

Sunday 7/25/04

**“Lord, Change My Attitude (Before It’s Too Late)” – Week 6**

Saved as mdutton\adult bible fellowship\Lord, Change My Attitude\05 Lesson Chp 4 Contentment #2

**Introduction: An Attitude of Contentment**

1. This may sound strange – or you may just chalk it up to a ‘typical pastor’ – but I wasn’t content that we had thoroughly studied the subject of ‘Contentment’ last week!

So . . . guess what? We’re going to take one more pass at it – and instead of fussing . . . you need to be ‘content’ with your pastor’s leadership (such as it is!).

2. We’re been putting these studies in the context of a ‘put off’ and ‘put on’ format

- it’s not enough to stop a bad habit – we need to REPLACE that habit with godly actions and godly thinking (you can’t change biblically without doing both) (Eph. 4:22-24)

3. We started this study with the ‘put off’ aspect of covetousness (taken from Numbers 11)

- We made several observations about *covetousness* from Numbers 11:

**A. Covetousness is wanting wrong things.**

Note: Ex. 20:17 – your neighbors house spouse . . . servant . . . animal or anything that is your neighbors

**B. Covetousness is wanting right things for wrong reasons.**

**C. Covetousness is wanting right things at the wrong time.**

**D. Covetousness is wanting right things but wanting them in the wrong amount.**

- by definition: *Covetousness is wanting God to replace Himself with something we consider more important.*

Point: Coveting really goes after the sufficiency of God in our lives! -- is God enough or do we need more?

4. Our key verse to keep in mind in order to have victory in this area:

- **Hebrews 13:5 *Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"***

- could be translated more literally:

- ***"I will never ever desert you, nor will I ever ever forsake you"***

Point: It is the presence of God and His commitment to His promises (i.e. His character, integrity as God – i.e. His holiness and complete absence from sin, He cannot lie) that leads us to a place of contentment!

- in one sense, contentment is a by-product of our faith in God([recognizing Who He is, what He has chosen to do [*provide* for us] or chosen NOT to do [*withhold* something from us that we may want]) that produces CONTENTMENT

- On the other hand, God gave us a will, a mind, and in our hearts we can CHOOSE to obey and consciously decide . . . *“I’m going to be content with Who God is, and what He has done/or not done, because ‘THERE IS A GOD, AND I’M NOT HIM!’*

> we find our joy and satisfaction in Him – not things that pass away with time!]

- Remember this statement: *“A consistent attitude of contentment can bring lasting joy and lead you out of the wilderness of covetousness”* –p. 83
- Let’s review one of the passages we used last week: {Open your bibles to Proverbs 30:8-9}
  - remember what covetousness is: : *Covetousness is wanting God to replace Himself with something we consider more important.*
- Let’s read one of the passages we studied:
  - **Proverbs 30:8 Keep deception and lies far from me, give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is my portion, 9 That I not be full and deny You and say, “Who is the LORD?” Or That I not be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God.**

[very briefly – review]

## I. We Need to Develop An Understanding of Contentment

### A. Defining contentment

***Contentment* = a satisfaction with God’s sufficient provision.**

- It’s being happy/joyful with whatever God supplies – the key is the whatever [not what we want, but what He wants us to have]

### B. Contentment has a partner: Godliness

[refer to 1 Timothy 6:6-12 – READ the passage again!]

- we always need to grow to be more Christlike – don’t get satisfied w/that part of your life
  - > it’s the what we *have* part that we struggle with!
- Here’s a formula that may help you to remember this concept:

**Godliness + Contentment = Great Success!**

(i.e. success in God’s eyes (glorifying God and enjoying Him forever!)

**Quote: “We must never be content with who we are, only with what we have.”**

- one of the points we spent a lot of time on last week . . .

### C. Our substitutes won’t work! ]

- We answered two questions:

- 1. What other substitutes do we tend to put into the equation of success?**
- 2. Why won’t that substitute work (glorify God) in the long run?**

Example: Godliness + POPULARITY (approval of man) = success OR . . .

- 1) Godliness + **Prosperity** = Great Gain [WRONG]

- **Luke 12:15 "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."**

2) Godliness + **Power or Influence** = Great Gain [WRONG]

Read Matt. 20:25-28 – Gentiles ‘lord it over’ – but it’s not going to be this way w/you!

- But the issue is, HOW DO YOU CHANGE AND GROW IN THIS AREA?

Q: *What principles has God given us that will help us to please Him in this area?*

- Let’s pick it up where we left off and consider . . .

## II. Three Steps That Break The Pattern Of Covetous Thinking And Lead To Contentment

### A. Step #1: Look to eternity

- **1 Timothy 6:7 “For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either”**

- Don’t build your life around things that pass away with time!

- Think about how long it would take for a tornado to suck up your house and leave nothing but the foundation!

- Ken Collier, friend of mine told me when Laurie was in her car accident: *“It’s just a thing; don’t cry over anything that can’t cry over you!”* [good advice!]

Point: \* **Our God is ETERNAL** – He is the One to Whom we should look for contentment and satisfaction – He will never pass away with time!

- one day, all that God has created will be destroyed by fire:

- **2 Peter 3:7 But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.**

- But God will live on forever – as will the souls of men

**Input: What does a person who has an “eternal” view of life look like – vs. a person who’s mind is set on temporal things?**

[various answers]

### B. Step #2: Let enough be enough

- **1 Timothy 6:8 “If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.”**

**“When we expect to be satisfied with the basics, God will often surprise us with treats.”**

**Input: Any examples you can give of that in your life of God’s special blessings?**

-Think of the persecuted church around the world – they don’t have a building, land, resources like we do!

ILL: Megah Singh – church planter in India – met during my doctoral program – he is training Chinese pastors who are coming across the border with nothing but the clothes on their back sometimes!

- You need to ask some questions:

- Am I really content with what God has provided or is covetousness controlling me?
- What will it take to say, ‘enough is enough’?

### C. Step #3: Learn from examples (positive and negative)

- We think we have to learn everything on our own.
- Why can't we learn from other people (i.e. that wealth, things, possessions don't satisfy)?
- Think about these examples:
  - John D. Rockefeller- "I have made millions, but they have brought me no happiness."
  - Cornelius Vanderbilt- "The care of millions is too great a load. There is no pleasure in it."
  - Henry Ford- "I was happier as a boy working in a mechanic's shop, though we had nothing."

**Input: What biblical examples can you give of men/women who modeled a life of contentment with what God had given them?**

[various answers – but Joseph, Daniel, the 3 Hebrew boys, Esther, Hannah (mother of Samuel), Paul, Jesus!!] – Note: Psalm 73 (esp. v. 25!) WOW

- Choices have consequences, so we need to ask . . .

### III. What's going to happen if you don't live this way? – Look carefully at 1 Tim. 6:9

#### A. Temptation and a snare (trap)

**1 Timothy 6:9** "But those who want to get rich fall (i.e. want = *settled desire born of reason*— the point being that you choose what you want to choose!) **into temptation and a snare (trap).**"

- the temptation is to sin and neglect other biblical responsibilities – the trap is to think that what you GET will satisfy you rather than what you ARE in Christ and seeking to glorify God!

\*\* IMPORTANT: That is the BAIT Satan has used for over 6,000 years – you will be as god, knowing good and evil – you'll really be satisfied then

- remember, he is a liar, and the father of LIES! (John 8:44)

- compared to God who is the COVENANT KEEPING GOD of Israel!

- The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write to Timothy:

- **1 Timothy 6:10** "For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil."

-The problem is the *love* of money.

-Loving money is not the root of evil but a root of evil.

#### B. Paul presents two ugly pictures

1. "Some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith."

- i.e. the slowing left THE faith – i.e. the embodiment of truth!

2. ". . . and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (NKJV)

Q: *How ugly is the picture of a person stabbing themselves?*

Point: Sin is never logical . . .and choices have consequences!

- We need to say what Paul wrote in **Philippians 4:11** “**I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.**” (he was writing from prison!)
- **How could he say this?** – READ **Phil. 3:7-14** – what a text – a foundation for contentment – KNOWING GOD – [knowing = *ginosko* – i.e. knowledge based on personal experience! 1<sup>st</sup> hand knowledge!

## ABF Study Guide

## “Lord, Change My Attitude (Before It’s Too Late)” – Week 6 (Contentment #2)

**Introduction:**

- \* “A consistent attitude of contentment can bring lasting joy and lead you out of the wilderness of covetousness” –p. 83

**I. We Need to Develop An Understanding of Contentment****A. Defining contentment**

**Contentment** = a satisfaction with God’s sufficient provision.

**B. Contentment has a partner: GODLINESS – 1 Timothy 6:6-12**

“We must never be content with who we are, only with what we have.”

Godliness + Contentment = GREAT SUCESS!

**C. Our SUBSTITUTES won’t work!**

*Examples:*

**II. Three Steps That Break The Pattern Of Covetous Thinking And Lead To Contentment****A. Step #1: Look to \_\_\_\_\_**

\* Our God is \_\_\_\_\_

**Input:** What does a person who has an “eternal” view of life look like – vs. a person who’s mind is set on temporal things?

**B. Step #2: \_\_\_\_\_**

“When we expect to be satisfied with the basics, God will often surprise us with treats.”

**Input:** Any examples you can give of that in your life of God’s special blessings?

**C. Step #3: Learn from \_\_\_\_\_**

- John D. Rockefeller- “I have made millions, but they have brought me no happiness.”
- Cornelius Vanderbilt- “The care of millions is too great a load. There is no pleasure in it.”
- Henry Ford- “I was happier as a boy working in a mechanic’s shop, though we had nothing.”

**Input:** What biblical examples can you give of men/women who modeled a life of contentment with what God had given them?

### III. What's going to happen if you don't live this way?

#### A. Temptation and a snare (trap) – 1 Timothy 6:9

- **1 Timothy 6:9** “But those who want (choose) to get rich fall into temptation and a snare (trap).”

#### B. Paul presents two ugly pictures

1. “Some by longing for it have \_\_\_\_\_ from the faith.”
2. “. . . and \_\_\_\_\_ themselves through with many sorrows” (NKJV)

> **Philippians 4:11** “I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.”

Q: How could he say this?

## “Lord, Change My Attitude” Week 5 (Contentment)

### Introduction:

- Hebrews 13:5 *Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"*
- *“I will never ever desert you, nor will I ever ever forsake you”*

### Quote – p. 83

- I. We Need to Develop An Understanding of Contentment
  - A. Defining contentment  
*Contentment = a satisfaction with God’s sufficient provision.*
  - B. Contentment has a partner: Godliness  
– 1 Timothy 6:6-12  
*“We must never be content with who we are, only with what we have.”*  
**Godliness + Contentment = Great Success!**



## C. Our substitutes won't work!

*Quote – p. 89*

## II. Three Steps That Break The Pattern Of Covetous Thinking And Lead To Contentment

### A. Step #1: Look to eternity

- 1 Timothy 6:7 “For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either”

### \* Our God is ETERNAL

- 2 Peter 3:7 But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

**Input: What does a person who has an “eternal” view of life look like – vs. a person who’s mind is set on temporal things?**

## **B. Step #2: Let enough be enough**

- **1 Timothy 6:8 “If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.”**

***“When we expect to be satisfied with the basics, God will often surprise us with treats.”***

**Input: Any examples you can give of that in your life of God’s special blessings?**

## **C. Step #3: Learn from examples**

- **John D. Rockefeller**
- **Cornelius Vanderbilt**
- **Henry Ford**

**Input: What biblical examples can you give of men/women who modeled a life of contentment with what God had given them?**

**III. What's going to happen if you don't live this way? – Look carefully at 1 Tim. 6:9**

**A. Temptation and a snare (trap) – 1 Timothy 6:9**

- **1 Timothy 6:9 “But those who want (choose) to get rich fall into temptation and a snare (trap).”**

**B. Paul presents two ugly pictures**

- 1. “Some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith.”**
- 2. “. . . and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (NKJV)**

**> Philippians 4:11 “I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.”**

**Q: How could he say this?**

**> Phil. 3:7-14**