

Being Content in a Job You Hate

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Day One

It could be that you have a job you really hate. If you could, you would quit tomorrow but you feel like you're in a prison because you need a job, you've got time and benefits invested in this job, and yet you hate the job.

I can understand your feelings because I've had a job or two like that myself. But the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians:

...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.... I can do everything through him who gives me strength (Philippians 4:11-13).

So, I want to talk about how to be content in a job you hate. You know, if you can learn this secret of being content, as Paul learned it, you can't lose because your fulfillment and satisfaction will not be based on circumstances—not based on whether you have a terrific job that you love or one that you really hate!

Keep in mind that Paul had to learn this secret of being content, and so do you and I. So, are you willing to enroll in Contentment 101, and learn how to be content with your job? That's where it begins. If you're not willing to learn to be content, of course, you never will learn it.

If you insist on saying, "I hate this job, I refuse to change my attitude toward this job, I could never be content with this job and furthermore I don't want to be content with it," then you've already prevented God from changing you and giving you a new heart and a new attitude.

First of all, you have to give up your rights. Most of us think things like, "I don't deserve this job," or "I deserve to have a fulfilling job," or "It's not right that I have to work at a job that doesn't utilize my talents," or "I can't be expected to endure the kind of treatment I get on my job." That's just our normal nature, which has been fed and fired up by our humanistic society, teaching us that we have our rights.

That doesn't mean that you're condemned to a job you hate forever, but if you can learn to be content for as long as you are there, when you do leave—if you do leave—you will not be running away. You will leave in victory not defeat, and you will have learned how to be content even in a job that is certainly not your dream job. So, if you are willing to relinquish your "rights" to have the job you want and learn to be content where you are, you're in for an amazing discovery. Think about that.

Day Two

Do you hate your job? Studies show that a large percentage of workers really don't like their jobs. Maybe you hate it because it's boring, or because the people you work with are difficult, or because you have an impossible boss.

Well, if you have a job you hate, here's what you do: Change employers. That's right—just change

employers right now, today. You're probably thinking, "But I can't just change jobs like that—today." Oh, I didn't say *change jobs*; I said *change employers*.

Paul wrote to the Colossians: "*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for human masters*" (Colossians 3:23). Did you realize you can change employers without changing jobs? Just say out loud, "I no longer work for that company or that person; I have a new boss. I now work for the Lord."

Keep that thought in your mind all day long as you're working and keep telling yourself over and over this truth: "I report to Jesus. Therefore, I must be careful how I act and I need to watch my attitude, because I report to Jesus."

I don't care how tough your job is or how much you hate it, if you work for Jesus, if you consider him your boss, if you continually remind yourself that you will give an account to him as to how you have performed in your job, and furthermore, that he will reward you if you do a good job, you can be content right there in that job you hate.

Believe me, I know because I've had to practice this myself. For three years I worked in a job I hated and wanted to leave. The first year there I did everything I could to find another job, and nothing happened. Finally, I realized God had me there for some purpose, and I decided to work for God, not for that company and not for that impossible boss.

As soon as I changed employers, I was content in that job. And God taught me lessons for the next two years in that job I hated which I could not have learned anywhere else. He also used me to witness to others who worked there. But nothing good happened until I changed employers.

If you've been working for an earth-person, or for yourself even, you've been working for the wrong person. Make this biblical principle a reality in your life today: Don't work for people or money or a company, work for Jesus. I promise you, you can be content in a job you hate if you work for the right person.

Day Three

Do you have a hard time making yourself go to work each day because you hate your job? As believers in the marketplace, we need to show an attitude toward our jobs that is different from the non-believers, and whether we like our jobs or not, we should learn to be content with those jobs as long as we have them.

Paul wrote to the Philippians that he had learned to be content in any circumstance, and we can learn it, too. So, if you want to enroll in Contentment 101, here's the next lesson to learn: Work for recognition and reward but not *earthly* recognition and reward!

The reality of most work environments is that expressions of appreciation and recognition are often few and far between. So, if you hate your job because you never get the recognition or appreciation you deserve, I've got great news for you. You can be content in that job you hate because when you work for the Lord, Colossians 3:24 says that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.

You see, God has a recognition and incentive program better than any employer could ever dream up, and if you perform your everyday work duties as unto him, you're going to be recognized and rewarded by the Lord, whether your employer ever appreciates you or not.

So, if you feel you're not receiving the earthly rewards you deserve, rejoice to know that you can be assured of a heavenly reward. If you're doing a good job and nobody says "thank you," just remember that someday you'll get the "thank you" you deserve from a higher level of management. That is, of

course, if you're working for Jesus and not for people.

So, if you're in a job you hate, you can learn to be content if you will live in the knowledge that your recognition and reward are coming from God. It's a big change of attitude, but the Holy Spirit has the power to make that change inside of you if you give him that permission. I pray you will.

Day Four

If you find yourself in a job you don't like, you need to know that you can learn to be content right where you are. And when you learn that, you are in a win-win situation, because you no longer allow yourself to be a victim of your job circumstances.

If you want to learn to be content with that job you hate, ask God what he has to teach you through it. Have you gone to God and said, "Lord, I'm in a job I hate and I can't get out. Why am I here? What are you trying to teach me or do through me in this job?"

You remember Joseph, sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers and treated unfairly and cruelly by his captors, wrongly imprisoned for two years for doing the right thing. Then God delivered him from that prison and he became second in command to the Pharaoh (Genesis 37-41).

Joseph said of his bad experience that his brothers meant harm to him when they sold him into slavery, but God meant it for good (Genesis 50:20). Joseph allowed God to turn a terrible experience into a blessing. But please note that God was able to turn it into a blessing *because* Joseph was willing to let him.

God may have you in that job you hate because he has a blessing there for you, but because of your attitude, he can't work that blessing for you yet. If Joseph had gotten bitter or remained angry or been rebellious, he would probably would have just rotted in that prison.

Are you rotting in your miserable job because you haven't given God permission to use it in your life for good? Believe me, there are miracles waiting for you in that job you hate, if you will in humility make up your mind to work for God and seek his reward and look for the good that God wants to do for you and through you right where you are.

You'll know contentment even in a miserable job if you have that attitude in you. It's the attitude that Jesus had when he was willing to leave heaven and come to earth to die for us. Surely it was a job he didn't relish, but he knew God would work redemption through it, and so he submitted to the good that God wanted to do by sending him to a job he did not enjoy.

Day Five

I've been talking about how to be content in a job you hate. Notice I didn't say "with" a job you hate, but "in" a job you hate. I believe there are times when you should actively pursue another job or another career, when the right thing to do is find a place to work which uses your abilities better or get more education so you can advance to better jobs, or simply find a better working environment.

But if you're in a job you hate, however long you are going to be in that job, as a Christian, you should learn to be content in that job. The Apostle Paul said he learned to be content in any circumstance, and he was in some very bad situations. If he can learn contentment, so can we.

Let me tell you the story of a woman in Wisconsin who found herself in a job she hated. It is a manufacturing job with repetitive and boring duties. She graduated from college with very good grades but found herself in this job that was beneath her.

Finally, after hearing my message on “The Freedom of a Captive Mind,” she decided to change her attitude about that job and to think of it as her mission field. She began reprogramming her mind with Scripture, memorizing verses on the job, and singing songs of praise in that factory job.

Her co-workers noticed the change in her. They began to ask her to sing her songs, and many times she was able to share the Scripture she was memorizing in conversations with different individuals. She started praying for her co-workers, and they began to come to her with their needs and ask her to pray for them.

She was able to lead one of her co-workers to know Jesus as her Savior and has touched the lives of all who work with her. Yes, the work is boring, but it gives her time to memorize Scripture while working and that has been a wonderful healing process in her own life. She has found contentment in a job she hated because she has seen it through the eyes of eternity, and asked God to use her there. He is.

I challenge you to ask God to change your attitude and make you content right where you are, so that you are a light shining in darkness in that corner of the world.