

CIRCUMSTANCES:
A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

Philippians 4:10-13

How should Christians respond to circumstances?

I. WE CAN LAUGH (10)

Amid wonderful circumstances

A. THE REASON

1. Their concern was revived
 - Blooming after dormancy
2. Their concern was recognized
 - Paul appreciated them focusing their attention on him

B. THE REJOICING

1. In their love
 - Epaphras had delivered their gifts to Paul (see 4:14-18)
2. In the Lord
 - a. This is a Christ-centered celebration
 - b. Paul is practicing what he preached - see 3:1 and 4:4

II. WE CAN LEARN (11-12)

In whatever circumstances

A. ABOUT CONTENTMENT (11)

1. The lesson: Learning to be content
 - a. This is a discipline that must be learned ... it does not come naturally
 - b. Contentment is an inner adjustment to outer circumstances
 - c. Dependent on no one but God
2. The lifestyle: No wants
 - Content with the basics - I Tim. 6:8
3. The limits: None
 - a. In whatever circumstances
 - b. Surrendered to God's sovereign will and ways
 - Not: Why am I here but wow God is here! - See Heb. 13:5

B. THROUGH CONTRASTS (12a)

1. Knowing Poverty - See II Cor. 11:23-27
2. Knowing Prosperity - Paul likely grew up in a wealthy home

Over please >

C. THE CODE (12b)

1. Learning the secret
 - a. Growing through groaning
 - b. Moving through the rigors and fulfilling the requirements
2. Living with satisfaction
 - a. Learning to be full
 - b. Learning to suffer need

III. WE CAN LEAN (13)

In all circumstances

A. DEMONSTRATE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

1. An unwavering optimism: I can do!
 - a. Activity is required: We've not arrived but we strive - see 3:12-14
 - b. Attitude is important: A confidence in our success
2. An unrestricted ability: All things
 - a. With God nothing is impossible
 - b. With God all things are possible > He is unlimited
 - c. What are some of your "all things?"

B. MAINTAIN A DEPENDENT ATTITUDE

1. Counting on Christ alone: Through Him
 - a. "A boundless confidence in the ability of Christ to match every situation."
- R.P. Martin, "Philippians, p. 178
 - b. See Isaiah 40:29-31
2. Conquering in His name
 - We are more than conquerors - Rom. 8:37
3. Fueled by His power: "who strengthens me"
 - He enables and infuses us with his dynamite

CONCLUSION:

Believers can be over their circumstances, not under them
We can laugh ... learn ... and lean!