

GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT
1 Timothy 6:6-12

Introduction:

1. An aged widow I knew was being taken to the assisted living facility where she would spend her last years.
 - a. The Christian driving her told her about the home and what it had to offer.
 - b. Though she had not seen it, the widow said: “I like it already.”
 - c. She had made up her mind to be content wherever she was.
2. Paul said: “Godliness with contentment is great gain.”
3. David pictured perfect contentment when he wrote: “The Lord is My shepherd; I shall not want; He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters” (Psalm 23:1,2).
 - a. Sheep do not fear for they trust their shepherd.
 - b. They know he will provide for them and protect them.
4. So many of us are not content with what we have.
 - a. We have all our needs supplied, but continually want more, better, bigger, and brighter things.
 - b. Media marketing creates “needs” for “stuff” that we have happily lived without in the past.
 - c. Our lives are given to a mad scramble to fill them with these artificial needs.
5. How can we learn to be content in a materialistic world?

Discussion:

- I. WHAT IS CONTENTMENT?
 - A. Contentment is not Stoicism.
 1. The Stoics trained themselves to be unfeeling in life.

2. They neither grieved at loss nor rejoiced at gain.
 - a. They reacted to the death of a loved one the same as to the breaking of a dish or loss of a possession.
 - b. A wedding was little different from a funeral.
3. Christians cannot be Stoics:

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep” (Romans 12:15).

B. Contentment is satisfaction with what God has given us.

1. Webster says contentment is “freedom from care or discomfort.”
2. Tyndale defines it as “ a detachment from anxious concern about the outward features of this life.”
3. John the baptist told soldiers to “be content with your wages” (Luke 3:14).
 - a. Soldiers were not highly paid.
 - b. They could be tempted to take bribes or blackmail.
4. Paul was a prisoner awaiting a hearing before Caesar.
 - a. He thanked the Philippians for a gift they had sent.
 - b. He then added: “Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:10-13).

II. THERE ARE MANY OBSTACLES TO CONTENTMENT.

A. Greed is a major obstacle to contentment.

1. A TV personality titled her autobiography, Settle for More.

2. The Bible says: “Let your conduct be without covetousness (greed); be content with such things as you have, for He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you’ (Hebrews 13:5).

B. Anxiety (worry) is another obstacle to contentment.

1. Jesus taught that God will provide for His people just as He provides for the birds and flowers (Matthew 6:24-34).
2. Paul wrote: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6).
3. Wendell Winkler wrote: “Birds build nests, lay eggs, and raise their young; they make their annual flights to other climates, but no bird ever tried to build more nests than other birds; no fox ever fretted because he had only one hole in which to hide; no squirrel ever became anxious because had not laid up enough nuts for two winters; no dog ever became stressed because he did not have enough bones buried for his declining years” (Heart Diseases and Their Cure, p. 39).

C. Complaining is also an obstacle to contentment.

1. Israel complained constantly in the wilderness.
 - a. They were not content with the manna God gave, and longed for the food of slaves in Egypt.
 - b. They complained about Moses’ leadership.
 - c. They even wanted to return to slavery.
2. God warned: “... nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed....” (1 Cor. 10:10).
3. The grumbler’s life is ever so sad;
It is filled with sorrow and woes;
He hasn’t thought how contented he could be,
By counting the blessings God bestows.

III. HOW CAN WE LEARN TO BE CONTENT?

A. The best place to begin is by counting our blessings.

- 1. Having something to eat every day is a blessing.**
- 2. Having a warm, safe place to sleep is a blessing.**
- 3. Having family, friends and fellow Christians is a blessing.**
- 4. Living in a free land of opportunity is a blessing.**
- 5. Having reasonable health and mobility is a blessing.**
- 6. Having a loving Father in Heaven, a Savior Who died for our sins, the privilege of prayer, and the hope of Heaven are incomparable blessings.**

B. It helps to remember the best things in life are free.

- 1. No artist can paint a picture that does justice to a sunset, starry sky, fall foliage, or a sparkling stream, yet God provides them freely for our enjoyment.**
- 2. Nothing is more precious than a baby's smile, a child's laughter, or the delight of grandchildren.**
- 3. Who can put a price on a beloved companion or on good friends?**

C. Keep in mind the "big picture."

- 1. Life on earth is uncertain and swiftly passing (Psa. 90:10).**
- 2. The greater, better life is ahead for the children of God.**

**"For our citizenship is in Heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself"
(Philippians 3:20,21).**

Conclusion:

- 1. This world and all that is in it is passing away (1 John 2:17).**
- 2. Why not "lay hold on eternal life" while there is time and opportunity?**

