

## Gratitudes - part 3 – Season of Contentment not Contention

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**BIG IDEA – In Christ - I have enough, I am enough.**

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**scripture focus - Matthew 6:31-34 NLT** “So don’t worry about **these things**, saying, ‘What will we **eat**? What will we **drink**? What will we **wear**?’ These things **dominate the thoughts of unbelievers**, but your **heavenly Father already knows all your needs**. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

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Being yourself can be hard. There are times we may look around and see what others have and think, “If I just had what they have, then I would be cooler, more qualified, richer, smarter, more spiritual, and overall better.” Whatever that “thing” is...**MORE isn’t always BETTER, and the greener grass on the other side might be AstroTurf.**

More Isn’t Always Better – HBR Overwhelming by choice.

**Marketers assume that the more choices they offer, the more likely customers will be able to find just the right thing. They assume, for instance, that offering 50 styles of jeans instead of two increases the chances that shoppers will find a pair they really like.** Nevertheless, research now shows that there can be too much choice; when there is, consumers are less likely to buy anything at all, and if they do buy, they are less satisfied with their selection.

**It all began with jam. In 2000, psychologists Sheena Iyengar and Mark Lepper published a remarkable study.**

**On one day, shoppers at an upscale food market saw a display table with 24 varieties of gourmet jam. Those who sampled the spreads received a coupon for \$1 off any jam.**

**On another day, shoppers saw a similar table, except that only 6 varieties of the jam were on display. The large display attracted more interest than the small one. But when the time came to purchase, people who saw the large display were less likely, one-tenth as likely, to buy as people who saw the small display.**

These studies and others have shown not only that **excessive choice can produce “choice paralysis,”** but also that it can **reduce people’s satisfaction with their decisions, even if they made good ones.** [yet, we want more choices anyway.]

**The paradox of choice** – Chris Myhill. Galleries deliberately provide large amounts of space between exhibits. This is so that visitors can digest and appreciate the content. Negative space helps people process the information they’re taking in, without feeling overwhelmed.

**We are on a quest for more for us, in us and in others. It’s just not sustainably healthy.**

**To figure out that we have enough and are enough in God, because of Christ, is THE challenge and delight of life itself!**

**There is an Old Testament story that details the lives of two brothers who bickered badly throughout much of their life.** But their story is a living parable, a reflection of our own lives as **we work to adjust our attitudes of gratitude!**

**These two brothers had a famous father!** Their dad, Isaac had a long and difficult and rather miraculous journey being a **Hebrew patriarch in ancient days.**

**Isaac, as you remember was the only son of Abraham and Sarah when they were very old – Abraham was 100! Isaac’s story starts in Genesis 21.**

**Isaac had two sons, twins in fact - Esau and Jacob.**

**One son was impetuous, impatient, and filled with passion and raw aggression for life. The other was smart, savvy, manipulative and patiently played the long game. They were total opposites in almost every way.** The one thing they had in common – they both wanted more and eventually used every bit of their natural abilities to get it. **They shared a zest for getting their way!**

**Jacob through slow, methodical manipulation, got Esau’s own birthright!**

Esau had a really bad day of hunting and **came home empty handed and starving. Jacob had Esau’s favorite stew cooking on the stove.** Esau, thinking he was in control, made a deal with his brother – **give me the stew and I’ll give you my firstborn birthright!** (“But Jacob said, “First you must swear that your birthright

is mine." So Esau swore an oath, thereby selling all his rights as the firstborn to his brother, Jacob." **Genesis 25:33 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.25.33.NLT>)

**Esau's comment about the whole exchange highlighted his character, his belief system on how life works.**

**In dramatic exasperation, he says, "Look, I'm dying of starvation!" "What good is my birthright to me now?" The Bible records Esau's real motives, "Esau ate the meal, then got up and left. He showed contempt for his rights as the firstborn."** **Genesis 25:34.** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.25.34.NLT>

**Genesis 25:34, Esau, "bazah," despised his birthright.**

This was known as the "Father's Blessing." **And, in that blessing would contain the last will and testament of the father and family legacy.** It was a contract as much as it was an affirmation between fathers and their children.

***Many adult children today suffer because their fathers did not know how to bless their children. Sons struggle with identity and confidence because their fathers did not bless them, or many ended up cursing their sons with a soiled family name. Daughter's struggle with their identity, their strength, their inner beauty of character because their fathers did not bless them. Many ended up searching for that inner security that only a father can provide. Oftentimes, these children grow up struggling, looking for that fatherly blessing in other things, other people.***

**Rebekah, remembering what the Lord told her before the boys were born (Genesis 25:23), decided this would be the moment to join in the subterfuge, the deception, to secure Jacob's future of leading the family wealth and story.**

**Genesis 27:1-4 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.27.1-4.NLT>

**"One day when Isaac was old and turning blind, he called for Esau, his older son, and said, "My son." "Yes, Father?" Esau replied. "I am an old man now," Isaac said, "and I don't know when I may die. Take your bow and a quiver full of arrows, and go out into the open country to hunt some wild game for me. Prepare my favorite dish, and bring it here for me to eat. Then I will pronounce the blessing that belongs to you, my firstborn son, before I die.""**

Ah, **"But Rebekah overheard what Isaac had said to his son Esau. So when Esau left to hunt for the wild game,"**Genesis 27:5 NLT  
<https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.27.5.NLT>

**Rebekah comes up with this elaborate plan, even going so far to put goat hair on Jacob's momma-boy arms and neck, to fool her husband into giving Jacob the blessing and making him the heir of their future. Genesis 27:8-17 NLT**

**The moment it happens...**

The ruse takes place and **Jacob actually lies to his own father to force him to mis-appropriate the family blessing!**

**Genesis 27:24 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.27.24.NLT>**

**““But are you really my son Esau?” he asked. “Yes, I am,” Jacob replied.”**

**Isaac's eyesight was awful, and likely his sense of touch was gone as well, but man oh man, that old guy could still smell!**

**Genesis 27:27 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.27.27.NLT>**

**“So Jacob went over and kissed him. And when Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, **he was finally convinced, and he blessed his son.** He said, “Ah! The smell of my son is like the smell of the outdoors, which the Lord has blessed!”**

**Genesis 27:32-36 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.27.32-36.NLT>**

**“But Isaac asked him, “**Who are you?**” Esau replied, “**It's your son, your firstborn son, Esau.**” Isaac began to tremble uncontrollably and said, “**Then who just served me wild game? I have already eaten it, and I blessed him just before you came. And yes, that blessing must stand!**” When Esau heard his father's words, he let out a loud and bitter cry. “Oh my father, what about me? Bless me, too!” he begged. **But Isaac said, “Your brother was here, and he tricked me. He has taken away your blessing.”** Esau exclaimed, “**No wonder his name is Jacob, for now he has cheated me twice. First he took my rights as the firstborn, and now he has stolen my blessing. Oh, haven't you saved even one blessing for me?**””**

**Genesis 27:41-44 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.27.41-44.NLT>**

**“From that time on, Esau hated Jacob because their father had given Jacob the blessing.** And Esau began to scheme: “I will soon be mourning my father's death. **Then I will kill my brother, Jacob.**” But Rebekah heard about Esau's plans. So she sent for Jacob and told him, “Listen, Esau is consoling himself by plotting to kill you. So listen carefully, my son. Get ready and flee to my brother, Laban, in Haran. Stay there with him until your brother cools off.”

Jacob and Rebekah got their way, but it would only cause a long and horrible breach between the boys and their own families.

**Things did not go well for either brother for a time.** Esau finally figured out how his life plan of living hard, fast and loose did not pay off well for him. He realized Jacob had indeed not just outsmarted him, but that God had intended on older serving the younger – and he was not happy about it!

**Esau went off, rebelliously living a life purely to embarrass his family legacy and vowed to kill his brother Jacob.**

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## Notes on Esau –

**Genesis 26:34-35 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.26.35.NLT>

“At the age of forty, Esau **married two Hittite wives**: Judith, the daughter of Beerli, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon. But **Esau’s wives made life miserable for Isaac and Rebekah.**”

**Genesis 28:6-9 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.28.8-9.NLT>

“**Esau knew that his father, Isaac, had blessed Jacob** and sent him to Paddan-aram to find a wife, and that he had warned Jacob, “You must not marry a Canaanite woman.”

**He also knew that Jacob had obeyed his parents and gone to Paddan-aram.** It was now **very clear to Esau that his father did not like the local Canaanite women.** So **Esau visited his uncle Ishmael’s family and married one of Ishmael’s daughters**, in addition to the wives he already had. His new wife’s name was Mahalath. She was the sister of Nebaioth and the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son.” [Esau was so angry and bitter that he married one of Ismael’s daughters! Ismael is the illegitimate son that Sarah talked Grandpa Abraham into conceiving a baby with Hagar]

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**Jacob did not fare well either. He had his own struggles.** Even following through with his father and mother’s wishes to marry within the Jewish community, **Jacob was outsmarted and out manipulated by his uncle Laban.** But on his journey over to Paddan-aram, God begins to supernaturally work in his life, meeting him in the middle of the desert and promising to bless him and protect him. **Genesis 28:10-22 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.28.10-22.NLT>

**Genesis 25-31 – God dedicated a lot of Biblical real-estate to telling the twin’s story from tragedy to reconciliation.**

However, running to the end, I want to point out something beautiful about their story.

Jacob escaped with Laban's daughters, grandchildren and what Laban believed to be his own flocks (which they were not his). Jacob has some more miraculous meetings with God out in the desert in Genesis 32.

Going through personal and professional crisis and for years living by his own rules, his own failed manipulative ways along with several God visitations. God will even change his name. Jacob/Israel now wants peace over prosperity – he had it all, but something was missing!

**Genesis 32:3-5 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.32.3-5.NLT>

**“Then Jacob sent messengers ahead to his brother, Esau,** who was living in the region of Seir in the land of Edom. He told them, “Give this message to my master Esau: ‘Humble greetings from your servant Jacob. Until now I have been living with Uncle Laban, and now I own cattle, donkeys, flocks of sheep and goats, and many servants, both men and women. I have sent these messengers to **inform my Lord of my coming, hoping that you will be friendly to me.**’””

**Jacob gets word back!**

**Genesis 32:6-8 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.32.6-8.NLT>

“After delivering the message, the messengers returned to Jacob and reported, **“We met your brother, Esau, and he is already on his way to meet you—with an army of 400 men!”** **Jacob was terrified at the news.** He divided his household, along with the flocks and herds and camels, into two groups. He thought, “If Esau meets one group and attacks it, perhaps the other group can escape.””

**Jacob prays. He prepares the presents. He plans to wow his brother with several waves of gifts with humble blessings!** “Jacob thought, **“I will try to appease him by sending gifts ahead of me.** When I see him in person, perhaps he will be friendly to me.”” **Genesis 32:20b NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.32.20.NLT>

**Genesis 33 opens with the most unexpected resolution to the very long and colorful story of the twins!**

**But first we see Jacob's fear of his brother in the way he staggers his family, putting the least of his favorites first in line to meet Esau!**

**Leah and her kids must have known what was going on! How do you think it made that wife, those kids feel?**

**“Then Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming with his 400 men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and his two servant wives. He put the servant wives and their children at the front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last. Then Jacob went on ahead. As he approached his brother, he bowed to the ground seven times before him.” Genesis 33:1-3 NLT**

<https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.33.1-3.NLT>

**But it was Esau, now with all the power, all the control, and behaving like the big brother, the firstborn he had despised when he was younger – it was this defining moment that captures a true reconciliation!**

**“Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him. And they both wept.” Genesis 33:4 NLT**

<https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.33.4.NLT>

**I want to point out one small but powerful detail in the brother’s proof no true reconciliation. They came to agree on the most important lesson they had learned.**

**Esau asked Jacob, ““And what were all the flocks and herds I met as I came?” Jacob replied, “They are a gift, my Lord, to ensure your friendship.” Genesis 33:8**

**But Esau said, “I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself. Genesis 33:9 ESV <https://bible.com/bible/59/gen.33.9.ESV>**

**And Jacob responded back, “No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand. For I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me. Please accept my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.” Thus he urged him, and he took it.” Genesis 33:10-11 ESV <https://bible.com/bible/59/gen.33.11.ESV>**

**Both brothers, now changed by God’s grace in their life speak these words to each other, “I have enough!”**

**Thinking about this idea of having enough reminds me of Jesus’ words to his friends and to us today,**

**Matthew 6:31-34 NLT “So don’t worry about **these things**, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we **drink**? What will we **wear**?’ These things **dominate the thoughts of unbelievers**, but your **heavenly Father already knows all your****

**needs.** Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

It was the Apostle Paul that reminded us, through his letter to the churches in Colossae, of exactly who you and I are in Christ - “Don’t let anyone capture you with **empty philosophies** and **high-sounding nonsense** that **come from human thinking** and from the **spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.** For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So **you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.**” **Colossians 2:8-10 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/col.2.9.NLT>

**“In Christ - I have enough, I am enough.”**

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## NOTES

### Scriptures

**Genesis 25:21-26 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/gen.25.22-25.NLT>

“Isaac pleaded with the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was unable to have children. The Lord answered Isaac’s prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. But the two children struggled with each other in her womb. So she went to ask the Lord about it. “Why is this happening to me?” she asked. And the Lord told her, “The sons in your womb will become two nations. From the very beginning, the two nations will be rivals. One nation will be stronger than the other; and your older son will serve your younger son.” And when the time came to give birth, Rebekah discovered that she did indeed have twins! The first one was very red at birth and covered with thick hair like a fur coat. So they named him Esau. Then the other twin was born with his hand grasping Esau’s heel. So they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born.”

**Genesis 33:9 ESV** <https://bible.com/bible/59/gen.33.9.ESV>

But Esau said, “**I have enough**, my brother; keep what you have for yourself.”

**Genesis 33:10-11 ESV** <https://bible.com/bible/59/gen.33.11.ESV>

“Jacob said, “No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand. For I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me. **Please accept my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.**” Thus he urged him, and he took it.”

**Matthew 6:31-34 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/mat.6.31-34.NLT>

“So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”



**Ecclesiastes 5:10-11 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/ecc.5.10-11.NLT>

“Those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness! The more you have, the more people come to help you spend it. So what good is wealth—except perhaps to watch it slip through your fingers!”

**1 John 3:1-3 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/1jn.3.1-3.NLT>

“See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don’t recognize that we are God’s children because they don’t know him. Dear friends, we are already God’s children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is. And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure.”

**Colossians 3:12-15 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/col.3.12-15.NLT>

“**Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves**, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.”

**Colossians 2:8-10 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/col.2.9.NLT>

“Don’t let anyone capture you with **empty philosophies** and **high-sounding nonsense** that **come from human thinking** and from the **spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ**. For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So **you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.**”

**2 Corinthians 2:15-16 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/2co.2.15-16.NLT>

“Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing. To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom. **But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume.** And who is adequate for such a task as this?”

**Proverbs 30:15-16 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/pro.30.15-16.NLT>

“The leech has two suckers that cry out, “More, more!” There are three things that are never satisfied— no, four that never say, “Enough!”: the grave, the barren womb, the thirsty desert, the blazing fire.”

**1 Timothy 6:6-10 NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/1ti.6.6-10.NLT>

“Yet **true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth.** After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can’t take anything with us when we leave it. So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content. But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.”

## Questions

- Q: Why would Esau despise, show contempt for, his birthright?
- Q: Was Rebekah forcing God's will to happen (similar to Sarah & Hagar)?
- Q: Can knowing God's promise, cause us to want to **make** it happen?
- Q: Did Jacob actually **steal** Esau's birthright? (Genesis 25:33)
- Q: What do you think changed Jacob's ideology?
- Q: Any guess on what might have softened Esau's heart?
- Q: What do you think about the brother's final commonality – having enough?
- Q: What is Christ's compare/contrast with unbeliever's verses believer's dominating thoughts.

## Diving Deeper into God's Word

### Strong's Concordance

**#3309 merimnaó: to be anxious, to care for.** I am over-anxious; with acc: I am anxious about, distracted; I care for. Drawn in opposite directions; "divided into parts" (A. T. Robertson); (figuratively) "to go to pieces" because pulled apart (in different directions), like the force exerted by sinful anxiety (worry).

**#1162 deésis: a need, entreaty.** praying for a specific, felt need") – heart-felt petition, arising out of deep personal need (sense of lack, want). Comes from the word for beg or request.

**#2169 eucharistia: thankfulness, giving of thanks.** Gratitude; giving of thanks.

### Vincent's Word Study

#### Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary

**Proverbs 30:15-16 The horseleech**, an insatiable creature, sucking blood till it be ready to burst —supposed by some to be the vampire (a fabulous creature), as being literally insatiable; but the other subjects mentioned must be taken as this, comparatively insatiable. The use of a fabulous creature agreeably to popular notions is not inconsistent with inspiration.

## Internet Links

### [Enough with 'I Am Enough' by AIMEE JOSEPH](#)

In him, I far exceed enough. I rocket past mediocrity and no longer worry about keeping up with the Joneses, as his perfect power radiates through my weakness ([2 Cor. 12:9](#)). In him I am transformed from one level of glory to another ([2 Cor. 3:18](#)), as I press beyond human standards to take hold of that for which he has taken hold of me ([Phil. 3:14](#)). He will transform me until I begin to resemble him who redeemed me ([Rom. 8:29](#)). **The gospel tells me two truths, and holds both at full strength: In myself, I am not enough. In him, however, I am more than enough.**