Overcoming *Materialism* and Finding *Contentment*

Phil 4:9-13 - “I have *learned* in whatever state I am, to be *content*…”
Overcoming Materialism and Finding Contentment

- Most Americans want the SAME THING:
Overcoming Materialism and Finding Contentment

- Most Americans want the **SAME** **THING**:
- **MORE**
Overcoming Materialism and Finding Contentment

- Most Americans want the **SAME THING**: 
  - Money,
  - Things,
  - Leisure,
  - just **MORE** of everything,
  - except personal responsibility.
Overcoming Materialism and Finding Contentment

- Today, some people are literally protesting in the streets demanding MORE money for doing MORE than what they are already doing. How did we get here?
Materialism, simply put, is the Love of “Things.”

It is the life-style of Selfish.

It is the “religion” of the Greedy.
• Materialism is Satan’s most successful lure, and with it that old angler has hooked MORE people and brought them into his fellow “ship” than with almost any other lure in his tackle box.
THE DANGERS OF MATERIALISM

- Christians/Non-christians:
- Once you get caught in it, you will sacrifice your Faith, your Family and your Future in pursuit of the goal of getting MORE and MORE.
THE DANGERS OF MATERIALISM

- Materialism (as my Bible defines it) is a sin, because essentially it is putting our Faith in “things” vrs. God.
THE DANGERS OF MATERIALISM

• Matt. 6:25, 33

• “Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’
THE DANGERS OF MATERIALISM

• Matt. 6:25, 33

• For the Gentiles (The World) eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these “things.”
THE DANGERS OF MATERIALISM

- **Matt. 6:25, 33**
  - *But seek first His kingdom* and *His righteousness,* and *all these “things” will be added to your life.*

- **Our Primary Job as Christians is to**
  - **TRUST GOD** and **PUT HIS WILL FIRST.**
THE DANGERS OF MATERIALISM

- **Matt. 16:26**
- “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”
Every time we compromise our FAITH in GOD and "Seek FIRST the "things" of This World," we are in affect "exchanging" or "trading" our souls for that "thing."
THE DANGERS OF MATERIALISM

- Essau once sold his families birthright (literally) for a bowl of “red stuff” and he regretted it till the day he died - (Gen. 25:29-34).
THE DANGERS OF MATERIALISM

• Some have “sold their souls for” Popularity, Power, Prestige.

• Essau only lost his earthly birthright.

• Some have sold their Eternal Birthright for FAR LESS.
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

- Phil. 4:9-13
- Contentment is something you **LEARN**.
- It does **not** come naturally.
- Greed comes naturally.
- Selfishness comes naturally.

- **Contentment with God’s Provision is an Acquired Virtue.**
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

- Phil 4:9-13 - “The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of Peace will be with you.”
But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned *before*, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak from want,
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

- for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance,
I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

• Something Paul had *learned* like Solomon *learned*... from God’s Holy Wisdom and from trial and error...

• “Skip the trial and error part, and just learn from GOD’S HOLY WISDOM.” (“There for the asking,” James 1:5)
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

WHAT IS CONTENTMENT?

The dictionary tells us that contentment means to be: quietly satisfied and happy.

The Bible promises us so much MORE.

The Greek word translated “content” appears only here in the entire New Testament making it absolutely unique.
True and complete Contentment comes only from God, and enables believers to be at peace in any circumstance.

Not a self-sufficiency, but a GOD SUFFICIENCY, having MORE than enough in Him and not being dependent on any other source for our happiness.
• Some Gk. philosophers described “Content” as autonomy and self-determination.

• Paul describes it as a FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN DEPENDANCE ON GOD. (See 4:13)
Numerous forces stand in the way of our contentment.

The media says we can never be content with what we have.

That’s mostly baby talk.
“Adult” Christians find **JOY** and **CONTENTMENT** in serving **God** and serving our **neighbor**.
“The value of a man’s work is not determined by his reward, but by the quality of his service.”

(M. Guy)
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

- Matt. 6:19-21 (paraphrased)

“Some people store up treasures in their homes here on earth. (and how) This is a shortsighted practice - and we are not to undertake it."
Matt. 6:19-21 (paraphrased)

Because moths and rust will eat up any treasure we may store here on earth. And/or thieves may break into our homes and steal our precious trinkets.
Matt. 6:19-21 (paraphrased)

But instead, we should store up our treasures in Heaven where moths do not attack, and where rust does not corrode, and where thieves are barred at the door.

Because again,

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

- Matt. 7:13-14 (paraphrased)
  You can only enter God’s Kingdom through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose the “easy way.”

- But the gateway to Life is small, and the road is narrow, and only a few ever find it."
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

• The “Worldly” Materialistic life = death and destruction.

• The life that is Heaven focused, Christ-like and selfless = Eternal Rewards that far exceed anything this world could ever offer. (see Mk. 10:29-30)
Paul said- *I have learned* the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. “*I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*”

**ALL of the glory goes to GOD/Christ.**

**It is THROUGH HIM-** that we have **all we need.**
God is our security.
(or He should be)
Everything we have comes from GOD and belongs to GOD. We are just the stewards of GOD’S great blessings.
When you know **Who** takes care of you and **Whom** you serve you can put your faith in **HIM** and not in **things**.
• If you have GOD in your life you are fully supplied.
Phil. 4:18-20

“I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God."
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

- Phil. 4:18-20

- And [now] my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

- He is our sufficiency.
- He is our security.
Jn. MacArthur: “The antidote for materialism is Contentment. The two are in opposition. Whereas the materialistic greedy person worships himself, the faithful contented man worships God. Contentment comes from trusting God.”
Jerry Bridges: “Contentment is one of the most distinguishing traits of the Godly person, because a Godly person has his heart focused on God rather than on possessions or position or power.”
Quick answer: Which would you rather have? A Billion dollars. Or a life in Heaven with Jesus.
LEARNING THE ART OF CONTENTMENT

• Quick answer: Which would you rather have? A Billion dollars. Or a life in Heaven with Jesus.

• When you don’t have to think about it…
  You’re content.