

## Fire Pit Topic: Contentment

April 2017

Definition: a state of mind in which one's desires are confined to his lot whatever it may be. A state of happiness and satisfaction.

1. How would you describe the most content person or thing in your experience?
2. Are there people or places you gravitate toward to find your inner peace?

### Fire Pit Discussion:

1. The grumbling of the people of Israel in the wilderness reminds me of a story I heard about the explorer Hernando De Soto. His army wandered for four years through the southeastern United States in search of riches. The clothing the men brought had worn out, and they had to wear the animal skins and furs of the Native Americans. The Europeans scorned these garments of people they regarded as savages.

Moving in a southwesterly direction, the survivors of the expedition reached Mexico in 1543.

They were surprised at the excitement their native clothing caused. The people there eagerly bought the colorful, painted animal skins. Some people wore the robes as they were. Others lined their best garments with the fur. The explorers had been blind to the beauty and value of the clothing they had worn every day.

Sometimes we overlook the value of what we have and search in vain for things we imagine to be more valuable or satisfying. The Hebrews wanted meat rather than manna, and de Soto's men could find no beauty in the clothing provided for them. It is a great gift to be able to rejoice in what we already have!

2. References:
  - Numbers 11:4 the rabble among them had a strong craving; and the Israelites also wept again, and said, "If only we had meat to eat!"
  - Philippians 4:12 "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."
3. When I am confronted with a lack of material things, health, or emotional strength, my impulse is to pity myself and blame God bitterly for wronging me. This oft-traveled path of discontent leads me away from God and into the dark regions of my sinful self.

As a Christian, I should know that I could overcome any problem with Christ. Yet even Paul said that he had to learn the secret. This knowledge is not acquired in a sudden flash of revelation but through a gradual process. When I teach class, I often explain a problem many times and in many ways before my students "learn the secret." Likewise, I am in the process of learning the wonderful secret of abiding in the Lord so that I can be content in all situations.