

Clash of Cultures – Contentment

Text : **I Timothy 6: 1-10**

INTRODUCTION :

A. Do you have faith ?

1. How do one know he has faith ?
2. “I believe in God.” *Belief is essential to faith, but it alone is not faith.*
3. The demons believe and shudder, but they do not have faith. (**James 2: 19**)

B. How does one know that he has faith in God , not just belief ?

1. Faith is like the wind, we only know it is there because of the affects it creates.
 - a. When we look out and see the trees swaying, we know the wind is blowing.
 - b. The whistling around the corner of the house, tells us the wind is blowing.
 - c. But, we cannot observe the actual wind.
2. Likewise, the affects of faith can be observed in one’s life. (*produces fruit*)
 - a. One’s value system changes and he prioritizes the spiritual.
 - b. One’s allegiance changes. His loyalty is to God above all else.
 - c. The person of faith increasingly seeks the will of God in his/her life.
 - d. As the person of faith learns the will of God he remolds his life to conform.
 - e. Faith gives one the peace of knowing that he is eternally approved of by God.
 - f. The person of faith realizes that God is in control and accepts God’s will for Him.
3. **Thus**, faith changes the way one thinks resulting in a change in the way he lives.

C. Not all of the fruits of faith are visible to others.

1. One’s speech and conduct can easily be observed by anyone.
2. Even one’s religious attitudes are apparent to others.
 - a. He will attend worship because he desires to be there.
(*I preach more about faith than attendance because faith produces attendance.*)
 - b. He changes his physical life (his schedule) to accommodate his spiritual life.
 - c. He does simple things like give thanks for his food, even in a public place.
3. NO ONE can see in the heart of another. (*As well, we keep it is carefully masked.*)
 - a. No one knows the peace you feel or the absence thereof.
 - b. No one knows the degree to which you trust God.

D. That which we will study today is one of those fruits of faith that only you know to what extent you have it in your heart.

1. Out ward appearances can make it appear that it is present when it is not.
2. It is a fruit of faith so it cannot truly exist apart from faith.
3. With this lesson we will begin to examine “**contentment.**”

There are many good reasons to be contented; here are five of them

I. No matter how much one acquires, things will not bring true happiness.

A. John D. Rockefeller was the richest man in the world. (*standard oil*)

1. Adjusted for inflation, Rockefeller was richer than Bill Gates.
2. When he was asked, “*How much money is enough ?*” Rockefeller famously responded, “*Just a little more.*” (*Richest still not satisfied*)

B. Those who seek happiness in physical things are always left unfulfilled.

1. As they achieve one goal and find themselves unfulfilled so they seek more.
2. Eventually they come to realize that Satan has been stringing them along. (*w/lies*)

C. Too many people go through life trying to fill that “God-shaped” hole in their soul with material things, but it never works.

Poem :

It was Spring, but it was summer I wanted
The warm days and the great outdoors.

It was summer, but it was Fall I wanted
With the colorful leaves and the cool dry air.

It was Fall, but it was winter I wanted
With the beautiful snow and the holiday season.

It was Winter, but it was Spring I wanted
With the pleasant warmth and the blossoming of nature.

I was a child, but it was adulthood I wanted
With its freedom and respect.

I was twenty, but it was thirty I wanted
With its maturity and sophistication.

I was middle-aged, but it was twenty I wanted
With its youthfulness and freedom of spirit.

My life was over, but I never got what I wanted.

**Ironically, at one point this person had everything he wanted,
But it was just never at the time he wanted it.**

D. In his wisdom, Solomon put it this way.

- Eccl. 5: 10-12** He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance *with its income*. This too is vanity.
- ¹¹ When good things increase, those who consume them increase. So what is the advantage to their owners except to look on?
- ¹² The sleep of the working man is pleasant, whether he eats little or much; but the full stomach of the rich man does not allow him to sleep.

E. Satan is deceitful, the father of all liars; there is never contentment in things.**II. We should be contented because we have enough already.****A. We don't need all we want. (*Seeking parity with the neighbors is covetousness.*)**

1. Americans already have more than any people in the history of the world.
2. God set the standard for material possessions very lower than we do.

I Tim. 6: 8- If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

B. Many in America suffer from “Aflu-enza.” (*Akin to “som-mor’s” disease*)

1. Always wanting more and better; there is never enough.
2. Those with “Aflu-enza” are never contented with what God has given.

ILL- Israel complained they did not have food and God sent manna. After the manna they complained about no variety and no meat.

C. Discontentment is thinking about what you don't have.

* Then, when you get what you wanted, you start thinking about what else you don't have.

D. The contented person realizes that if he is not happy with what he has he will not long stay contented with what he wants if he gets it.**E. Discontentment comes from who we are, not what we have.**

THUS : contentment is completely unrelated to how much one possesses.

III. Discontent leads to spiritual disaster.**A. Vs. 9-10** But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

1. Desires lead to temptation.

2. Temptation hides a snare.
3. The snare bring destruction of one's faith ... of his relationship with God.

B. The love of money (*things*) is having a heart fixed on this earth.

1. This is the antithesis of the Christian's heart.
 - Col. 3: 1-2** Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
 - 2** Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.
2. To desire the things of this world is to knock on the doors of Hell.
 - a. Jesus demands that one make a clear choice. He is #1 or nothing. (**Matt 10: 37-39**)
 - b. **Matt. 6: 24-** No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.
 - c. Earthly ambitions reject Jesus as one's Master.
3. Do we believe God ? HE SAYS : “The love of money is a root of all sorts of evil.”

C. Those who desire to have what they cannot afford serve a different Master.

1. The average family in this country has \$8000 in credit card debt.
 - a. Most people do not have one car paid off before they buy another one.
 - b. People buying houses they cannot afford has destroyed our national economy.
2. **Prov. 22: 7-** The rich rules over the poor, And the borrower becomes the lender's slave. (*You can serve only one.*)
3. A survey says the average American spends more time listening to Satan's pleas than he spends listening to the word of God. (*TV commercials every 4 to 9 min.*)

*** People who spend more than they earn have a spiritual problem.**

D. The bible is replete with examples of people being destroyed by desire for gain.

1. Solomon was the wisest man in history, but he was destroyed by multiplying gain.
2. Balaam sold out the people of God for the sake of money.
3. Judas sold the Lord of glory for the cost of a common slave.
4. Ananias and Sapphira lost their lives because they could not turn loose their money.

E. Godliness and contentment are directly linked.

1. **I Tim. 6: 6-** Godliness with contentment is great gain.
2. One cannot be godly and discontented at the same time.
3. **Discontentment is to reject God's providential oversight of one's life.**

IV. No matter how much one acquires, he can't take it with him.

A. This is a principle which is taught all through the bible.

1. **I Tim. 6: 7-** For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.
2. **Eccl. 5: 16-** As he had come naked from his mother's womb, so will he return as he came. He will take nothing from the fruit of his labor that he can carry in his hand.
3. The attitude of Job was exactly correct. When deprived of everything, he said :
Job 1: 20-21 Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. ²¹ He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

B. All that man accomplishes in this life is temporary.

1. Life is but ice in the sun. *Even this world is temporary.*
2. This was a great frustration to Solomon as he grew old and realized the folly of his efforts on the earth.
Eccl. 2: 13 And I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness. ¹⁴ The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I know that one fate befalls them both. ¹⁵ Then I said to myself, "As is the fate of the fool, it will also befall me. Why then have I been extremely wise?" So I said to myself, "This too is vanity." ¹⁶ For there is no lasting remembrance of the wise man as with the fool, inasmuch as *in* the coming days all will be forgotten. And how the wise man and the fool alike die! ¹⁷ So I hated life, for the work which had been done under the sun was grievous to me; because everything is futility and striving after wind.
¹⁸ Thus I hated all the fruit of my labor for which I had labored under the sun, for I must leave it to the man who will come after me. ¹⁹ And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the fruit of my labor for which I have labored by acting wisely under the sun. This too is vanity.
3. No matter how much you acquire someone close will get it all.

When John D. Rockefeller died, every paper in United States was speculating how much he was worth. One determined reporter was able to arranged an appointment with one of Rockefeller's aids, and when he got into the room with this man, he said to him:

'How much did Rockefeller leave?'

The man looked at him and soberly and calmly said: **'He left it all'.**

C. Many have tried to take it with them; but none have succeeded.

1. The Pharaohs were buried with great treasure, but grave robbers ended up with it.
2. One Chinese emperor built an entire city complete with army, but it is in a museum.
3. The Christian can send it on ahead, but no one can take it with him.

V. Contentment is a direct command of God.**A. The bible (N. T.) commands are clear and unmistakable :**

1. **I Tim. 6: 8-** *If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.*
2. **Heb. 13: 5-6** *Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,”⁶ so that we confidently say, “The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?” (*Do you believe this ?*)*

B. It all boils down to faith.

1. *Do I have enough faith to trust God to care for me ?*
2. Do I believe the promise of God ?
Matt. 6: 33- *But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*
3. Contentment is a learned behavior, but it can only be developed in a heart of faith.

C. The culture of this world is constantly clashing with the culture of Heaven.

1. Our earthly society unceasingly presses consumerism on us. (**30 % commercials**)
BUT ... God is calling us to fix our minds on things above.
2. The culture of this earth urges us to want “*Just a little more.*”
BUT ... Jesus instructs us to trust HIM to care for us
and devote our lives totally to accomplishing HIS goals.
3. Which will we choose ?
 - a. Will our lives be spent pursuing the same goals as our friends in the world ?
OR ... Will we heed Heaven’s call to be **in** the world, but not **of** it ?
 - b. Will we serve God living to accomplish HIS goal on this earth ? **Salvation of souls.**
OR ... Will we serve our own interests ?

No one can do both; one can only serve one master !!

INVITATION : Each Morning we choose which master we will choose that day.
I urge you to keep choosing God. First step

Lesson Text :**I Timothy 6: 1-10**

1 All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and *our* doctrine will not be spoken against. **2** Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these *principles*.

3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, **4** he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, **5** and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. **6** But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. **7** For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. **8** If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. **9** But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. **10** For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.