

## I'M SATISFIED?

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Satisfaction can be a good thing. We all know the old song that speaks of being “...satisfied with a little cottage below.” The songwriter used a symbolic material comparison (“a gold one that’s silver lined”) to express the idea Heaven will be much better than anything we experience here. Jesus taught that we should not worry so much about material circumstances in Matthew 6:19-34. He said, *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you”* (Matthew 6:33).

Paul’s advice on the subject of material satisfaction is famous. *“I know how to be abased and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:12, 1 and 19).

So God told us long ago that we should not worry over our material circumstances. We are to work hard and depend on God to bless us. So we do and He does. We ought to be satisfied with His plan. And that’s good.

But there is another area in which we most surely should not be satisfied. Let’s allow the Scriptures to speak: *“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God: and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone that partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil”* (Hebrews 5:12-14). Here were some folks who had become a little too satisfied with the level of Bible knowledge to which they had attained. Thus they were rebuked.

This rebuke was necessary because their self-satisfaction had led them to the precipice of spiritual peril. They had been tempted with going back into the Jewish religion (or, more than likely, a mutilated form of it) and some seemed ready to do it.

So they had been warned: *“Beware, brethren, lest there be in you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God”* (Hebrews 3:12). Just as they had to be careful to avoid this deprecating form of salvation, we also must exercise ample care. It is easy to let this bad kind of satisfaction salvation.

After all, we have studied all these years and the Bible doesn't change, so what's the problem? The problem is that the blessing of Bible study is in the process of doing it. The Bible has a huge amount of information in it. It is designed by the mind of God to be accessible to the most basic of minds and yet challenge minds that are most capable and fully developed. Someone said it is as shallow as a little stream while at the same time as deep as the ocean. The Scriptures have in them everything we need to grow spiritually and to be able to approach God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). We should never stop learning them.

I like the way the New King James Version approached 2 Timothy 2:15. *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God; a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* Hugo McCord has it like this: “Do your best to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman, interpreting correctly the message of truth.” If we take these two renderings and put them together in our mind we must conclude that God is telling us (through Paul telling Timothy) that Bible study is at least two things: (1) work and (2) something that requires our best efforts.

We should all be satisfied with the way God blessed us. But we must not allow ourselves to grow self-satisfied in our Bible study. Instead let's do our best to grow in the faith that comes by the Word of God.

*Bill Inby*