

### 3.10 BE CONTENT

Topic: Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

Subtopic: Be Content

3B. Be Holy 4F. Peace in the Home, School, Church and Community

Class: Class III (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)

Objectives:

**Knowledge:** Students will find that contentment takes away covetousness and generates gratitude.

**Attitude:** Students will find a balance for what they have and what they want, developing a gracious heart.

Materials Needed:

Memory Verse Exercise Book  
Exercise Book

Scripture:

**References:** Philippians 4:10-13, 19  
Teacher's Notes

Memory Verse: "Do not desire another man's house...or anything that he owns. Exodus 20:17

#### TEACHER ACTIVITIES

##### Introduction:

1. Have you ever wanted something so bad that belonged to somebody else that you just thought you had to have it? What did you do about it?

##### Bible Story:

2. The 10<sup>th</sup> commandment tells us that we are not to desire anything that another person owns. Paul tells us instead we are to be content with what we have. Talk about Phil 4:10-13, 19

##### *Suggested Discussion Questions*

3. If you admire something that belongs to another to the point that you want to steal it, have you broken this tenth commandment? How?
4. Where was Paul when he wrote the letter to the Philippians?
5. What particularly did he want to say to these people?
6. What did Paul learn to do both when he was in need and when he had plenty?

##### Application:

7. Is it hard for you to see someone have something you would like? Why?

##### Evaluation:

8. How can you develop a heart of gratitude?

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES

##### Introduction:

1. Let students respond. They may say they stole it. They cried for it.

##### Bible Story:

2. Students may want to comment on this attitude of being content with what they have.

##### *Possible Answers to Questions:*

3. Yes because your desire for something that didn't belong to you got out of control.
4. In prison
5. He wanted to thank them for supplying the things he needed.
6. Paul learned that whether he was in need or had plenty, he needed to be content with what he had.

##### Application:

7. Yes. See how students answer—because they really need something, they would like to be like other children ---

##### Evaluation:

8. Give thanks for the things you do have. Most likely they will outnumber what you lack. Give thanks that the other person can enjoy what they have.

### **Extension Activities**

1. Have students write their new memory verse in their Memory Verse Exercise Book: “Do not desire another man’s house...or anything else that he owns.” Exodus 20:17
2. In the other Exercise Book, have students write at the top of the page: BE CONTENT. Underneath, write out the acronym you develop for the word CONTENT. [Use suggestions in # 3 below if you choose to]
3. Time for discussion: Talk about Paul’s way of handling times when he may have not only wanted, but needed, things that other people had. He learned to be content with whatever he had. Let’s take the work CONTENT and see if we can let each letter remind us of how we are to handle those times when we may have an excessive desire for something that doesn’t belong to us. [Let students come up with their own ideas but here is a suggestion.]
  - C - be CAREFUL with what you say about wanting that item
  - O - OFFER your desire to God and let Him help you put it in the right perspective
  - N – NOTICE how the owner uses the item to fill his needs
  - T – THANK God for the things you do have
  - E – ENTERTAIN ways that you might one day be able to have the item (save money, do jobs for pay, learn how to make it etc.)
  - N – NURTURE your mind by thinking on things of God which are more important than material things and put your desire in the right perspective
  - T - TRUST God to supply your needs which He promises to do.

## **NOTES FOR TEACHERS**

### **Highlights for the Bible Story**

Again the Scripture for today is not in story form but instead it helps us see how Paul learned to be content with what he had.

1. The book of Philippians is actually a letter that was written by Paul to the church in Philippi. Paul had started the church in Philippi and he had a deep appreciation for them.
2. Paul was in prison at the time of writing this letter. He was there because people didn’t understand how loving God is the better way to live. Yet he knew God was with him and because of that he wrote the letter conveying a lot of joy.
3. He particularly wanted to thank the church at Philippi for sending him a gift that supplied him with things he needed while in prison.
4. He did not want the Philippi church to feel that he had been neglected but he did want them to know that their gift had been received with great appreciation.
5. Then he said something very important. He said that he knew what it was like to be in need. He also knew what it was to have enough of the things he needed. He said he had learned the secret of being content no matter whether he was hungry or full.
6. Sometimes we see things that other people have and we think we just have to have it. When our desire for that thing gets out of control we might even steal it. Or we may become very envious of the person who has the thing(s) we want and our friendship with that person may be broken. There is a word for desiring something too much. That word is covet.
7. The 10<sup>th</sup> commandment says “Do not desire (covet) another man’s house...or anything else that he owns.” (Exodus 20:17)
8. Instead we learn from Paul that we need to learn to be content with what we have.
9. One of the easiest ways to be content with what we have is to give thanks to God for things we have or to show our gratitude to our parents for the things we have or the opportunities

we have been given. Speaking thanks helps us keep those strong desires in the right perspective.

10. God knows what we need and He promises to supply our needs.

### **Peacemaking Connection**

The first four commandments of the Ten Commandments call us to keep our focus on God. When we do that we do not struggle with arrogance and pride and other things that so often lead to conflict and tensions. The last six commandments help us see that our behavior has a lot to do with keeping the peace. Respecting one another, handling our anger appropriately, being faithful to our families, not taking things without permission from one another, always speaking truth and learning to be content with the things we have rather than desiring other things too much provide an atmosphere of harmony and respect and peace. May you choose to live by these commandments and inspire peace in your community.

### **Key Points**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment addresses the sin of desiring something too much (coveting). That desire begins in the mind as we look on something we want. Paul teaches us what he learned while in prison in Philippi. He says that whether we want something too badly or if we have enough, we need to learn to be content with what we have. God will supply our needs.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

Do I desire things other people have too much? How do I handle those desires? How am I grateful for the things I have? Have I learned to be content with what I have? Have I learned that there is joy in providing for the needs of others? Am I a good example to my students of being content with what I have?