

Let Us Be Content



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God's Word speaks clearly ^{1 Timothy 6:8} *"If we have enough food and clothing, let us be content."* The world wants everyone to be in a continual state of discontent, but materialism leads to coveting and coveting to greed—wanting more, the best, and the latest, but never saying *Thanks, Lord for all Your blessings*, and never learning to be content with what we now possess.

In a world that is content only with the latest and the most, the believer should be thanking God for the many blessings already received; for the multitude of good things already enjoyed, and for the priceless privilege of knowing God's Truth. *That* is of incredible value, because most people in the world do not know the Truth, and would not live it if they *did* know it. ^{John 17:3} *"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."*

John the Baptist told those who wanted baptism—but who did not show signs of repentance ^{Luke 3:9}, *"And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."*

Showing fruits of repentance would be doing what he told them to do ^{Luke 3:11} *"He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise."* To others ¹³ *"Exact no more than that which is ap-*

pointed you." And to soldiers ¹⁴ *"Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages."*

John the Baptist was just speaking for the Lord Jesus, and giving God's Truth to those who were willing to listen. The advice *"Be content with your wages"* is universally rejected by the world. The constant desire for more money and higher wages is a common problem today—no one seems content with what they are paid; even though the Word says ^{1 Timothy 6:8} *"Having food and raiment let us be therewith content."*

A poll of wage-earners—and asking each one what they would like to be paid—the majority of them, and regardless of whether they were earning minimum wage or a high salary, said they would want to make *twice* what they were earning. The human heart is never satisfied—until it is converted by God. We must allow God to change our heart. Being content is something to learn.

We should pray for a contented spirit and a thankful heart for the many good things God continually provides. Contentment is a secret, the apostle said—but a secret that can be known—^{Philippians 4:11} *"for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."* ¹² *"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want."*

The secret of being content is found by wanting to be in the will of God—which is explained in the Word of God. ^{1 John 2:17} *"The world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."* The will of God is to *not* covet the possessions of others, but to be content with those things we already possess.

Let us be content—is something we should desire; something we want to learn under God's teaching. His Word gives advice on every issue—being content with what we have, or being content where we work, is just one aspect of God's will. ^{Hebrews 13:5} *"Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"* God will provide what we need when we need it—we just trust Him to do it.

Satan constantly tries to have us be discontented about something and to always desire more than we have. We are to be satisfied with *less*, rather than always striving for *more*. It is to give away *surplus*, rather than accumulate *extra*. We should *cherish* what we have—not *resent* what we lack.

The apostle Paul learned not to complain in difficult times. ^{2 Corinthians 12:10} *"I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses"*—for the sake of God's Truth; *"for when I am weak, then am I strong"*—by the ability God gives me, he meant. He knew the importance of persevering in faith, and doing what God wanted him to do. He had learned the secret that ^{1 Timothy 6:6} *"godliness with contentment is great gain."*

The apostle was grateful because the church members were concerned about him and had sent him gifts. When the opportunity presented itself, they again showed divine love. This is the apostle's thank-you letter to them. ^{Philippians 4:10}, *"I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it."*

God had given the apostle a contented spirit. His goal in life was not to see how many things he could *accumulate*, but how a trusting faith in God could be *applied*. He was a prison-

er in Rome, confined to a small apartment Acts 28:30, and guarded by a soldier Acts 28:16. He was under house arrest, and was not permitted to work at a trade to pay expenses, but in that situation, he had the opportunity to trust God in faith to provide his needs each day.

This expression of thanks reveals his attitude of contentment, in spite of very difficult circumstances. His letter reflects his confidence in God's promises to provide, no matter what the situation was at the time. He knew God was in control of everything, and if he met this according to the Word, the promise would be fulfilled—Romans 8:28 that *“All things work together for good to them that love God.”*

If the apostle would trust God in faith—based on the Atonement of Christ, for strength, courage, peace, and contentment, God would give him success. He was sure that God would take care of him, if he would choose to trust Him. The Holy Spirit had enlightened him to know the big difference between *wants* and *needs*. By maintaining our faith and trust in Jesus every day, our attitudes and desires *can* change.

Each morning we should ask God to reveal any attitude in our *heart* that is not in accordance with His *will*, because 1 John 2:17 *“The world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”*

It is not the will of God to accumulate more things and stockpile many possessions—way beyond our present needs. Jesus gave advice on being content Matthew 6:32-33 (*“For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:”) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”*

Our responsibility is to keep trusting God in faith; His responsibility is to provide our needs

for the moment. No matter what our present situation may be, there is no need to worry, but there is a faith to apply. If we will trust Him in faith, God will prove faithful to His promise. *Outward* circumstances are to have no affect on our *inner* contentment.

It is very true that those with the most things are often the most discontented. They do not know the secret, because they have not read the Book. More money does not equal more contentment. Most people think that God does not provide things for them today, but the believer in Christ has faith in God that He *will* provide what is needed.

Jesus gave this advice—which would lead to being content and then lead to eternal life. He said to *“Sell,”* and *“give to the poor,”* because this would Luke 12:33 *“Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted.”* He added *“Where your treasure is,”* there your *heart* is 34. We accept His advice so we can trust God in faith—for each day's needs. What we do with our *treasure* shows the attitude of our *heart*.

1 John 2:15-17 *“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does [pride]—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.”*

Jesus said that it is not possible to love God, and love the world at the same time. We cannot worship or love God and money simultaneously. Luke 16:13-15 *“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”*

“The Pharisees, who dearly loved their money, naturally scoffed at all this. Then he said to them, ‘You like to look good in public, but God knows your evil hearts. What this world honors is an abomination in the sight of God.’”

We are not to love the world or constantly desire things of the world, because unbelievers are preoccupied with fulfilling every desire, and never asking if it is God's will or not. The world puts forth every effort to accumulate material things that are seen—*lust of his eyes*. The human heart can be obsessed with pride—*boasting of what he has and does*. The serpent tempted Eve with these very things, but God wants to see the opposite in us—self-control, generosity, and humility.

A trusting faith in God, to provide the needs of the moment, is the attitude of the believer, so by the grace of God, may we be able to take a good look at what He has already given and say, *Thanks, Lord, for providing these many blessings. Forgive me for not realizing how blessed I am to know Your truth, and be able to trust in the Atonement Blood, Jesus shed for me.*

If we will maintain our faith and trust in Him each day, to provide our needs in a right and scriptural way, He Philippians 4:19 *“shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”* Of that we can be sure. Our only concern is to be in His will—ready to learn the secret of being content with what He has already given—1 Timothy 6:8 *“Having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.”*



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