

## Linda's Tree of Knowledge

August 18, 2020

### Sister to Sister In This Place

#### Philippians 4:11-14

***"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. 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. I can do all this through him who gives me strength. Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles."***

The word "content" has several different meanings. Depending on its usage it can complete its responsibility in meaning as a noun, verb, or an adjective. The biblical use of content is as an adjective. So, the meaning of the word, "content," as an adjective is, "to satisfy." This passage of Scripture is basically telling us that we should be content/satisfied with the place in life that God has us in, no matter the situation, no matter what season, and no matter the troubles that we are facing.

The Bible gives us several life stories of God's people facing circumstances where they were content, and they had to make life choices. One story in particular is the one in which a widow in Zarephath chose to share her tiny morsel of food with Elijah, a man of God. The widow was very poor and only had enough flour in a jar and oil in a jug to make one loaf of bread for herself and her son. When she was about to make her bread of flour and oil, Elijah came along and asked her to make a loaf of bread for him, prior to making bread for herself and her son. The woman complied and made one for Elijah first, using all of the flour in her jar and the oil in her jug. Because of her obedience, she was able to make bread with the flour and oil that was found in her unending jar and jug for herself and her son. Because of her choice, God blessed her, and her jar of flour and her jug of oil never ran out.

Even though this woman faced dire circumstances, she was content and had her mind made up on how she was going to handle her situation. God sent Elijah, "Then the word of the Lord came to him: "Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food" (**1 Kings 17:8-9**). In this place of contentment, lived a widow who was living as God had her in this season of her life. In this place of contentment, God sent Elijah to share the widow's troubles. In this place of contentment, God will fix all of your troubles; give you peace; and bless you so that your jar and your jug are constantly overflowing with His love.

### Devotional Moment Shut the Door

#### 2 Kings 4:3-7

***"Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side." She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. When all the jars were full, she said to her son, 'Bring me another one.' But he replied, 'There is not a jar left.' Then the oil stopped flowing. She went and told the man of God, and he said, 'Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left."***

Sometimes in life, we simply have to “shut the door.” This is not a “shut the door,” to your heart, or a “shut the door,” to a bad relationship, or a “shut the door,” to some friends, but this a “literal” shut the physical door in your life. You know the ones that I am referring to; those wooden doors, those steel doors, or those glass doors that lead into your place of living.

In Scripture: **Isaiah 26:20**, “Go, my people, enter your rooms and **shut the doors behind you**; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by.” **Genesis 7:13-16**, “On that very day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham, and Jepheth, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark. They had with them every kind of wild animal according to its kind, all livestock according to their kinds, every creature that moves along the ground according to its kind and every bird according to its kind, everything with wings. Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and entered the ark. The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah. **Then the Lord shut him in.** **Exodus 12:22-23**, “Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. **None of you shall go out of the door of your house until morning.** When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, He will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down. **Joshua 2:17-19**, “Now the men had said to her, ‘This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother, your brothers and all your family into your house. **If any of them go outside your house into the street their blood will be on their own heads**; we will not be responsible. As for those who are in the house with you, their blood will be on our head if a hand is laid on them.”

When the widow in **2 Kings 4** **went inside and shut her door**, she closed her door to an outside world of debt, heartache, and trouble. While inside, she became content and prosperous. She and her sons worked on a project which in the end would benefit them to live a good life. At the appointed time, the widow opened her door to a life of prosperity and plentiful. Because of her obedience to the man of God and her willingness to comply with him, she reaped God’s benefits.

Sometimes in this **complicated**, yet **simple** world that we live in, we simply have to be quiet; to listen to God with our hearts; to get away from all the noise and the people in our physical ears; and to shut our doors until God says that it is time to come back out.

### Discipleship Moment

#### Disciple Attributes

Disciples are willing to be trained for a life of service. They will be trained to be fishers of men, and salt and light in the world: preachers, teachers, servants, disciple-makers. They will begin to reflect the character of God as revealed in Jesus. Characteristics of His life will become theirs, especially as His holy nature is revealed in righteousness and love.

Disciples of Jesus will choose to live under the authority of God as revealed in the **living Word** of Jesus and the **written Word** of God of both Old and New Testaments. They will walk in obedience to Jesus in all that He says and in all that the Father has written down for them in the holy Scriptures. They will also choose to live in an intimate fellowship with others who also want to be disciples. They will cultivate those relationships as well as their

relationship to the Lord and be bonded together in a fellowship of love. They will learn that their commitment to discipleship involves a deeper level of trust in the Lord than that which brought them to saving grace. They will go from faith to faith, trusting Jesus in ever greater measure. Finally, they will learn to live continuously in their relationship with Him. While enjoying His presence, they will allow Him to use that presence for His own purposes in their lives.

### Scriptures & More

#### Scripture: Matthew 16:24-25

“Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.”

#### More: Matthew 21:6

“The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them.”

### Tidbits & Pieces

Do all the good you can...  
By all the means you can...  
In all the ways you can...  
In all the places you can...  
At all the times you can...  
To all the people you can...  
As long as ever you can.

*John Wesley*

### In Prayer

#### (Throwback Sundays – Anderson UMC Sanctuary Choir)

Give us this day  
Our daily bread  
You said you would  
Supply all my needs  
According to your riches  
I have but to ask  
And I shall receive.

To go from here  
And share this love  
You gave to me  
To show someone who is lost  
And help them find their way  
The way to truth and faith  
So, they can be free.

Be free like me  
Be free like me

Oh Lord, we need your love

Oh Lord, we need your peace  
Oh Lord, we need your joy  
On this day.

### Children's Moment

#### I'm A Branch

Have you ever grown a plant? You had to put it in sunlight and water it. What happened if one of the green, healthy stems broke off the plant? Did the stem keep growing or start to die?

Jesus said He's like a vine, and we are like branches of the vine. Just like any other plant, the branches have to stay attached to the plant or they soon die. They can't do anything without the vine! But if they stay attached to it, then they grow strong and makes fruit or flowers.

If we stayed joined to our Vine, Jesus, we will stay strong and grow into the people God means for us to be. What will our "fruit" look like when we stay connected to Jesus? **Galatians 5:22-23** tells us, "But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy, and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself. There is no law against things of that kind."

So, stay joined to Jesus by reading your Bible, praying, and living your best for Him. Because you can't do anything without your Vine!

***Bible Blessings***