

#28 Northside Natter

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Today, I'm looking at **Destiny with Contentment**.

A person's destiny is a predetermined course of events considered as something beyond human power or control; say's the *American Heritage Dictionary*. Destiny is our lot in life, the cards we are dealt that will shape our future. Apparently.

I don't agree with that definition. Our destiny can, and does, change when God is in the picture.

I believe natural man can shape his own destiny through several things:

- his ability to work hard for what he wants from life
- his resolve in doing whatever it takes to make it happen
- his endurance to stay the course
- confidence in himself

Natural man goes far, or not, based on these attributes. If he has little endurance, he will settle for what's easy and dream, or fret, about the rest. If he has little resolve, he'll slacken off and won't do the study, hard yards or push himself. If he doesn't want to work hard, he won't. Simple. Natural man is where he is because of his own choices and I think it's too easy to blame it all on his lot in life; his destiny.

When we add God to the equation, we find several things will happen:

- opportunities become more obvious and at the right time
- working hard for what we want becomes easier to endure
- we have the strength to stay the course more readily
- our confidence is in the Lord, not in ourselves

Spirit-filled man will get further. He will endure, be patient, put more work in and not slack off. Why? Because he's doing it unto the Lord. God makes all the difference. Our lives won't be like the idle rich because that's not good for us spiritually, neither is living in poverty with want. Our lives, with the Lord, are better than what we had (or would have had), richer, full of contentment, joy, peace, temptations and trouble. Apparently, we need the lot to have a well-balanced life. It builds resilience and strength for the really hard times that will come. Learning how to weather the storms is all part of nurturing a strong resolve and endurance.

Romans 5:3

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience.

We have a bigger say in our destiny than we think. Our lot in life isn't static. We can change it if we don't care for it too much, with the Lord's help.

What if we live on meagre means and have no job or way of bringing in more income? This is where the Lord really shines. While we work on our attitude, the Lord will work on our circumstances. What attitude? We can sometimes have a poverty mentality and feel sorry for ourselves; we want what other people have and our discontent blinds us to the Lord's blessings. Once we change to an abundance mentality, we will be more content and notice all the blessings he gives us.

Just think about this for a minute or two. Do we really need to have every gadget people have? Do we really need to go on those cruises and fancy holidays, have a 100" TV screen, drive a new car, wear the latest fashions, go to all the sports games, eat out every week, see a movie every weekend, or fill our homes with new furniture and other adornments? If we can afford it, why not? But do we need to?

People's homes are bursting with things they no longer want. Objects that they bought on a whim because someone else had it, or it was the latest must have. Yet, do these things make us happy? No. Nothing other than a feeling of contentment, peace and joy will make us happy and no-one can buy those things. If we can be happy with our lives and in what we have achieved, we will be content.

If you are wondering if there is something that you have achieved in your life, something that you can be truly proud of and ecstatic with yourself for doing, go no further than this: you became a spirit-filled child of the Living God. *Awesome!* There isn't anything more satisfying, more humbling, more joyous or contentment-building than that. This world has nothing to offer to compare to it. Not a thing. What is man's adulation for our achievements compared to God's? What do we need in our lives that God has not already made possible for us to gain?

We have food, clothing and shelter. These are our basic needs – tick that one off. We have an income (job, self-funded, Centrelink) – tick that one off too. All needs are met.

1 Timothy 6:8

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

Of course, we have tribulation as well. Things like neighbours we wish would move far, far away, a broken-down car that needs fixing, ever-increasing bills to meet, wayward children to deal with and more. Our lives have enough happening in them without making it worse by wishing we had this or that like other people have. We need to learn to be content with what we have.

I have a neighbour up the road who is a spirit-filled man attending a nearby church. He has a lovely wife and a nice new home. Yet, he's not content. He grumbles about his pastor and church and has a history of church-hopping. His latest desire is to be sent overseas to do missionary work and he wants to find a church that will help him do that. Missionary work is a noble cause, after all, and perhaps he'll find contentment in doing it. The problem is that being discontented comes from a dodgy attitude which he will take with him where ever he goes. Putting on the mind of Christ will solve his problem. But why go overseas to do missionary work when there is much more to be done for the Lord in his own country and even his own street?

Man's destiny may look like it was set in stone, but the Lord has other ideas. The lack of contentment can destroy our destiny. That's something to really mull over. Like our discontented neighbour, the discontented saint could be destined to wander the earth looking for that elusive something unless he stops, puts on the mind of Christ and gets on with what he's supposed to be doing for the Lord. Destiny with contentment is everything for a spirit-filled person. If we aren't feeling content with where we are now, we need to change our attitude – not our address, state or country. Let's be content with what we have for we truly are blessed.

Hebrews 13:5

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

If he will never leave nor forsake us, what more could there be that we should want?