



Managing Wealth God's Way: Learning to be Faithful Stewards

Sermon Notes for Message #3 of DDM: The High Value of Contentment (1 Timothy 6:6-10)

– Pastor Jeff

- There is nothing wrong with desiring a better life, but lurking behind every desire is an ungodly and unsavory discontent or dissatisfaction which can manifest itself in covetousness or envy. Solomon said, *“In the day of prosperity be happy, but in the day of adversity, consider the Lord has made the one as well as the other.”* (Ecc. 7:14)
- It is God's will that we pursue a life of contentment in a money-loving, never satisfied, consumer-driven culture of discontent.
 - The false teachers in Paul's day believed and preached *“that godliness is a means of gain”* (1 Tim. 6:3-5)
 - Paul counters with the truth that godliness is not the means to financial gain, but that godliness is the gain. Godliness is not a means to something more valuable; it is supremely valuable all by itself.
- Contentment in the Greek culture was all about being self-sufficient or having all the resources within oneself. However, in God's culture, it is about finding one's sufficiency in Christ who gives us everything we need.
- Paul makes his point clear when he says, *“But godliness is actually a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment”*. Contentment makes godliness a *“great gain”* for three reasons:

① Contentment rightly appraises what's next (6:7)

- What's next is our final exit, so Paul shares two undeniable truths about human possessions: nothing in, nothing out.
- Nobody will be taking any material possession with them when they die and God repeatedly reminds us of this truth:
 - Adam and Eve: *“For you are dust and to dust you will return”* (Gen. 3:19)
 - Job: *“Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked will I return”* (Job 1:20-21)
 - Solomon: *“As he had come naked from his mother's womb, so will he return as he came. He will take nothing from the fruit of his labor that he can carry in his hand.”* (Ecc. 3:15)
 - Sons of Korah: *“Be not afraid when a man become rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he died, he will carry nothing away; His glory will not descend after him”* (Psalm 49:16-17)

② Contentment rightly affirms what's necessary (6:8)

- What we have that God has provided as basic necessities (*“food and covering”*) is enough. What appears to be missing from Paul's list is clothing, but it is included in the word *“covering”* (any man made object such as clothing and shelter).

- Jesus warns everyone not to worry “about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on” (Matt. 6:25) because God feeds the birds and clothes the lilies who are less than people made in His image.
- Our challenge is not to allow the cultures beliefs (treating wants as needs) to condition our thinking. He promises to provide our needs (Phil. 4:19), not all our wants. Discontent always wants something more or something else.
- The greatest necessity and treasure is the Person of Jesus Christ. The secret of contentment is to be satisfied with Jesus Christ.

③ Contentment rightly avoids what's nasty (6:9-10)

- Paul shares six fruits of discontent which fuels the “want to get rich” attitude and “the love of money”
 - 1) The nastiness of sinful deceptions (v. 9a: “*fall into temptation and a snare*”). You get ensnared by the allurements of illicit gains
 - 2) The nastiness of stupid desires (v. 9b: “*and many foolish and harmful desires*”). Trying to keep up with the Jones or overextending yourself is foolish and harmful.
 - 3) The nastiness of shocking destruction (v. 9c: “*which plunge men into ruin and destruction*”). The greedy eventually drown in a sea of their own covetousness.
 - 4) The nastiness of spreading depravity (v. 10b: “*for the love of money is the root of all sorts of evil*”). Greed has many expressions and unsavory fruit.
 - 5) The nastiness of sad defection (v. 10c: “*and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith*”). The sadness of defection is magnified by the greatness of the treasure of Christ who was abandoned.
 - 6) The nastiness of self-induced distress (v. 10d: “*and pierced themselves with many griefs*”)