

The Tennessee Tribune

Volume 23, No. 23, 3 Sections

THURSDAY, June 7-13, 2012

\$1.00

God's Grace is Still Sufficient: The Benefits of Being Content

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To be sure, there are times when God responds to our prayers in a manner that is favorable to us. For example, some people have prayed for confidence during a job interview or for the actual job itself, and God, through His generous love and mercy, granted them the desires of their heart. There are also times when God's plan for our lives supersedes our own. Even though people have prayed for years to go somewhere, God seemed to have a plan for them to remain in the same city, remain at the same place of employment or remain around the same set of friends or colleagues. God answers prayers, but we are forever reminded by the prophet Isaiah: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the LORD (Isaiah 55:8)."

God loved the Apostle Paul, and Paul prayed to God on three separate occasions to have a thorn removed from his side (2 Corinthians

12:8). The scriptures tell us that God did not remove the thorn; however, He told Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness..." (2 Corinthians 12:9)." Indeed, while preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, Paul experienced divine inspiration and human incarceration, blessings from God and beatings from people (Acts 16:37), heavenly consecration and consistent condemnation. However, through the ups and downs, the tragedies and triumphs, the progress and pain of the Christian experience Paul said: "...I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content (Philippians 4:11)." In the same letter, Paul also said: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13)."

There is value in waiting on the Lord. There are also benefits to being content with what God has given us and where God has placed us in

our lives. I've provided pastoral counseling to many people who think that God is no longer concerned with their well being. They've turn to drugs, wasteful spending, and unproductive relationships because they are not content with the manifold blessings (e.g., food, family, jobs, health, strength, friends, shelter, hope, youth or opportunity) that God has already provided for them.

Being content with the temporary or permanent plan that God has for our lives helps us to see the tremendous blessings He is constantly bestowing upon us. Even if we pray to God and God decides not to remove some of the "thorns" of our lives (e.g., financial, familial and geographic burdens), it is important to know that God's grace, which is God's love, is still sufficient. Nothing can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:39), and God's love will sustain us