**: The truth is, I have all I need. That may not be much. It may not satisfy my body or my mind. It is enough to complete God's purpose for our lives. We can treat each other with the dignity and respect worthy of God's creation. To smile in greeting, laugh with a child, tell someone we love them. Maybe we don't have a thing to offer someone that the world has beat down. We can "make many rich (v10)," by rejoicing for life and overflowing with gratitude. It is what we were seeking in our desperation, and likely is what they need, too.

## III) Our Perspective...

Location controls perspective. When we chose to obey the ways of the world, it trapped us in a dungeon, subjecting us to the emotional response to whatever it gives us. Jesus broke the chains that enslave us, but we remain dislocated until we choose to leave. When we do, our perspective changes and we see ourselves, the world, and Jesus differently. It is this difference of perspective that frees us to perceive all the world has to offer in a different light.

♦**I am empty**: It is unbelievable that the more I have, the more I feel empty. I need even more to fill my life so I can be distracted from the emptiness inside. This is encoded in our language. We describe our relationship to things possessively. A description of power. It all comes down to a struggle for power. Sometimes, obedience to God leads to "having nothing (v10)." Nothing is mine. We are at His mercy to provide what we need for however long we need it. Probably we will release it to another once we are done. Not probably—certainly. We don't take anything across death's threshold.

♦**I am full**: Yet we "possess everything (v10)." I am full because I possess all the fruit of the Spirit in my character. These are inexhaustible resources available to all. Faithfulness reorients our perspective to see that whatever I need to live a life pleasing to God, He will provide. A ram for Abraham, ravens for Elijah, a donkey for Jesus. The world has us in a vicious cycle of striving for things that are never quite enough. God relocates us to a virtuous cycle of knowing we are enough. Choose your point of view.