



SPRING-TIME DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

March 30, 2023



Photo: Our Daily Bread

CATCHING CONTENTMENT

I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content.

Psalm 131:2

READ Psalm 131

In a psychiatrist's advice column, he responded to a reader named Brenda, who lamented that her ambitious pursuits had left her discontented. His words were blunt. Humans aren't designed to be happy, he said, "only to survive and reproduce." We're cursed to chase the "teasing and elusive butterfly" of contentment, he added, "not always to capture it."

I wonder how Brenda felt reading the psychiatrist's nihilistic words and how different she may have felt had she read Psalm 131 instead. In its words, David gives us a guided reflection on how to find contentment. He begins in a posture of humility, putting his kingly ambitions aside, and while wrestling life's big questions is important, he puts those aside too (v. 1). Then he quiets his heart before God (v. 2), entrusting the future into His hands (v. 3). The result is beautiful: "like a weaned child with its mother," he says, "I am content" (v. 2).

In a broken world like ours, contentment will at times feel elusive. In Philippians 4:11–13, the apostle Paul said contentment is something to be learned. But if we believe we're only designed to "survive and reproduce," contentment will surely be an uncatchable butterfly. David shows us another way: catching contentment through quietly resting in God's presence.

By **Sheridan Voysey**

PRAY & REFLECT

Dear God, I rest in You, the deepest well of my truest contentment. Amen.

When do you most feel content? How could you set aside unhurried time to be quietly present with God today?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

Psalms 120–134 are known as the Songs of Ascents, so called because the fifteen psalms in the collection were sung by the ancient people of God as they journeyed up to Jerusalem for the annual feasts. Psalm 131 is among the shorter of these songs. Nineteenth-century preacher Charles Spurgeon noted that this psalm "is one of the shortest psalms to read but one of the longest to learn." What makes it the longest to learn is that it challenges one of the most difficult aspects of our human behavior, our pride. In this psalm we hear the heartfelt prayers of one who's renounced pride. The psalmist also expresses and encourages humble satisfaction with God by using the universally familiar image of a mother and child. Though weaned, the child's contentment is found in the mother's loving presence and not just in her nourishing provision. – By **Arthur Jackson**

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