

Contentment Is The Enemy

Of Covetousness

Hebrews 13:5 & 6

Philippians 4:11 & I Timothy 6:6-10

Evangelist Doug Lowery

Introduction:

Luke 12:15 is Christ's warning concerning covetousness! ***"Take heed and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesses."*** God does not measure you by your bank statement, your land holdings & your stock portfolio. There is nothing wrong with money—but it is the "love of money spider" that traps many in its sticky web!

There is a disease that has infected many Christians today. It is the **"IF ONLY"** disease. The germs of this disease can infect every area of our lives, if we allow them to continue to spread unchecked. Instead of gratitude flowing out of a heart of praise, the "IF ONLY" disease causes greed to flow out of a heart of pouting! Nothing ever satisfies the one with the "IF ONLY" disease. He always wants more!

A **materialistic mania** has taken over this nation! Possessing THINGS has taken prominence over good relationships, having peace with God and peace within our homes, walking with God, and righteous living.

Hear God's Wisdom About What He Thinks Is Better:

Proverbs 15:16, 17 - "Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." Proverbs 16:8- "Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right." Proverbs 17:1 - "Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife."

From our text in Hebrews 13:5 - and from two other New Testament passages, I want to share 7 Biblical truths concerning this great virtue. Contentment is a heart attitude! It is a vital quality that is desperately needed in our lives- especially today!

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

PRAYER

1. Contentment is our Solution to Covetousness

Hebrews 13:5

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Basically, we are looking here at **The Principle of Replacement**. The Word of God is brimming with exhortations to put off the old man, and put on the new man. It is not good enough to just put off!! We must also put on!! It is not enough to tell a thief to stop stealing! Paul, in Ephesians, gives the solution to thievery: *"Let him that stole steal no more (put off): but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth (put on)."* (Eph. 4:28) **We must not only put away covetousness, but we must also put on contentment!!**

2. Contentment is in our Security of Christ's Presence Hebrews 13:5

For He hath said, *"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."* This quotation comes from Deuteronomy 31:6- *"Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."* Also- Joshua 1:5- *"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."* Jehovah made those promises to Old Testament saints.

Now, our Saviour, Jesus Christ makes the same promise to us! Having the Lord Jesus Christ in our hearts is our greatest prize! He is our greatest, most valuable possession. He is the Pearl of Great Price. Salvation, and our future home in heaven is worth more than any earthly asset!! Proverbs gives us a great deal of insight concerning true riches. Turn there with me please. Proverbs 8:17-21: *"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honour are with me;*

yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures."Proverbs 13:7- *"There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches."* We need to understand that there is no virtue in poverty- but neither is it necessarily a virtue to be rich! Some very rich people **have nothing** according to God's Word.

The rich look to the market for their security. When the New York Stock Exchange is up- they call that a Bull Market. When it is down, it is called a Bear Market. **We are not looking to the market for our security, we are looking to the Master, Jesus Christ- the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.**

2 Great Truths That We've Seen So Far From Hebrews 13:5 & 6-

1. Contentment Is Our Solution To Covetousness

2. Contentment Is In Our Security Of Christ's Presence

Now, another great Bible truth from Philippians 4. Then, we will go to I Timothy 6 to see the last 3 truths of our outline.

3. Contentment is the State of the Mature Saint

Philippians 4:10-13 esp. V. 11

10 ¶ But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Paul just told us in chapter 3, verse 13, that he hasn't arrived—that he

hasn't seized perfection yet. But, he was reaching forth to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Our calling is Christ-likeness!! Our goal is Christian maturity. Maturity has many facets. Just when we think we have really attained maturity in one area, we see a glaring deficiency in another area of our lives that really needs some attention and work.

At least one area of Christian maturity is contentment with our capital and our circumstances! Paul **learned contentment**. Have you learned to be content?! Paul was not going to let a prison cell rob him of his joy!! Paul was not going to let physical hunger take away his peace. He knew that there were peaks and valleys. He had been abased- and then he had times when he abounded!! He wasn't going to let his financial state dictate his spiritual state!! Contentment is very liberating!! **The unsaved, the carnal Christian, and the spiritually immature Christian all allow their low capital and their lousy circumstances to put them in the prison of despair & depression!** Why be in bondage?! **The Christian who has reached a higher level of maturity, uses the key of contentment and walks out a free man.**

The content man is not greedy! (V. 17) One more thought from our passage in Philippians before we move on to I Timothy 6. **Think of verse 13 as being worded this way..."I can be content through Christ because that will strengthen me."**

Complain and be a whiner, or be content and be a winner!

Now, 1 Timothy 6

6 ¶ But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

4. Contentment is the Substance of the Godly Christian I Tim. 6:6

GREAT GAIN!! Godliness linked with contentment equals GREAT GAIN! We may not have a lot of money in the bank or a lot of nice things- but, if we are content- God says that is a very valuable asset. Again- Proverbs 13:7- *"There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches."* Do you want true riches? Hebrews 10:34 tells us- *"For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."* There will be substance in heaven (rewards) for the believer who contributes to the needs of others, but there is also the substance of GREAT GAIN now to the godly, contented saint!!

You can be a Christian of substance!!

5. Contentment is our Satisfaction with God's Supply I Tim. 6:7 & 8

The discontent person is really saying, "God, I don't believe you realize how important I am- and how valuable I am. I deserve a lot more than this!!" **We came into this world penniless- and we will go out penniless!** We've never seen a U-Haul trailer full of prized possessions being pulled by a hearse!! We are to be satisfied with food and clothing. Anything above food and clothing is absolute luxury, grace and God's goodness. By the standards of many Third World countries, we are all rich indeed!! Let's not be ungrateful. God is providing for you- even if you think it is not enough. He doesn't have to supply **all our wants! We all need to curb our wants!!**

6. Contentment is our Shield against many Temptations & Troubles

I Tim. 6:9 & 10

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Proverbs again comes through with some great cross-references on this theme of "the love of money." Listen carefully to Proverbs 28:20- *"A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be*

rich shall not be innocent." Proverbs 23:4 and 5- "Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven."

God's Word does not teach that we should not try to earn money!! The Bible does not teach that poverty is righteous and wealth is evil!! We should be diligent...we should be wise...we should be good stewards. We can save money- we can invest money- we can spend money! But, we simply are not to fall in love with money!!!

Listen to this great verse from Proverbs 10:22- "The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." We need to take heed to I Timothy 6:9 & 10!!Contentment—the
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of Covetousness

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Philippians 4:11 & I Timothy 6:6-10

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God's view of riches: Proverbs 15:16,17; 16:8; 17:1

1. Contentment is our S to Covetousness

Hebrews 13:5

Luke 12:15 "Beware of covetousness"...

We are being bombarded:

"The Apprentice" "Deal or No Deal"

"Who Wants to be a Millionaire"

"Show Me the Money"

The Lottery/ Expensive Possessions

The income of sports stars, movie stars, music stars, CEO's

Ephesians 4:28—the principle of Replacement

2. Contentment is in our S of Christ's

Presence Hebrews 13:5

This is a quotation from Deut. 31:6 Joshua 1:5

True Riches= Proverbs 8:17-21; 13:7

When the New York Stock Exchange is up- they call that a Bull Market. When it is down, it is called a Bear Market. **We are not looking to the market for our security, we are looking to the Master, Jesus Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah.**

3. Contentment is the S of the Mature Saint Philippians 4:10-13 esp. v. 11

The immature believer is always whining about something! Paul "learned contentment"—we must learn it too! Contentment is liberating!!

Complain and be a whiner, or be content and be a winner!

4. Contentment is the S of the Godly

Christian I Tim. 6:6 Hebrews 10:34 & 35



Proverbs 13:7

5. Contentment Is Our S With God's Supply I Tim. 6:7 & 8

Discontent is charging God with not being generous enough to you!! We entered the world penniless, and we will leave with nothing in our pockets. We've never seen a U-Haul trailer full of prized possessions being pulled by a hearse.

6. Contentment Is Our S Against Many Temp

tations & Troubles I Tim. 6:9 & 10

The love of money can cause great sorrow.

Contrast this with Proverbs 10:22—"The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."