



Which of these do you think is most important for you?

One of the dangers here is the thought – “when I have this,” (whatever it is), “I will be content.”

Will this ever be true?

Why? Why not?



Does contentment come from having the perfect life?

How hard do you find it to be content?



Declutter

There is a trend at the moment to declutter your life and your living spaces. To live with the minimum. – Just what you need.



What do you think?

For or against

Advantages - disadvantages.

Do you think that God blesses contentment?



When you should not be

What should you not be content with?

Injustice, sin, inequality. To this we could add the things in our lives that we know should not be there. Bad character traits, half-heartedness, etc.

What are you content with that you should not be?

There is a difference between being content with a situation and being content with what we have.

Which of these is harder?



Joseph in prison was content despite an intolerable situation.

How could he be?

How can you be?

What will you do when you are discontent?

What will stop you from being content?

Will having more make you happier?

Will having less make you less happy?



That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil- this is the gift of God.

Ecclesiastes 3:13

Do you think contentment is a gift from God?

If so, what should you do?



What does Hebrews 13:5 say? (If you don't know this verse, learn it! It is a quote from Deuteronomy 31:6)

What is the context?



Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.' So we say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?' Hebrews 13:5-6

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What is contentment?



But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 1 Timothy 6:6-8



What does it mean to be content?

How do you feel when you are content?

To be content means to be satisfied with what you are or what you have; not wanting more or anything else. The word 'satisfied' is important here. It implies a being at peace, a finding fulfilment, or happiness in what we have.



When are you content?

When are you discontent?

The verse above links contentment to godliness.

How would you describe this connection?



Godliness means living in a way that pleases God, being Christlike, living Christian values. To this we are to add contentment. We are to be happy living a godly life. If we take the word satisfied from the above definition. Make the most of a difficult Christian life and putting up with it. It means finding wholeness in a way of living that produces happiness.



Are we always?

What stops us?

How are worldliness and contentment likely to mix?

The problem here is that we often feel that we are missing things that we need, or that we should have. Or we look at others and want what they have.

Why do we always want more than we have?



According to verse 8, what will be content with?

What does Paul mean by this?

He means your basic needs. The same things Jesus tells us to pray for in the Lord's Prayer and not to worry about in Matthew 6.



The enemies of contentment

Envy

Greed

Competition



Define these words.

Envy is wanting what others have.

Greed is wanting more than your fair share or more than you need.

Competition is the need to be better than someone else.

www.freedom.gen.nz
studies@freedom.gen.nz
Pastor Ray Moxham

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What effects do these things have in our lives?

What does it feel like to be discontent?

Disappointment, dissatisfaction, and unhappy. Empty

There is a direct connection between trusting God and contentment.

Generally, these things make us unhappy. They bring disharmony, anxiety and emptiness. Of course there is another side to this. Discontent can be a driver for change, growth, innovation and progress. We will look at this shortly.



Read James 4:1

What kind of desires is James talking about?

What does this cause?

This might sound extreme to you, and maybe James is exaggerating to make a point. Certainly, killing would be an extreme response. The point is valid; wanting what you don't have, especially when others do, brings disharmony. This can be internal or external.



What does internalised discontentment look like?

What does externalised discontentment look like?



What does James say you should do instead?

Think of an example – How are you going to pray?

If you recognise that you don't have something that you need, James says you should ask God for it.



Greed is a problem because if you have more than your share, you often force someone else to have less. This creates imbalance. The person who has less than they need will act unpredictably.

What is the 10th Commandment? Exodus 20:17

We generally consider this command to be the weak command. But you will realise from James that envy causes strife. When Jesus interprets the 10 Commandments in the Sermon on the Mount, He uses this last command as a lens for explaining all the commands.



For example:

Read Matthew 5:27-28

What does it mean to commit adultery?

What does it mean to lust after someone?

Oh,-you have got it; it, means to envy, or covet your neighbour's wife! To want what you can't or shouldn't have.

What should you do with such a desire?

Jesus is not changing the law, or making it stricter; He is explaining what it always meant.

So if you apply the 10th commandment to do not steal, what do you get?



The context

When Paul tells Timothy to be godly and content, he contrasts this with something else.

Read 1 Timothy 6:9-12



What is the temptation?

What is the trap?

What are the harmful and foolish desires?

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

What does this mean?

What is the love of money?



How will the love of money show in your life?

Why is it dangerous?

Is this written to people who have money or people who don't?

What is the danger either way?

Does this mean it is wrong to be rich?

Paul says the danger is that you wander from the faith.

How might this happen?

He also says you will pierce yourself with many griefs.

How? What griefs?



We live in a very materialistic world. **What effect does this have on contentment?**

What things does materialism cause us to devalue?



But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 1 Timothy 6:11-12

Paul wants to replace the Love of Money with the love of other things – **like?**

Some soldiers came to John the Baptist and asked him what it meant for them to repent and to show the fruit of repentance.



What did he tell them? Luke 4:14

Are you?

Is anyone?

What does Philippians 4:13 say? (If you don't know this verse, learn it!)

What do the two verses before say?



Read Philippians 4:11-12

Paul has just received money from the Philippian church. This enabled him to focus on his ministry.



In what situation was Paul content?

Why?

How?

Shouldn't Paul have been discontent when he was hungry?

When should you be content?

It is easy to be content when you have plenty, not so much when you don't.



What is the secret of being content?

Trusting God
Knowing that God know what he needs
Not to be obsessed with material things.
To have goals that don't require wealth.
Having faith
Being grateful for what you do have.
Focusing on spiritual things.