

What Does the Bible Say About Contentment?

We live in a world engineered to keep us discontent. Every advertisement is a message that we do not yet have enough and will not be happy until we buy the next thing. The Bible cuts straight across this, calling contentment a treasure and naming it great gain. Contentment is not laziness or having no ambition. It is a settled, restful heart that has learned to be at peace with what God has given. Let us see what the Scriptures say.

Godliness With Contentment Is Great Gain

Paul put it bluntly: *"godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content"* ([1 Timothy 6:6-8](#)). The world measures gain in possessions. God measures it in a godly life joined to a contented heart. A man with little who is content is far richer than a man with much who is not.

Contentment Is Learned

Contentment does not come naturally. It is learned, often the hard way. Paul, writing from prison, said, *"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound"* ([Philippians 4:11-12](#)). He had been hungry and full, rich and poor, and through all of it he had learned to keep an even, contented heart. If contentment can be learned, then discontent can be unlearned, and that is good news for any restless heart.

The Secret of Contentment

Paul named the secret in the next breath: *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"* ([Philippians 4:13](#)). Contentment does not rest on circumstances, which change, but on Christ, who does not. The same truth anchors the Hebrew writer's counsel: *"be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"* ([Hebrews 13:5](#)). The reason we can be content with less is that we can never lose the most important thing, the presence of God Himself.

The Enemy Is Covetousness

The opposite of contentment is covetousness, the craving for what we do not have. Jesus warned, *"Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"* ([Luke 12:15](#)). The tenth commandment struck at the same root, *"Thou shalt not covet"* ([Exodus 20:17](#)). Paul went so far as to call covetousness *"idolatry"* ([Colossians 3:5](#)), because the heart that must always have more has set up a god in place of the true one.

The Danger of Loving Money

Discontent often shows itself as the love of money, and Scripture warns that this is a trap. *"they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare... For the love of money is the root of all evil"* ([1 Timothy 6:9-10](#)). Jesus told of a rich man who tore down his barns to build bigger ones, planning to settle back and enjoy his wealth for years to come, only to hear God say, *"Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee"* ([Luke 12:20](#)). He had gained everything he wanted and lost the only thing that mattered. The chase for more is a road that never ends and never satisfies.

Learn to Be Content

Contentment and gratitude are close kin. The thankful heart, seeing every good thing as a gift from God, naturally rests instead of grasping. So learn contentment as a skill, the way Paul did, in plenty and in want. With food to eat, clothes to wear, and the unfailing presence of God, you already have enough. Hold your possessions loosely, give thanks for what you have, and let your heart rest. Godliness with contentment is great gain, and it is a gain no one can take from you.

Every Scripture reference in this study links to the King James Version. Open it and read for yourself.