Wednesday 13th May

Philippians 4:12-13

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 all this through him who gives me strength.

I find Paul’s statement in these verses of Philippians super-challenging!! And when you think that he was writing to this baby church whilst in chains because of his faith and efforts to tell others about Jesus, it becomes even more challenging! ‘I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation’. Wow! What an incredible thing to be able to say, there seems to be so much discontent around, and yet people are searching more than ever for contentment. Contentment is not a secret because only a few are in on it - it is available to everyone who follows Jesus. But perhaps it is a secret because it is not easy to realise in our lives. This time of isolation has been testing when it comes to contentment, and I am guessing that most of us have experienced moments of contentment as well as times of discontent.

Well the clue to the secret comes in the final sentence: ‘I can do all this through him who gives me strength’. Paradoxically, contentment is not found by pursuing it. Contentment is found in pursuing Jesus. If we have Him, we have all we need. As King David said, ‘The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want’ (Psalm 23:1). He is our all sufficiency.

*Lord Jesus, we thank you that you are the only one who truly satisfies. We know that we can find contentment in you, and yet so often we struggle. Help us to grow in our realisation of this secret of contentment, as we grow in our love for you. In this time when we are experiencing all sorts of pressures and concerns, help us to press in to you.*

*We pray for our nation as we undergo the changes in lockdown this week. We continue to ask for your help for leaders at national and local levels. We pray too for our communities, that the good fruit of kindness, neighbourliness and consideration would be carried forward into this new season. We thank you so much that many people have been seeking you in this time and ask that this movement would continue to grow. That as people taste and see that you are so good, there would be a mighty tidal wave of revival sweeping through the land. Amen*