



Godliness with Contentment

Read 1 Timothy 6:6–19

Introduction:

The apostle Paul says, “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Timothy 6:6). The writer of Proverbs 30:8–9 prays, “Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.” How is this a great example of “godliness with contentment” and how does it serve as a test to see if we have godliness with contentment?

An inappropriate desire for wealth will lead to telling falsehoods and lies. He prays, instead, that he has just enough but not too much because he knows the main business of his life is to trust in the LORD. God’s honor is paramount, not his own comfort. It serves as a test because, have you ever prayed for less?!

Into the Text:

1. Verse 10 is one of the most misquoted verses in the Bible. Many say, “Money is the root of all kinds of evil” instead of “the love of money.” Prove that money is not evil.

Money is a blessing of God through which he provides for us opportunities to thank him, support the state, provide for family, help the poor, etc. Understanding that wealth comes from God helps us see the wealth of Abraham, Job, Jacob, David, Solomon, among many other patriarchs as a wonderful blessing from God. The problem is not with money but with the heart towards money. (e.g., Judas, the rich young man who came to Jesus, the parable of the rich fool, the rich man and Lazarus, etc.). That’s why those without money can have money problems too—the desire for it.

2. In verse 11, Paul tells Timothy to flee from “all this” (i.e., the love of money) and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. How does each help a person flee from “all this” and acquire contentment?

Answers will vary but should focus on the fact that all of these point a person outside of themselves and not to selfishness. We gain contentment as we are reminded of God’s love in his Word and trust God to provide all we need, and then focus on love for him and our neighbor.

3. In verses 13ff, Paul alludes to Jesus' second coming. In what ways is this motivation to "flee from all this?"

We must give an account for how we use God's gift of money as his managers. Jesus' return is a reminder that life is temporary and we can't take it with us. As Jesus' forgiven brothers and sisters, his coming is to take us to heaven. We have far more than even the greatest riches of this life to look forward to!

4. In verses 17-19, Paul lists two dangers when God blesses someone with wealth and then describes the best way to use your wealth. Identify the two dangers and how one should use their wealth?

Riches can be a temptation to be proud as though you must be especially blessed beyond others (i.e., "arrogance"). It's also easy to put your trust in riches instead of the one who gave them to you. Are you more content with \$10,000 in the bank or \$0? The answer should be that it does not matter but think of why we want to save more and more. Could it be because we want to have to trust God less and less? Instead, we will want to have an open hand with money as we generously use it to serve others (offerings, those in need, etc.).

Applying It:

1. For what reasons can a person who loves money **not** be content?

You will always want more. Idols are insatiable. Jesus said that you cannot serve two masters because you cannot be devoted to money and God at the same time. Idols/gods demand your attention, time, and witness promising satisfaction and fulfillment in return. Money cannot do that. God can. As a wise professor once said, "There are many things God will put up with in the human heart, but 2nd place is not one of them."

2. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Explain the truth of Jesus' words when it comes to our spending priorities like gifts to the Lord, paying taxes, providing for family, and the poor, etc.

Answers will vary. Giving an offering is a display of trust and a small token of thanks to God who gave us all! And we often get to see God doing great things through the church we support. Every good act needs to be thanked to be completed. Think of how you feel when you get an anonymous gift. Your heart longs to express your thanks. Supporting the functioning of society, carrying for those in need out of thanks to Jesus is far more fulfilling than being helped. Think of lifelong servants who lament in the nursing home that others need to help them now and need reminding that they are giving others a chance to give of themselves.

3. Martin Luther said that money must be the least of all God's gifts because he even gives it to fools. What truth was Luther trying to make about money and its place?

There are so many more important blessings than money—faith, vocations, etc. Focus on what's most important in life.