

Build the Wealth of Simplicity with Contentment

Wealth comes in many forms. In today's world, one form of wealth is simplicity. The more freedom one has from the frustrations of an increasingly complex world, the wealthier he or she is. And one of the ways of simplifying the spiritual life is to learn contentment.

The apostle Paul once warned his younger colleague, Timothy, about devious men who enter the ministry and deceive people through false piety in hopes of making money. He spoke of them as those "who suppose that godliness is a means of great gain" (1 Timothy 6:5). Then Paul said, "Now godliness with contentment is great gain" (verse 6). In other words, *true* godliness—the kind "with contentment" instead of greed—really "is great gain." How so?

The Christian who learns contentment experiences the "great gain" of freedom from a complex web of evils that have eternally ruined the souls of many. As verse 9 explains, contentment frees you from the "temptation and a snare, and . . . many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition." Contentment greatly minimizes the possibility that greed will prove you to be a false, self-deceived Christian, as it has "some [who] have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (verse 10).

Discontentment, whether about income or anything else, complicates life. It demands the pursuit of more money or things than you have now. Since more cannot satisfy, the discontentment grows and pushes you harder and faster. And as the pace of life increases, so does its complexity.

But the Bible exhorts us, "Be content with such things as you have" (Hebrews 13:5). How can the Lord expect that of us? It's because in the same verse "He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'" Regardless of what we do not have, knowing that we'll never lose the riches of the presence of the Lord Himself should content us "with such things as [we] have." And this kind of Christ-centered contentment liberates us from the complicating pursuit of more and builds the wealth of simplicity. Enjoy the wealth.

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