

If you go next door to my neighbor's property, you will quickly discover her lush, thick green grass. It's beautiful! And if you step on her turf, your feet sink down into the rich soil. Sometimes when I experience her deep, cushiony lawn I'll say to myself, "Wow, I wish I had a lawn like Katherine's!" But Katherine has a professional lawn service that nurtures the soil, fertilizes the grass, and removes all the unwelcomed visitors that could take over her lawn. Although it's costly, her lawn service makes her place look very attractive.

Then you have my lawn. At the front curb you'll find a huge pile of junk waiting for the Spring clean-up team to take it away. My front lawn is filled with crabgrass, dandelions, lambs ear, and a whole host of other weeds and wild flowers. My backyard is a work in progress. Each day it "survives" the dog, soccer games, and the boys leaving skateboard ramps, skateboards, wood, and tools all over. And then I remember my backyards growing up. Our backyards looked more like a well worn baseball diamond, because we played wiffle ball every day with the neighborhood kids. Although the grass was always torn up or completely gone, we had a lot of fun, and we enjoyed life!

I guess **it's human nature to want what you don't have**. If I only had better working conditions and made more money, then I would really like my job. If I bought a new car, then my life would be great. If I could just sell my house, and all its problems, and buy a newer home, then I would be happy. Or if I just found someone different who could make me happy, then my problems at home would be gone.

The problem with "greener grass" is that it costs a lot, and it's not always greener. In our society, it's not all that uncommon for people to be out looking for a new job, a newer car, a newer home, a new mate, or a new church that seems better than the old one. We begin investing time and energy searching for "greener grass" without even knowing it. We begin neglecting our grass, our marriage, our children, our homes, our work responsibilities, or our church. Before long, we don't have good "feelings" about the old one when compared with the newer one. So we're tempted to throw it away and get a newer one. **But the trouble with "greener grass" is that wherever I go, and wherever I live, and wherever I work, and whomever I am with, the grass always looks the same.** Now what's with that?

In time we will eventually realize we take ourselves wherever we go, and we reproduce the same "grass" (or dynamics) wherever we are. Why? Because we are creatures of habit. We do what we do because of who we are, but we tend to blame others for our recurrent problems and our unhappiness, and we are always looking for someone or something better or different to make us feel good. **But more or different is not always better.** And those who are pursuing health realize the wisdom of being content, living each day in God's strength in our current life's context.

- Who or what are you tempted to get rid of in your life because it no longer feels good?
- How do you tend to recreate the same relationship problems wherever you go?
- What work habits have you developed that lead to frustration in you and others?
- Sometimes I think to myself, "If I just quit _____, then I would be happier."
- Think of a time when you persevered, and worked through a problem, and things eventually got better at home, at work, or at church.

With God's help and strength, we can learn to be content in all of our circumstances, or God may give us the help and strength to make much needed changes in ourselves so that we become more content with ourselves, and our lives.