

25. Gospel Driven Life

Finding Contentment

1. Introduction
 - a. Ecclesiastes, Rolling Stones
 - b. But we pursue it, don't we? (ex of the ways we pursue contentment)
 - c. "Many people give lip service to the maxim that 'money can't buy you happiness', but most give lip-service to the hope that it just might, after all." - N.T. Wright
 - d. How much do you need to comfortably live on? A little bit more.
 - e. Finding contentment - catching and taming the mythical beast
2. *[2b] Teach and urge these things.*
 - a. The whole premise of 1 Timothy, why he was in Ephesus, why Paul writes to him
 - b. Compared to the false teachings that are the situation of the letter.
3. *[3] If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, [4] he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, [5] and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.*
 - a. **False doctrine is unhealthy, a sickness**
 - i. Explained in v.3 as an abandonment of the gospel as source for godliness
 - ii. Often abandoned from people thinking they are wise, but are fools (v.4)
 - b. False doctrine results in
 - i. Envy → jealousy which produces inward and outward devastation
 - ii. Quarrels → c.f. James
 - iii. Dissension → Disunity, fractioning
 - iv. Slander → Tearing people down w/ words
 - v. Evil suspicion → fill the gap with distrust and suspicion
 - vi. Constant friction amongst other proud people → C.S. Lewis on pride...
 - c. After 6 chapters we see what was actually **the root of it all - GREED**
 - i. They believed that teaching the gospel was a means to make money
 1. So they made it easier to digest, more acceptable to people
 2. Common in ANE of "philosophical hucksters"
 - d. Greed is often the impetus for false teaching, bad doctrine, and heresy
 - i. ex: Selling of indulgences which led in large part to reformation
 - ii. ex: Prevent the Bible from being given to the people as control
 - iii. ex: Lessening stance on clear Bible teachings to bring people back in
 - iv. ex: Having to get published for a dissertation has birthed heresy
 - e. The Ephesian false teachers took some tips from the cult of Artemis
 - i. c.f. Acts, selling trinkets for money and worship, silversmiths
 - ii. Paul says, "You want gain? You want profit? Let me show you."

4. *[6] But godliness with contentment is great gain, [7] for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. [8] But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.*
 - a. The false teachers thought that money would bring contentment and they embraced heresy in order to get it.
 - b. Paul says that TRUE godliness (found in the gospel) with contentment is not just gain but GREAT gain (true profit).
 - c. What is true godliness?
 - i. Explain the gospel
 - d. How do we find contentment? (the big question)
 - i. It seems to be a matter of perspective
 - ii. Change the way you view your money....
 - iii. Change the way you view EVERYTHING in your life
 1. We're going to come back to this...
5. *[9] 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. [10] 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.*
 - a. We tend to think that money will solve all our problems & make us content...
 - b. Paul disagrees, saying that greed and the love of money leads to...
 - i. Temptation → Something we are supposed to run from, not run to
 - ii. A snare → Explain figure 4 trap, rabbit snare → kills us or holds us captive
 - iii. Senseless desires → ex: Skymall
 - iv. Harmful desires that ruin people
 1. People make ethical compromises that ruin testimony, ruin marriages (leading cause of divorce), step on the backs of poor
 - c. Paul summarizes: *[10] For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils.*
 - i. C.f. to Jesus' words, "You love God or you love money"
 - d. Loving money is like seeing a pit of stakes w/ a pile of coins in the center, and jumping on to the stakes in order to go get it without stabbing yourself.
 - e. **A love of money does not promise contentment, but ruin.**
 - i. It ruined the false teachers and it will ruin you too.
 - f. So is there a better way? Yes. *[6] But godliness with contentment is great gain*
6. How? How do we become content?
 - a. I was going to give you a bunch of practical steps. Stuff like, "live in the moment" and "don't window shop," and those are helpful...
 - i. But something more...
 - b. **You don't need to prune the branches, you need to take the axe to the root of your tree of idolatry.**
 - c. Here's how to be content: **Find contentment in Christ alone.**
 - d. Stoic philosophers talked often about the most prized virtue of "contentment"
 - i. They meant "self-sufficiency" by it → finding everything from within

- ii. Paul flips this to be “Christ-sufficiency” → finding it from him
- e. God is most glorified in you, when you are most satisfied in him (content with him)
 - i. God is glorified in you (that’s the goal) → GREAT GAIN
 - ii. How? When you are content in him.
 - 1. More specifically, when you are content in the gospel
 - iii. So, to rephrase: *[6] But godliness with contentment is great gain*
 - 1. **The gospel, and contentment in the gospel, is great gain.**
 - 2. Let’s boil it down even more. **The gospel is the greatest gain.**
- f. What’s the point of 1 Timothy? It’s all about the gospel.
 - i. It seems so simple yet so impossible.
- g. How do you find contentment? Realizing that **every misplaced desire you have is actually a desire for what the gospel alone can give you.**
- h. So my question is this: is Jesus enough? Is the gospel sufficient?
 - i. If you lose your job, is Jesus enough?
 - ii. If you don’t get that promotion, is Jesus enough?
 - iii. If you are never able to retire, is Jesus enough?
 - iv. If you will never know what it’s like to live in that house, is Jesus enough?
 - v. Though you may never see those distant shores, experience that vacation, is Jesus enough?
 - vi. Though your health may collapse, is Jesus enough?
 - vii. Though you may lose all your loved ones, friends, family, is Jesus enough?
 - viii. Is the gospel enough? Is eternal life enough? Is being made new, like Jesus, celebrating with him for all time enough?
 - ix. Are the momentary failings, the temporary pain, the lacking of all the things we want, think we deserve, and can’t live without worth the INEVITABLE weight of glory like the Bible says? Is Jesus truly enough?
- i. Job thought so.
 - i. Lost it all and this was his response, “Even if you slay me, still will I trust.”
- j. Is it easy? No. Have I done it? No. May I have to? I hope not, but I may.
- k. Godliness, found in the gospel, and contentment, found in Christ alone, is GREAT GAIN.
 - i. I want you to have great gain, great profit - the greatest profit in the world
- l. It is not rhetoric for me to tell you this: it is found in Jesus.
- m. And some of you don’t know him - not like I do. Not like Paul did.
 - i. And even if everyone does, there’s a world out there that doesn’t...
- n. Some of you know him, but don’t treat him like he’s important.
 - i. Your eye never has enough seeing b/c you are searching for satisfaction everywhere BUT the only place you can find it.
 - ii. And you know the answer, which makes your actions just plain foolish
 - iii. Luckily, repentance is just a moment away for all who are cut to the heart
- o. Do you want true contentment? **True contentment is found in Christ.**