

CONTENTMENT

1 Timothy 6.6-16

Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but **godliness** has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 1 Timothy 4.7b-8

Contentment is one of the most distinguishing traits of the godly person, because a godly person has his heart focused on God rather than on possessions or position or power. The words that are rendered as “content” or “contentment” in our English Bibles actually mean “sufficiency.” The same word translated “contentment” in 1 Timothy 6.6 is rendered “all that you need” in 2 Corinthians 9.8. When God said to Paul, “my grace is sufficient for you” (2 Corinthians 12.9), he used the same word translated elsewhere as “be content” (see Luke 3.14; 1 Timothy 6.8; Hebrews 13.5).

The idea of contentment in the Bible is most often associated with **possessions** or money, but there are other areas of life in which we need to be content. After possessions, probably the most common need is to learn contentment with our **position** in society or in the body of Christ. Still a third area that demands our practice of contentment is the **providence** of God.

Contentment With Possessions

Exodus 20.13-17

Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. Luke 12.15

1 Timothy 6.10-11; Hebrews 13.5; Psalm 119.36-37

How then can we pursue an attitude of being content with what we have? What are some practical steps we can take? The following scriptural principles especially helpful in this area.

- Our focus should be on the true values of life. Mark 8.34-37
- Service to God through service to mankind is the only motivation acceptable to God for diligence and hard work in our vocational calling.
- All that we have comes from God as a result of his grace. 1 Chronicles 29.12; Deuteronomy 8.18
- God in his sovereign good pleasure has seen fit to give some people more wealth and possessions than others; consequently we are not to envy them.
- For those whom God has blessed with wealth or an abundance of possessions, with privilege comes responsibility. 1 Timothy 6.17-18

Contentment With Position

3 John 9; Romans 12.3, 6

- First, I realize that I am where I am not by chance, nor by the favor or disfavor of other people, but by the decision of an all-wise and all-loving heavenly Father.
- Second, I realize I do not deserve to be where I am. Ephesians 3.8
- Third, I realize that each part of the body is indispensable. Ephesians 4.16; 2.10; 1 Corinthians 7.21; Psalm 75.6-7

Paul's Secret of Contentment With God's Providence

Psalm 33.10-11; Isaiah 55.8-9; Philippians 4.11-13; 2 Corinthians 12.7-10

In all of the areas in which we are called upon to be content – whether possessions, position, or the providence of God – the grace of God is the ultimate solution for our discontent. Grace, as used in the New Testament, expresses two complementary thoughts; God's unmerited favor to us through Christ, and God's divine assistance to us through the Holy Spirit.

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