

1 Timothy 6:3-19

Love of Money part 3: an enemy of contentment

Content with food and clothing?

- Would you be content with little more than the basics? (v8)
- “imagining godliness is a means of gain” (v6) – trying to fit Jesus’ message into a secular paradigm
- seeing our world from a different perspective: a) brought nothing in, take nothing out (v7) b) acting on desire to be rich does not lead to contentment (v9) c) love of money produces envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, constant friction (v4)
- 10th commandment – do not covet

Contentment, not complacency

- “contentment” – self sufficient, satisfied (vv6, 8)
- without the desire to be rich, what would motivate you?
- Denying the love of money can lead to a period of boredom and a sense of meaninglessness – patience is needed for spiritual growth

Contentment and godliness

- “great gain with godliness with contentment” (v6)– godliness is a goal, or a way of doing everything else. We pursue godliness, etc. rather than riches.
- Paul, who writes this, learned contentment (2 Cor 12:9-10; Phil 4:11-12)
- Hebrews 13:5-6 “Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you’. So, we can confidently say ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?’”

Questions for reflection

1. When do you find yourself satisfied (even if only for a moment)? When you lack contentment, what do you look to for satisfaction?
2. Could you live a meaningful life with only the very basics – food, clothing and shelter? What would you miss most (of what you have now or aspire to have)?
3. If you didn’t allow your desire for respect, comfort, possessions, control, pleasure, etc. to motivate you to do things, would you still work hard? Enjoy life? Act with integrity?
4. Paul learned contentment by having everything he valued taken from him (his standing in the community, his identity, physical health, comfort, etc. 2 Cor 12:9-10, Phil 4:11-12) – are there things in your life that should be removed because they are

hindering your contentment (though you hold on to them because you imagine they will one day satisfy)?

5. In Hebrews 13:5-6 we read that knowing that the Lord is with us should be sufficient to keep us content with what we have. Why is that not enough? Where do you struggle to find the promise of Christ sufficient and satisfying?
6. If you had to choose only one thing, which would you choose: a life filled with wealth, access to pleasure, and a position people envy; or the promise that the Creator loves you, will sustain you, and has an inheritance for you after you depart from this world? [note: this is a reflection exercise, and not everyone would have to choose between the two]