



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church  
*Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week*

## Living Contentment

Today we are considering “Don’t Covet”. That means, don’t want something so badly that you will do anything to get it. By doing some of these things, you would probably be breaking a number of other commandments!

I think being content means giving your days and nights to God and trusting in his protection and mercy. I DON’T think it means “resting on your laurels” and becoming lazy. That’s what retirement means to a lot of people – they actually retire from life!

Living contentment, to me, means accepting what comes your way and being thankful that God is not “just”, that is, he doesn’t give us what we deserve, but far more good than we deserve.

Some of us have been surprised by job loss this year. To be content does not mean to sit back and say “whatever will be will be”. We still have to get up each day and do other work – job seeking is not an easy task. Some of us look at the news each day, “tsk tsk” a little. and move on to the sitcoms. No. We are not to remain content when we see what is happening in our world. We are to dig in the best we can and bring God’s love into this world as best we can. If that means volunteering our time, talent and knowledge someplace, get to it and do it. If it means giving some bucks we might spend on things we really don’t need, then get to it and do it. If it means letting go of some of our favorite prejudices, start working on it. Not coveting also means helping to improve God’s world and remembering that each of us, even “they” are children of God whom we are to love I’m a volunteer “nut”. I believe that my time is one of the most valuable gifts God has given me. As it is with many of us, once retired, we are busier than we were when we “worked”. My calendar is filled with normal things, and then, each week, this that or the other comes up and

things get squeezed together. It gets bad when you have to cancel something just to fit that doctor visit in!

Living in contentment means that we look at God's word and remember that he strongly suggested a Sabbath – I believe it was a command, not one of the 10 suggestions. Part of sabbathing is prioritizing life. There are some things we just have to say “no” to. This is my work because I have the talent/ time for it. This is not my work, but it may very well be yours. Let's talk about it.

I like teaching children. I tried this past year and this that and the other thing began to make my Sundays insane. It was not good for the teaching mode and it certainly wasn't good for the worship mode. I had to give it up. Sundays became better for me, but it put the burden on someone else – who proved to be much better than me at it anyway.

Are you dealing with injury or pain? No, that isn't easy and we aren't content because we can't do what we used to do. But God knows our discontent. Take that time and use it for spiritual growth. In financial pain? We aren't content but we use the wisdom God has given us to seek out help and new work. We may not be “content” but living with God means living in HIS contentment!

*TMK*

*-- Week of July 12, 2009*