

Christian Contentment – Part 3

Scripture Reading: I Timothy 6:1-12

The things that we possess do not define us. Unfortunately, things tend to possess us – and that is what can define us (Luke 12:15,21 – *see Luke 12:1-48; Psalm 49:16-20; Matthew 16:26*). However, if a person seeks contentment through knowing God and seeks to use his situations and possessions to serve God, that person shall be blessed (Matthew 5:1-16; 6:19-33; 7:7-12,21-27 cp. Jeremiah 9:23-24; I Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17; Philippians 1:20-21; I Timothy 6:17-19). Our station in life, and our possessions are temporary provisions that may be used to glorify and serve God, laying up treasure in heaven. Or our station in life, and our possessions may be used to please ourselves and perhaps to please some others for a short while.

As Paul begins the sixth chapter of I Timothy, he mentions an important ethical issue in Christian living. It is the matter of a good, honest, and humble work ethic. How we conduct ourselves in our earthly business is of great importance to the work of the gospel. Respect for those who are in authority is one way of encouraging others to respect God and His Word. Conversely, a spirit of grumbling and rebelling can lead others to blaspheme God and His Word (Titus 2:9-10 cp. Ephesians 6:5-8; I Peter 2:18-25, Philippians 2:14-15). To do this, we need a godly attitude of contentment before God. It is fine to work hard and to seek to advance ourselves. But our primary outlook on our social and economic status in this life should be centered on God's provision and His placement of us in the world (Psalm 75:5-8; Hebrews 13:5-6).

Consider I Timothy 6:1-12

- Believers who are servants / employees should be godly examples of good workers. They can either promote or discredit the reputation of God and His Gospel by their attitude and work ethic. Honest work and respect for the boss / employer is imperative. This includes a boss who is a brother in Christ (**I Timothy 6:1-2**).
- Wholesome, sound teaching from God's Word promotes godliness – which includes submission to authority for God's sake. *"Doctrine is for doing"* (**I Timothy 6:2b-3**).
- Pride, self-centeredness, and ignorance cause many to mishandle God's Word. Those kinds of teachers have an unhealthy desire for controversy and conflicts – arguments that cause divisions. Those kinds of teachers do not edify – they do not build-up people and promote godliness (II Timothy 2:14-17,23-26). Get away from them (**I Timothy 6:3-5** – *see KJV / NKJV for the last part of vs. 5 cp. Romans 16:17-18*).

- Good ministry promotes godliness and contentment in people (**I Timothy 6:6-8**)
 - Worldly things only last for our life in this world.
 - Realizing that our needs are met, we can focus on greater things – things of eternal value.
 - Godliness is incomplete without contentment. Can you imagine restless, dissatisfied worshippers of God and His Son?
 - Restlessness and discontentment work against the pursuit of godliness (Galatians 5:16-17; I Peter 2:11). Consider the danger of double-mindedness – serving two masters (Matthew 6:24; James 1:2-12; I John 2:15-17).
- The desire for wealth and material possessions is a terrible infection that can ruin a person and destroy their walk of faith (**I Timothy 6:9-10**). *“The love of money”* literally means, in the Greek, *“affection for silver.”* The false teachers described in I Timothy 6:3-5 are dangerously attracted to wealth. They compromise the truth for the sake of money (*“The Faith”* = the teaching of the doctrine of Christ). See I Timothy 3:3,8; Titus 1:7,11; I Peter 5:2.
- Flee the lust for worldly wealth, pleasure, and power. Make it your goal to pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience [*endurance, steadfastness*], meekness [*gentleness*] (**I Timothy 6:11** cp. II Timothy 2:22).
- This is a battle – a cause for which to fight. Keep your eyes on the prize – the eternal benefits of serving the Lord (Philippians 3:14-19). There are many people watching – witnessing our words and our actions (**I Timothy 6:12**).

Here, again, Christ is our example (**I Timothy 6:13** cp. John 18:28-38).

- John 18:36 – Christ’s kingdom is not of this world. We are not here to gain earthly wealth or power.
- John 18:37 – The work of Christ’s kingdom is to gain the truth, and to give the truth to others (Proverbs 23:23; John 8:30-32; Mark 16:15).