ThanksGiving: Grateful Hearts – Generous Lives – Glory to God

Satisfied: Grateful to Give from Godly Contentment

1 Timothy 6:6-19

There's a link between Gratitude & Generosity. So we're looking at 4 key elements of Grateful Hearts, Generous Lives, for the Glory of God.Today, we move on to **Satisfaction – Grateful to Give from Godly Contentment.**

The largest bank account, biggest house, impressive investment portfolio? Maybe. An ancient Jewish proverb asks, *"Who is rich?"* & the answer, *"He who rejoices in his lot."* We measure wealth & riches in dollar figures, but there's another more accurate way that measures wealth by contentment & satisfaction. Many who we envy due to their massive fortunes are living in constant anxiety on how to protect what they have & a constant, never-ending, insatiable desire to acquire more!

"He is richest who is content with the least, for contentment is the wealth of nature." **Socrates (5th Century BC)**

"He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income…Everyone also to whom God has given wealth & possessions & power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot & rejoice in his toil – this is the gift of God." **Ecclesiastes 5:10, 19 (King Solomon – 10th Century BC)**

"Mo money, Mo problems." **Notorious B.I.G. (1997)**

We'll never experience gratitude & practice generosity without contentment.

Main Idea: Grateful Hearts & Generous Lives Embrace Contentment as a Way of Life

"But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen. As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life."
1 Timothy 6:6-19

3 Aspects of Godly Contentment from 1 Timothy 6:6-19

I. Contentment in Provided Resources – 1 Timothy 6:6-10

Paul's letter to his son in the faith, Timothy (pastor in Ephesus), is all about the value of contentment. He notes that we were born with nothing, when we die we can take nothing, & desire for riches is a snare that results in so many problems.

"But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils." **1 Timothy 6:9-10a**

"Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'" **Hebrews 13:5**

So many examples of this truth. John D. Rockefeller was asked how much was 'enough', he replied *'just a little bit more.'* Studies show that many lottery winners will eventually go bankrupt. A large number of NFL players will be broke soon after their playing days are over. Bernie Madoff accumulated extraordinary wealth through massive financial fraud that cost him his freedom and untold thousands their own money. One simple word would have prevented each of these disturbing realities from happening…CONTENTMENT! So much misery avoided…

"But godliness with contentment is great gain…" **1 Timothy 6:6**

There's nothing wrong with working hard for a promotion, pursuing that year-end bonus, wisely investing for retirement, or aspiring to financial success to give more to God's Kingdom! The danger isn't **HAVING** or **EARNING** money; it's **LOVING** money! And danger exists regardless of wealth/poverty. Work hard, plan wisely, & steward faithfully what God gives you. **But never allow your pursuit of MORE to rob you of gratitude for what God has ALREADY provided!**

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II. Contentment in Pursuing Righteousness – 1 Timothy 6:11-16

Paul then encourages Timothy & the Ephesians, as they flee, to instead…

"Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called…" **1 Timothy 6:11b-12a**

Last year, I took my boys to the Sugar Bowl. We road-tripped, enjoyed some Cajun food, ate beignets at Café du Monde, & made some awesome memories. Of course, we were there to cheer on the Dawgs, & we wanted them to win! But they didn't! And as disappointing as that was, I wouldn't trade that trip for anything. Why? Because as much as I wanted UGA to win, the real purpose wasn't a football win. It was spending time with my boys! A win would've been a great bonus, but it wasn't what mattered most. That's Paul's point: There's nothing wrong with pursuing financial success, but it must never be our PRIMARY pursuit. **Our greatest ambition isn't to acquire wealth, but to become more like Christ!**

Main Idea: Grateful Hearts & Generous Lives Embrace Contentment as a Way of Life

III. **Contentment in Promised Returns – 1 Timothy 6:17-19**

Again, the Bible is not condemning wealth. In fact, Paul says it's God who…

"...who richly provides us with everything to enjoy." **1 Timothy 6:17b**

How to Enjoy the Riches that God's Provides:

- **Be Humble (vs. 17) –** Recognize God's Ownership & Your Stewardship
- **Be Generous (vs. 18) –** Priority, Progressive, and Percentage Giving
- **Be Hopeful (vs. 19) –** More committed to heavenly wealth than earthly

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." **Matthew 6:19-21**

Unfortunately, too many Christians are perfectly content to sacrifice HEAVENLY TREASURES in pursuit of EARTHLY PLEASURES! We spend so much of what God has entrusted to us on things that won't last, while neglecting opportunities to invest in what will last forever. But grateful hearts and generous lives recognize that the greatest returns aren't found in the treasures we accumulate on earth, but in the treasures we store up in heaven! **Godly contentment gladly exchanges TEMPORARY PLEASURES for ETERNAL TREASURES!**

A thermometer measures the temperature in a room, but a thermostat actually helps CHANGE it! The way we handle money functions as BOTH in our lives. Like a thermometer, our spending reveals the priority of our hearts. Look at where our money goes, & we'll discover what matters most! But like a thermostat, our giving can actually help CHANGE the condition of our hearts. When we intentionally & generously invest in God's Kingdom, our hearts increasingly follow our treasure!

Main Idea: Grateful Hearts & Generous Lives Embrace Contentment as a Way of Life

The secret to godly contentment isn't found in having everything we WANT, but in recognizing that in JESUS CHRIST, we already have everything we NEED!

"Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." **Philippians 3:8**

<u>Sources and Further Reading Opportunities</u>

- **CSB Study Bible –** Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- **Bible Exposition Commentary –** Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- **Message of 1 Timothy & Titus –** John Stott (1996)
- **Spurgeon Study Bible –** C.H. Spurgeon (2017)
- **Tony Evans Study Bible –** Tony Evans (2019)
- **Exalting Jesus in 1&2 Timothy, Titus –** Akin, Platt, & Merida (2013)