

"Contentment: Is It Well With Your Soul?" Hebrews 13:5-6

Contentment: it's not the amount, it's your attitude. It's not bad to be rich and good to be poor. It is a matter of the heart.

I. **Guard your heart**

Then He said to them, "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."

—Luke 12:15

A. There is nothing inherently wrong with wealth. There are good uses of wealth.

- Gift for enjoyment – 1 Tim. 6:17
- Resource for eternal investment – 1 Tim. 6:18-19
- Resource for worship
Wealth always a tool for worship – coins, cattle, etc.

B. The best things are the riskiest

Sex, immorality

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

—Colossians 3:5

Col. 3:5 – association between immorality, greed and idolatry

Wealth can be very good or very destructive

Discontentment leads to idolatry

Measurement of our love for God

- Luke 3:10-14
- Where your treasure is...
- God wants your heart, He doesn't need your money
- Christ spoke about money.

C. Discontentment leads to:

- Dissatisfaction; Never enough – Eccl. 5:10

I have made many millions, but they have brought me no happiness.

—John D. Rockefeller

The care of \$200 million is enough to kill anyone. There is no pleasure in it.

—W.H. Vanderbilt

I am the most miserable man on earth

—John Jacob Astor

I was happier when doing a mechanic's job

—Henry Ford

Andrew Carnegie observed, Millionaires seldom smile.

—Source Unknown

Prov. 30:15

- Anxiety – Mt. 6:25-34

Lack of trust in God, lack of love toward brothers in need

- Alienation; no intimacy with Father; don't know provider and protector

1 Tim. 6:9-10

D. How do I know if I love material wealth?

Am I preoccupied with my finances?

Am I craving things I don't need?

How do I feel when someone wants to borrow something from me?

How do I feel when they bring it back damaged or broken?

Do I feel genuine joy when someone in need asks me for financial help?

II. Cultivate contentment

A. Three words used in Bible to express same concept in slightly different way:

- 2 Cor. 12:10; contentment; well-pleased, joyful, settled state in the inner man
- Phil. 4:11 (cf. 1 Tim. 6:6); contentment; "self-sufficiency"; no one can add or detract from the condition of my soul

- Hebrews 13:5

2 Cor 12:9; grace is sufficient; John 14:8 (show us the Father and it is enough)
1 Tim. 6:8; food and covering

Contentment is a settled state of peace and joy that comes from confidence in God's presence, protection and provision. God has given me enough. He is enough.

B. Motivation for contentment

God will provide

C. How do we learn contentment?

D. Battle whether you are poor or rich – Phil. 4:11-12

1. Give thanks - Cultivate a thankful heart for what you have
Phil. 4

2. Differentiate between "needs" and "wants"

Needs – 1 Tim. 6:8; Food and covering

Phil. 4:19 "my God will supply all your needs"; Paul went hungry, and Paul was tortured, and Paul was executed

Ultimate need – final deliverance into God's kingdom

3. Flee materialism and pursue His kingdom

1 Tim. 6:11; seek first His kingdom

4. Give sacrificially

I'll never forget a conversation I had with the late Corrie ten Boom. She said to me, in her broken English, "Chuck, I've learned that we must hold everything loosely, because when I grip it tightly, it hurts when the Father pries my fingers loose and takes it from me!"

—Charles Swindoll, Living Above the Level of Mediocrity

Poor or rich – 2 Cor. 8:1-5

5. Cultivate a love for eternity

"I don't have a heart for missions": Give to missions; invest

"I don't have a heart for eternal things": Invest in eternity

Result:

- Contentment
- Confidence, Peace, Joy in meeting others' needs – 2 Cor. 8
- Intimacy – 2 Cor. 9:7 (God loves a cheerful giver)

Conclusion

Small groups starting up to study courses by Crown Financial Ministries (www.crown.org)

Read *The Treasure Principle : Discovering the Secret of Joyful Giving*
by Randy Alcorn

Read Mt. 6:19-34. Ask: Where is my treasure? Where is my heart?