

Great Gain: Contentment

Key Verse – 1 Tim 6:6 *But godliness with contentment is great gain...*

Main passages: Luke 12:13-21 + 1 Tim 6:6-10

What is contentment? The state of being happy and satisfied.

- Fulfillment, gratification, pleasure, satisfaction, and serenity.
- 4 essential areas: Eat, Play, Work and Sleep
- Perpetual state of satisfaction, frequently at peace and enjoying life's pleasures?

The Greek word for contentment = *autarkeia* (sufficiency). Scriptures mentions two types of contentment:

- Contentment = self-sufficiency
- Contentment = Christ-sufficiency

Contentment = self-sufficiency

Fuelled by 2 areas:

- Power + Possessions
- Power = status, control, influence
- Possessions = things you need + things you don't need

Luke 12:13-21 ¹³ *Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."* ¹⁴ *But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?"* ¹⁵ *And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."* ¹⁶ *And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, ¹⁷ and he **thought to himself**, 'What shall I do, for I **have** nowhere to store **my crops**?' ¹⁸ And he said, 'I **will** do this: I **will** tear down **my barns** and build larger ones, and there I **will** store all **my grain** and **my goods**. ¹⁹ And I **will** say to **my soul**, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." ²⁰ But*

God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." (ESV)

Power. Deut 8:17-18 ¹⁷ Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' ¹⁸ You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day. (ESV)

Possessions. Note the rich man's focus on self. 6 times he mentioned (I). 4 times: I will do this, I will tear down, I will store, and I will say. 5 times: My crops, my barns, my grain, my goods, and my soul.

Job 1:21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." (ESV)

Ecc 5:15 As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand.

1 Tim 6:6-10 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. 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. (ESV)

Contentment = Christ-sufficiency

Paul extends *autarkeia*. Satisfy others...

- **2 Cor 9:8** *And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work (ESV)*

Paul redefines *autarkeia* “self-sufficiency” to “Christ-sufficiency”. Satisfied in every circumstance...

- **Phil 4:10-13** ¹⁰ *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.* ¹¹ *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:* ¹² *I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.* ¹³ *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (NKJV)*

Final thoughts...

1 Thess 2:17-20 ¹⁷ *But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavoured the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face,* ¹⁸ *because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us.* ¹⁹ *For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?* ²⁰ *For you are our glory and joy. (ESV)*

Matt 5:14-16 ¹⁴ *“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.* ¹⁵ *Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.* ¹⁶ *In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (ESV)*