

**Russell Kelfer**

# **Adam: Was He Content?**

**#701-B**

**Series: God's Living Legends Part 1**

**dtm** DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.  
INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230 • (210) 226-0000 / 1-800-375-7778 • [www.dtm.org](http://www.dtm.org) • [dtm@dtm.org](mailto:dtm@dtm.org)



# Adam: Was He Content?

Number one. That's what we all want to be: number one. We either want to be the first or the best. We want to be number one. The first man to walk on the moon will never be forgotten. The first person to swim the English channel was a hero. The first person to discover a new cure for something is a hero. Others may come along behind and add as much benefit to mankind, but the one we remember first is the one who was first. Even the first person to do something wrong is etched in history forever. For this, and many other reasons, Adam is certainly worthy of our investigation. He was the first man to walk with God. He was the first man to be separated from God. Adam was the first husband. He was the first father. He was the first farmer. He had the first surgery. He had the first dog and the first cat. He had the first job. He was number one in God's book. And Adam is who we are looking at as we begin our journey through the wonderful world of God's living legends.

In our first study, we looked at Adam's environment. We examined the world's paramount excuse for sin: circumstances. The world says we are the product of our heritage, our environment and our circumstances. That's not true. Scripture teaches that we are the product of our choices. The same ghetto that produces a hardened criminal produces a renowned evangelist. The same affluence that produces a spoiled materialist produces sensitive saints. The broken home that seemingly destroys one life is a springboard to Jesus for another. Choices. Sin is a choice. Adam made a wrong choice. However, it was not through his troubled environment.

We looked, you remember, at the setting of Adam's environment. Was that the cause of his fall? Here is what we found out:

1- He had a perfect father and a perfect relationship with his father. His father was God, so his father always loved him, was always available, and met his every need. That wasn't his

problem. He had a perfect father.

2- He had a direct line to heaven. He had a walk with God and a talk with God that was totally exclusive and totally personal. Adam actually walked with God without the veil of sin between. He had never tasted sin. He had a direct line to heaven with nothing in between.

3- He understood what it meant to work. The work ethic was not new to Adam. He understood what responsibility was. He named every animal. He was the first gardener, the first husband. He knew how to work. He knew how to make decisions.

4- He grew up in paradise, a perfect environment. He had no environmental problems to hang his hat on and blame his sin on. There were no hospitals, no traffic jams, no lawsuits, no inflation, no warfare, no irate customers.

5- He had a marriage made in heaven. He had a woman created just for him by a perfect God. Eve was custom made with Adam in mind, because God decided it was not good for man to live alone.

6- He wasn't deprived. He was given access to everything in the garden except one tree. So, he went for that.

So, Adam didn't fall because of circumstances; his circumstances were perfect. Adam fell because of character. He was beginning to focus on his own needs, rather than the Word of God. The fatal choice was a *result of*, not the *cause of* those attitudes. You and I possess the propensities to those attitudes apart from the Spirit's control in our lives. Let's look at Adam through the mirror of the Word. We will focus on five basic attitudes God desires of man that ultimately affect his choices and Adam's responses to these five areas. I am going to simplify these definitions as we begin, then amplify them later in the study.

Quality 1- Adam needed a spirit of contentment. That is what this lesson is all about. Contentment over-simplified is "grateful acceptance that what you have is all you need and ALL you have is undeserved." Contentment. Had Adam exercised a grateful spirit, had he been joyfully content with all he had, there would have been no appeal to partake of the forbidden fruit. Adam and Eve had more going for them spiritually and circumstantially than any other person who has ever lived. Had they been having

## Adam: Was He Content?

a praise gathering with the angels, Satan's taunts would have been instantly rebuffed. Satan has always attacked in the area of possessions and rights. He still does. The first character quality needed is contentment. We will look at that in this study with a magnifying glass and try to examine it a little more closely.

Quality 2- Adam needed a faithful spirit. A faithful spirit is one that remains in place and serves. A faithful spirit never leaves its post for lesser things. It never leaves its assignment for greater glory. Adam had two major assignments from God. First, he was to tend and keep the garden. Secondly, he was to care and provide for his wife. The word "keep" means to guard from outside intrusion. It was Adam's job to "keep" the garden. The serpent should never have been there in the first place. Adam may have been fishing one time too many, or the Cowboys may have been on television. Apparently Mr. Adam wasn't keeping his garden faithfully, or a talking snake would have been sent to the Paradise Zoo where it belonged. Even his wife, his only human responsibility, should not have been free to chat with God's enemy. Faithfulness—that's character quality number two.

Quality 3- Adam needed an obedient spirit. An obedient spirit is the spirit that joyfully does exactly what it is told. Exactly. It wasn't that Adam's instructions weren't clear; they were painfully clear. It was simply that he did not fully grasp the holiness of God. He did not understand that God cannot set standards and lower them to meet our compromising spirit. God demanded obedience. He still does.

Quality 4- Adam needed a responsible spirit. That's a spirit that seeks no scapegoats in life. When it errs, it says, "I did it." When Adam sinned, Adam said, "Lord, the wife You gave me, she made me do it." Can't you just see little eighty pound Eve and this one-hundred and eighty pound Adam, saying, "Lord, it is Your fault since You gave me this woman, and it is her fault; she almost broke my arm." Another thing—the responsible spirit doesn't hide when it is found out. Adam was found hiding from God, as though man can hide from an omnipresent God.

Quality 5- Adam needed a dependent spirit. A dependent spirit is the basic attitude that your life is not yours to run. It is realizing that God is boss and being relieved about it. This was the essence of Adam's error. Satan approached him as though he had a decision to make. He didn't have a decision to make. God

## Adam: Was He Content?

didn't ask him to consider the benefits of knowing the difference between good and evil. God said, "Adam, don't eat that." Adam's decision was already made for him. When Adam decided to operate independently of God's Word, that's when Satan's spirit was manifest. Don't you see it is the same way with us. The only decision we need to make is this: Jesus IS Lord. God IS our boss. All of life and all of eternity rest on the understanding of that one simple statement.

Our first detailed look at Adam is a look at the attitude that allowed him to even consider wanting what God said was not for his own good. Contentment. Probably no attitude so stands at the core of man's rebellion than the absence of contentment. If God is who He says He is (and He is), then you have for this moment and time all you need, all you need in the material realm and all you need in the spiritual realm. Whatever God has withheld from you, you do not need. And whatever God has told you to leave alone, leave it alone. It may be something that is okay for someone else, but if God says, "It's not for you," don't touch it.

God had planted a beautiful garden. The word garden literally means a place hedged about. From man's perspective, to be hedged about means that God has shut us in; we've lost our freedom. From heaven's perspective, it means that God has hedged us about so that Satan cannot get in except by God's permissive will. The enemy has only controlled access to your life. God allows him only certain privileges, and we can control his access further once he approaches us by invoking the authority of God. We have been gloriously hedged about and Eden was a picture of the Christian life.

In that garden, God provided all that Adam would ever need. It's a picture of the Christian life. My God has promised to "supply all your needs according to His riches in glory". He provided in the center of the garden a tree of life which is the essence of His son, Jesus. The tree of life served as evidence that God's character was both eternal and immortal. In God, life exists and as man partakes of that life, he develops more fully into godliness. He becomes more like God as he becomes more dependent on God. The more he eats of this tree, the healthier he becomes. Jesus IS the tree of life. He that eats of Him will never die.

The second tree God called attention to was the tree of knowledge of good and evil. If we could come to understand this

## Adam: Was He Content?

tree, it would help unlock our understanding of how God works where sin is concerned. You may be asking: “Why did God put that tree in the garden?” He did so as evidence of His supremacy. His goal was to train man’s spirit to be obedient to God’s Word. That was His goal: to train man’s spirit to be obedient to God’s Word. Your next question might be, “Well, if that was His goal why did He say you can’t taste it?” There is the secret. We were to learn by looking and leaving it alone. God designed man to learn right from wrong by obeying right. The more you obey that which is right according to His Word, the greater revelation you will have of what is wrong. So God desired that man should learn of evil by tasting good. Your children need not learn of sin by experiencing it. Many of us can testify that sin scars for life. Our children don’t need to go to X-rated movies to understand immorality. They can learn all they need to know of evil by obeying the Word of God. The tree is an object lesson like a bottle of castor oil sitting on the sink or like a switch that has been used to punish or like a crashed car that is left outside the city to remind people not to speed. It is a reminder that disobedience produces death. And the fruit of that tree is not edible. It is poisonous. It was placed there so that simply by seeing it, man could avoid the mistake of disobedience, and thus progressively, like removing the layers of an onion, come to experience right from wrong.

To taste evil is to make the tongue bitter. It creates a craving for more evil, a craving which can never be satisfied. Man’s job is to be satisfied with God. He needs to be satisfied that all God has given is all man needs. If Adam had been busy praising God for the garden, for the beautiful trees, for the plants, for the food, for the shade, for the job; if he had been praising God for Eve, for all of her attributes, for providing him with a helpmate; if he had been busy praising God for the tree of life itself, for God Himself, the tree which represents rebellion would have had no appeal. No appeal at all.

That brings us to the point: How content are you? Suppose God asked you to move back into the last house you lived in. Would you still be content? Suppose God asked you to move back into the *first* house or apartment you ever lived in. Suppose God asked you to move into the smallest house you have ever lived in. Would you still be content?

Suppose it was the will of God for you to be a one car family again. Suppose it were God’s will for you to be a no car family,

## Adam: Was He Content?

to have the blessed ministry of riding the bus. Would you still be content? Suppose tomorrow your salary were cut in half. Would your songs of praise grow weaker? Would the fruit of rebellion taste better? If God allowed a catastrophe into your life and left you suddenly alone, would you still be content? If you have the tree of life (Jesus), Scripture says you have all you need to be content. We sing that old chorus, "He's all I need, He's all I need, Jesus is all I need." But do we really believe it?

Contentment transcends circumstances and finds its total satisfaction in God. Therefore, it views all circumstances not as detrimental, neither as incidental, but rather as providential. What is contentment? Let's look at some capsule definitions:

Contentment is a Christian's heart at parade rest. It is enthusiasm with no worldly cause. It is a heart that is immune to jealousy. Contentment lives in a house that is just the right size. Contentment eats hamburger with no thought of steak. Contentment is excitement in the midst of illness, compassion over the needs of someone who is worse off than you, joy in the midst of pain. Contentment is satisfaction with a job no one else would have. Contentment is thankfulness for a boss who is unfair and unkind. Contentment is gratitude over a paycheck regardless of its size. Contentment says "Thank you, Lord" for hand-me-downs. Contentment praises God that the car runs at all. Contentment loves the hardest with the least recognition. Contentment says, "Thy will be done, Lord," even when His will means a cross.

Contentment is never being possessed by your possessions, never being irritated by another's success. Contentment is a giving spirit with a bare cupboard. Contentment is praying that your enemy succeeds, even at your expense. Contentment is buying a coat just for warmth. Contentment is a heart at rest at the thought that things might always remain as they are and never improve. Contentment is joy based only on the presence of God. It is enthusiasm that your thorn in the flesh got the promotion you wanted. Contentment is satisfaction with your spiritual gift. It is handling a recession without depression. It is gentle confidence in the midst of apparent failure, knowing that success was not up to you. Contentment is refusal to compare your lot in life with anyone whose circumstances are worse than yours. That is contentment.



## Adam: Was He Content?

The Scripture paints a portrait of contentment that says it all. Paraphrased says:

For God-likeness to be real, we must be content just as we are.

We came into this world empty-handed and we are guaranteed to go out of it the same way.

So, if we have food to eat and clothes to wear, there ought to be nothing in this life to make us discontent.

So, to set our sights on worldly accomplishments or riches means disaster strewn along a pathway lined with grief and hurt.

The basis of loving money as a god forms the foundations of evils of every kind. Some have taken this path, lost sight of their spiritual goals and ceased to grow.

(I Timothy 6:6-10)

Philippians 4 paraphrased adds these verses:

Be joyful and thankful no matter what happens. Be continually praising God.

Let the whole world see your relaxed spirit. God is in control.

Cease all worrying, instead replace worrying with praise, prayer, and appreciation. Take to God what you would otherwise worry about and thank Him for taking care of it.

Then you will be flooded with the contentment of God's peace which is so fantastic the world will have no explanation for it. This peace will stand guard over your thought life, and control your desires as you simply rest in God.

(Philippians 4:4-7 paraphrased)

So I am not concerned for my welfare. I have learned the secret of contentment.

In every conceivable situation I am content with nothing and I am not flustered by success. I have learned that secret: it doesn't matter what my circumstances are,

for Christ can do everything through me. He is my strength.

(Philippians 4:11-13 paraphrased)

Contentment is the state of being so satisfied with God's plan for your life that you are so busy praising Him, Satan can't get a word in edgewise. Imagine, if you will, Satan interrupting you at the throne of grace as you are worshipping God for His sovereignty, praising Him that He makes no mistakes, and he

## Adam: Was He Content?

says, “How come God made you so short?” “Why aren’t you prettier? Why did you have those parents?” You wouldn’t even hear him. Your eyes would be too filled with the glory of God.

Here are some practical suggestions to help us communicate contentment to each other, to our families, and to those with whom we minister.

Suggestion #1 – Start a “thank-you” book and keep it on the dinner table. Take a little spiral notebook and write “THANK YOU, LORD” on the front of it in big letters. If you have small children, let them draw a picture of something they have to be thankful for and laminate it on the front and put it on the dinner table in order to have it there every time you eat.

Here are some of the things you can keep in your thank-you book. First, you can list the qualities of God and praise Him for one a day. Use your prayer notebook, and take the attributes you are using in your private time with God and communicate them to your family. These are REAL multiple vitamins. You take one a day and focus on it, and you teach your children what it means, for instance, that God is all powerful; that He is omnipotent. It means there is nothing He cannot do. Then, ask them to explain what that means to them, then worship together.

Then, list all the spiritual treasures God has given you. He has given you a home in heaven that is guaranteed. He has given you direct access to Himself through prayer. He has promised to give you the Holy Spirit to always be alongside you, because He is always inside you to provide your every need. List all of the spiritual treasures you have to be thankful for, and the Scriptures that go along with them.

Next, thank Him for the necessities of life. When was the last time your family had nothing at all to eat and nothing at all to wear? When was the last time you thanked Him that you did have food and clothes? You see, our children think that we are supposed to thank the Lord for the new toy they got for Christmas. They don’t understand that we need to thank Him that He has provided our needs for today: food on the table, clothes to wear, a roof over our heads, the things we need, not the things we want. And so we wonder why their perspective gets warped.

Next, thank Him for answered prayer. Keep a log of answered prayer for life. Don’t ever throw it away. The children of Israel were told to build a monument, an altar celebrating the prayer

## Adam: Was He Content?

that God answered on their behalf. The key was that every time their children and their children's children would walk by that monument, they would have to say, "What happened here?" Grandpa and Grandma would say, "Let me tell you what happened." Then they would go back again and again and again through the miracle. You have miracles that happened in your life that have never happened to anyone else. There's a good chance your children don't even know about them. They ought to hear about those miracles so they can tell their friends, "Let me tell you how my daddy came to be a Christian," or "Let me tell you what God did for our family". Learn to teach your family to constantly be aware of the miracles of God and of answered prayer.

And learn, as well, to thank Him for people. Teach your children to thank God for their grandparents. Find a positive character quality to praise Him for. Don't thank Him that Grandpa took them to an amusement park, thank Him that Grandpa has a generous spirit. Thank Him for people. Thank God for your children in their presence so they know you really care. Find positive qualities in their lives to praise God for while they listen.

Next, thank Him for the crises out of which come character. What better way to teach our children that God is interested in character rather than circumstances, than to be able to say, "Dear Lord, thank You that Daddy lost his job. We know that through this You are teaching us a patience we never had before. Lord, we know You will provide us a job, but we want to thank You for the patience." Do you see the impact that could have on a small child?

Finally, meditate together as a family and memorize verses as a family that teach of God's provisions and promises. Then praise your way through those promises as you personalize the Scripture. Make threads of verses that sing progressively of His goodness. This will not only teach them to praise, it will teach them to thread verses and how to meditate as well.

So that's suggestion number one: start a thank you book. Keep it on the dinner table for the next fifteen years. If it wears out, what a neat problem. Buy another one.

Suggestion 2- set aside ten minutes a day for praising God before you ever ask Him for anything. Spend the first ten minutes

of every day worshipping God and praising Him. Keep a personal praise list like the one you have on the table, maybe a little more personal and then learn to worship each day God's character qualities, His omnipotence, His omniscience, His mercy, His grace.

Suggestion 3- Ask God for wisdom to create some teaching aids to communicate the concept of contentment to others, particularly your children if you live at home and have children. One of the things you can do is a "Contentment Is" contest. These little one-liners that we gave you earlier can give you a place to begin. See what your little children can come up with after you explain what it means to be content. You will be amazed at the wisdom God gives them. Have a "Contentment Is" contest.

Suggestion 4- Another idea is for you to ask God for wisdom to create visual aids. Come up with pictures and plaques and drawings that visualize contentment. Some examples could be to picture how content you could be with nothing around you except God's creation. There are many different ideas. "The Lord is my Shepherd, He is everything I need" would be a good picture aid. Children can make these visual aids by drawing pictures or writing stories to show how they can be content with what God has for them. Each child who is old enough can write an essay entitled, "These Things I Am Most Thankful For". Then you can use books to study how little children can be content. The moral to stories can be used properly to describe contentment, such as a book named, The Little House. In this book, the little house wonders how it would be to live in the city with bright lights, and he gets his chance. Then the great-granddaughter of the builder moves him back into the country and he realizes that is where he is happy to stay. There are hundreds of books that can be used. Purchase these books or check them out of the library to read to your children. As you read stories to your children, you can glean character qualities from them. After reading, ask your children what the substance of the story was and let them respond.

It's also important to explain what the Scripture says we are supposed to be content with. It says you are supposed to be content with your wife, your husband, your children, your married condition, (I Corinthians 7 and Genesis 2), your salary (Luke 3), your boss (I Peter 2), yourself, your health, your possessions. You are supposed to be content with God's timing, with persecution, with rejection, with your peers and with your

parents.

Memorize and meditate as a family for one week on verses that deal with just one subject concerning character qualities. The whole focus of your family time could be on contentment. Some verses to consider would be I Timothy 6:6-10, Hebrews 13:5-6, Matthew 6:19-34, and Psalm 16:6.

Then, finally, begin to focus on the character quality of God that most demands contentment. This is what we will do every time we study a character quality. We will ask ourselves, "What attribute of God produces that quality in us?" What is it in God that demands of us that we be content, that we be satisfied with our lot in life? Think about it.

God IS spirit, and they that worship must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The whole matter of contentment is solved when we realize God is spirit. Therefore, God's kingdom is spiritual. God's treasures are spiritual. God's rewards are spiritual. So everything we really need is spiritual, and there is nothing spiritual we do not have. We have all the treasures of the kingdom at our disposal. We have perfect access to a perfect God. We have a perfect guarantee of a perfect eternity in the presence of a perfect God. We have perfect promises that the perfection of His character will be revealed through us as we are exposed to the pressures of an imperfect world.

You and I as believers in Christ have everything in the spiritual realm. We need to learn to praise God that He is spirit, that by essence He exists in a spiritual realm so that the disappointments of this present life are a springboard to a grateful spirit, because they remove the curtain of the temple and reveal the backdrop of that which is eternal, and thus we can become content because there is nothing eternal we do not have.

So Adam's problem was not the spur-of-the-moment crisis decision. The decision was a result of who Adam was. You and I are no different than Adam. When we begin to look at our responses to the tests of life, they will tell us what Adam's responses did; they will tell us what we are really made of. God desires a spirit of contentment, that we be grateful for what we have. God desires a spirit of faithfulness, that we remain in place by faith. God demands a spirit of obedience, that we do just as we are told. God demands a spirit of responsibility, that we seek no scapegoat for our mistakes. God desires a spirit of dependence,

## Adam: Was He Content?

that simply says He is Lord.

Adam didn't need to taste the fruit of unbelief to learn right from wrong. He needed to be grateful for what God had given him and content to learn the difference between good and evil by doing just exactly what the word of God said. Adam should have been so happy and so busy praising God that Satan's feeble question, "Hath God said?", would have been drowned out by the thunderous chorus of: "To God be the glory, great things He hath done." May we begin to spend our time, so much time and so much quality time in praise that only the tree of life appeals to us. That is the message of the contented spirit. It is a lesson we can learn by looking at Adam, one of God's Living Legends. A poem says it like this:

CONTENTMENT

I prayed for a task that was noble and grand  
He placed but menial jobs in my hand.  
I prayed that the spotlight would fall upon me  
But He placed me 'neath shade trees where no one could see.

I prayed for more riches to spend and to share  
He met all my needs, but with nothing to spare.  
I wanted acceptance, to be loved and received,  
I found misunderstanding and oft' became grieved.

So I cried out to God in my anger one night,  
And I wept and I argued, "Have I not the right  
To ask and receive, to seek and to find,  
To gain the world's riches, to win the world's mind?"

But He answered, "Oh, lad, I've heard every prayer,  
You're seeking for riches and riches are there.  
But, oh, child, my burden when your life is spent  
Is not what you've done, but were you content?"

"Content with riches if riches were best,  
And yet more in poverty able to rest.  
Content with the role wherein lies no acclaim  
That others might wonder and honor My Name."

"Content in that place under pressure so real  
Content 'neath a load others ne'er have to feel.  
Content with that person, content with that call  
Content when the world offers nothing at all."

"Contentment that's based on a love that is free  
A desire to become what I want you to be.  
A life that is satisfied, rested, complete  
Simply content to be found at My feet."

"I'll not leave you, my child, in the midst of your task  
Nor will I forsake you; what more could you ask?  
So rest in contentment, cease all your strife  
And I will supply all the needs of your life."

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230  
210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778  
www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org • © Russell Kelfer

(03.05.15)