

February 28, 2021 - I Timothy 6:6-10 - "Contentment is Essential"

Introduction:

A number of years ago Charles Osgood reported a story on CBS radio about a widow named Bertha Adams. Bertha died at the age of 71, she was of sound mind. The Coroner's office of Palm Beach, FL. reported, "She died of malnutrition, she weigh only 50 pounds. She was known in her community to go around and beg people for food. You may be thinking, "How very sad". She was a homeless person. From all outward appearances she was a penniless recluse, a pitiful and forgotten widow. But such was not the case. Upon searching her home they found \$200,000 in cash and they discovered keys to 2 safety deposit boxes. One container had over 700 shares of AT&T dividends and the 2nd box had over \$600,000 in cash. Her wealth didn't do her any good. Her entire life of greedy hoarding didn't add another pound to her under-nourished body or another day to her life. She left behind close to a million dollars.

As scripture states in this passage, "For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. It is clear from this passage and this story that greed of money and wealth can destroy one's health, one's faith and one's life. The Scriptures teach us...

I. The Wisdom of Contentment vv.6-8

1. The Bible teaches we should be good stewards of our money. Bertha Adams wasn't a good steward of her money; she was worshiping it. When money becomes the over powering issue in a Christian's life it can be the start of sinking into the temptation of the lust of money. Paul told Timothy that those who misuse God's Word wrongly think godliness is a means of material gain. The false teachers and their excessive love for money prompt the subject matter from verses 6 to 10. Paul rejected the perverted idea that godliness is to be used as a means of material gain. Knowing his statement might be misinterpreted, he followed up with an explanation.

In I Timothy 6 and verse 6, "But godliness with contentment is great gain." Paul is correcting issues in the church at Ephesus where Timothy is serving as the pastor. It seems obvious, looking at verses 6 to 10, that there were some people in the church at Ephesus who were experiencing the unfortunate results of loving money. You can't serve God and money and some of them chose money.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

2. Paul relates that contentment and happiness are never the result of how much we have but our attitudes toward what we have. Paul knew this kind of contentment first hand; let's look at his testimony in **Philippians 4:11-13**. In verse 11 Paul tells us that he is content. The Greek word *owl-tar-case* translates to English as "content" and it appears only here in the New Testament. In extra-biblical Greek it was used to speak of being self-sufficient, having enough, or **not** being dependent on others. For Paul, his satisfaction and happiness in life was not dependent on what was happening around him. Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter to

one of his favorite churches! Would any of us be so content?

3. Godliness is keeping God as notable in our lives... It speaks of reverence, and devotion to God. True godliness and true gain is unrelated to how much you have. Folks, if you are content with what God has blessed you with then you are rich!

He (Jesus) said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Luke 12:15

Contentment is not complacency; it is realizing we can enjoy what we have while we plan and work toward our financial goals. However, as incomes go up so do desires for more expensive things and the concerns that accompany them. Many people discover that as their incomes go up, so does insomnia. The more we have the more we worry about how to protect and keep it. More prosperity doesn't mean more tranquility. Being content or happy is a choice we make because we know whatever we have is more than we deserve.

Hebrews 13:5 Let your] conversation [be] without covetousness; [and be] content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

4. The main reason people find themselves in serious financial debt is they are never content with what they have. They never feel like they have enough. Some people feel they never have enough money, and they go so far into debt that both partners have to work long hours just to keep their heads above the water financially. As a result, many live in a house, not a home, because mom and dad are always tired, irritable, working all the time, and fussing and fighting about all the debts and bills. Seriously, does God desire this for your life, your family?

5. We work so hard to have an abundance of things and the futile thing of it all as Paul states in verse seven: For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out.

When they buried Bertha Adams, she didn't take a penny with her. Solomon gave us this wisdom in Ecclesiastes 5:15, "And as he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came and shall take nothing of his labor which he may carry away in his hand."

In Mark 8 verse 36 we have Christ teaching "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" In other words, it wouldn't matter if you gained every single thing there was in this world. If you weren't prepared for eternity it would all be a horrible, horrendous deceptive loss. Are you saved?

6. In verse eight Paul tells Timothy, "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. In other words, we need to be satisfied with the necessities of life. Paul is not condemning having possessions if God benevolently chooses to give them. But what he does condemn is the desire for them emerging out of discontent. If we have these things...Praise God. In **Matthew 6:28-31** Jesus taught us that our father knows our needs and provides them.

II. The Foolishness of Greed. Vv. 9-11

1. Note in verse 9, "*But they that will be rich*" – they that purpose to be rich. This is speaking of those that have a determined desire to be rich these individuals have decided they're going to pursue it. They that approach life that way – "are falling" – present tense – "into

temptation” They are continually in the process of falling into all kinds of sins that entrap them. Gamblers fall into this trap. They started to gamble for money and it became so compulsive that it literally controlled their life. Satan sets the trap, the snare and holds you in it as long as he possibly can. This desire for riches tempts our heart away from eternal riches, and ensnares us in a trap few can escape – always dreaming of riches, and always setting one’s heart on them. Sad in many cases it plunges men into ruin and destruction.

2. The desire for riches is far more dangerous than the riches themselves – and it isn’t only the poor who desire to be rich, it is the rich who want *more* riches. The Bible nowhere condemns wealth. However, Scripture dictates that the rich must be responsible, and aware of the perils of wealth. The most important aspect of money management is the control of our attitude towards it. Remember money is not “the root of all evil” as Paul is often misquoted, “*the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil*” (1 Tim. 6:10).

The desire to be rich can really only be satisfied in Jesus Christ, and satisfied with spiritual riches rather than material ones.

Conclusion:

God never judges by a bank account, or a statement of worth. He probes the heart where no surgeon can reach. He looks for righteousness and where it is lacking, His judgment follows. Riches in themselves are morally neutral, neither good nor evil. Wealth is like fire — very useful, but also very dangerous. We must balance between prudent saving and sinful stockpiling. A better question is “How much can I bless others with the wealth God has entrusted to me?”