Let's Talk About: Contentment

Two weeks ago, you had a lesson on gratitude. What do you think it means to have gratitude?

How are you grateful for the things that God has provided?

Failing to Be Content

Truthfully, it can be difficult to be grateful, especially during difficult times. It can also be difficult to be grateful when others are succeeding or appear to be "doing better" than you. This is why it is important to be content.

One of the odd things about the Bible is that there are numerous examples of people complaining or grumbling about their circumstances. Read Numbers 11:4-9. What were the Israelites grumbling about?

Were they content with what God had provided?

David frequently complained in the Psalms. Read Psalm 73:1-3. What is David complaining about?

We see that David is envious of those he sees as wicked. He is angered that they have prosperity. He is probably jealous that they have things that he doesn't have. Was David content with what God had given him?

Finding True Contentment

There is no denying that it is easy to complain. It is easy to have a "grass is always greener" mentality. Do you find yourself complaining? What kinds of things do you complain about?

Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10. Paul gives some incredible instructions on finding contentment and what happens when we fail to do so. What does verse 6 tell us? Why do you think there is "great gain" in being content?

When you find contentment with what you have, it is much easier to enjoy what you have. You enjoy the great blessings you have. Can you name some of the things that God has blessed you with? Are you content with those things?

How does verse 7 relate to being content?

If you think about it, you entered the world with nothing. That you have anything is more than you started with. Even if you lost everything you ever gained, you would only be back where you started.

Read Matthew 6:19-21. What does Jesus tell us that we should do?

How do you think this passage relates to contentment?

1 Timothy 6:8 points out that we have food and clothing. Are you content with that?

What stops you from being content with the things that you have?

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This is also addressed in verses 9-10. What do these verses tell us is the focus of a person who is not content?

What does verse 10 tell us will happen when a person is not content?

A lack of contentment will lead you away from your faith. It will lead you to chase after things that will become idols to you. What are the idols in your life?

One important note. It is acceptable to want to achieve more. To further your education, find a better job, or to want to have a family. Things like this are acceptable. The problem is when you make those things idols. When they become far more important than your recognition of what God has done for you.

Stop and pray in your group to remove those idols.

Finding Contentment in God

Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. What did Paul want from God?

How did God respond to him?

Paul asked God three times to remove a "thorn" that had been given to him. He did not explain what the thorn was, simply that he asked God to remove it. God did not do so. God explained that His grace was sufficient for him. What do you think this means?

What do you think it means that God's power was made "perfect" in Paul's weakness?

This is the beauty of contentment. It not only helps us to be grateful for the things that God has already provided, but also helps us to draw closer to Him. Paul explained at the end of verse 9 that he boasted about his weakness because it revealed the power of God.

There is an important point to Paul describing his infirmity as a "thorn." A thorn can have many meanings. It can be an addiction, a physical or mental ailment, a loss of a job, a loss of a loved one, or other type of loss. Can you see that the loss can draw you closer to Jesus?

What is a "thorn" in your life? How is God's power being revealed in this circumstance?

God Is with You!

Read Hebrews 13:5. Explain this verse.

How do you think the "love of money" removes your contentment? The writer of Hebrews tells us to be content with what we have and follows that statement by explaining that God will "never leave you nor forsake you." How do you think those two statements work together?

When we focus on our contentment, we recognize that God has always cared for us. Has God given you everything you need?

Do you know that He Is always with you, providing for your needs?

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 12:9 - **But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**

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