Respectable Sins

Session Five

Discontentment

***HOOK***

Since last session, how did you do at trusting God with your anxieties and accepting God’s sovereign will?

If you became anxious or frustrated, what steps did you take? Or, what steps SHOULD you have taken?

In what specific areas of you noticed progress?

“Anxiety is a fearful uncertainty over the future, whether short-term (as in my plane trips) or long-term, such as might result from a job loss. Frustration is usually the result of some immediate event that has blocked my plans or desires. Discontentment…most often arises from ongoing and unchanging circumstances that we can do nothing about.” Jerry Bridges

***BOOK***

What is discontentment?

Jerry Bridges – “Discontentment…often arises from ongoing and unchanging circumstances we can do nothing about, is sinful when it negatively affects our relationship with God. How do we respond to Him when a job or a marriage doesn’t work out, we remain childless, chronic pain continues, or we face burdensome administrative details.”

Is there such a thing as legitimate discontentment?

When does discontentment spur us to positive action (in other words when it is legitimate) – and when is it sinful?

What subject is most frequently warned about in Scripture in regards to discontentment?

Look up the following passages in groups and write down what they say about discontentment over money and possessions.

* 1 Timothy 6:7-10
* Hebrews 13:5
* Philippians 4:11-13

In this lesson, we are going to look at another aspect of this that is probably closer to home for most of us. Our attitudes of discontentment most often arise through unchanging circumstances in our lives that act as trials to our faith. What are some common unchanging circumstances that can trigger discontentment?

What other sins can discontentment lead to?

Jerry write, “it is our response to our circumstances rather than the degree of difficulty [in them] that determines whether or not we are discontent.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?

[*The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% of how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our Attitudes.*](http://thinkexist.com/quotation/the_longer_i_live-the_more_i_realize_the_impact/296740.html)*” Charles Swindoll*

One of the key verses for this session is Psalm 139:16. How might this verse help us in dealing with circumstances that tempt us to be discontented?

How does Psalm 139:13 help those who physical disabilities or deformities?

Write out what this statement from the author means to you: “We must believe that the Bible’s teaching about these attributes [God’s sovereignty, wisdom, goodness] really is true and that God has brought or allowed these difficult circumstances in our lives for His glory and our ultimate good.”

What does resignation mean?

Why is resignation NOT a biblical response to dealing with discontentment?

Psalm 139:13, 16 gives us some insight into how to deal with discontentment. In groups, look up the following passages of Scripture and record what counsel they give for dealing with the sin of discontentment.

* Matthew 6:33
* 2 Corinthians 4:18
* Colossians 3:1-3
* Proverbs 21:6

***LOOK***:

Throughout *Respectable Sins*, Jerry encourages us to remember God’s attributes. If we believe and remember that God is infinitely wise, loving, and knows what is best for us, then how will we respond to circumstances that tempt us to be discontent? On the other hand, if we think God is simply toying with us and wanting us to suffer, how will we respond to trials?

 What are some of the attributes of God that you can focus on when feeling discontented that will help overcome that sinful desire?

***TOOK***

What types of circumstances tempt you to become discontent?

When has God used your discontentment to each you something, help you grow in a particular area, or get your attention and make you more attentive?

Which particular insights, quotations, or verses in this session especially connected with you? Why?

This next week, carefully note which circumstances tempt you to be discontent, and when temptation occurs, immediately ask God to help you trust and obey Him and be content with the circumstances.

Write a prayer thanking God for being in control of your circumstances (even when you don’t feel that certainty). Invite Him to help you respond in ways that serve and glorify Him.