

## FREEDOM FROM WANT

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: 1Timothy 6:6,7. From Roy H. Enoch (08-22-1993).
- B. There are few things that create dissatisfactions than wants.
  - 1. Not being satisfied makes us very uncomfortable.
    - a. A certain amount of want, desire, ambition is needed.
    - b. But when it sets priorities and consumes our thought it becomes a problem.
  - 2. This is not a new problem.
    - a. It was probably the basic motive that prompted Lot to "pitch his tent toward Sodom."
    - b. It was David's wants that caused him to send for Bathsheba and have her husband Uriah killed.
  - 3. The OT writers warned about discontentment (Prov. 17:1; Eccl. 4:6).
  - 4. NT writers dealt with the same problem (Phil. 4:11; 1Th. 4:11).
    - The Lord had to deal with this problem in His ministry.
      - a. The sermon/mount emphasized not to be anxious about food, drink and clothing (Mt.5:25-34).
      - b. He taught dangers of greed w/the farmer who tore down his barns and built greater (Lk. 12:13-21).
      - c. James and John mother asked that her sons be given places of honor in His kingdom (Mt. 20:20-28).
- C. In our text, Paul describes "godliness with contentment" as great gain (1Tim. 6:6,7).
  - 1. Even men recognize this principle.
    - a. A song asks, "Why don't you stop and smell the roses?"
    - b. Another thought emphasizes that we will leave everything when we die, "Shrouds are not made with pockets."
    - c. As one asked when a rich man died, "How much did he leave?" and another replied, "Everything."
    - d. The futility of the pursuit of things is illustrated by the following verse:
      - "To get his wealth he spent his health*
      - And then with might and main,*
      - He turned around and spent his wealth*
      - to get his health again."*
  - 2. Contentment is not found in doing nothing.
    - a. Paul said that if a man will not work, neither let him eat (2Th. 3:10).
    - b. Also, if a man provide not for his own, he is worse than an infidel (1Tim. 5:8).
- D. Brother E. Ray Jerkins, a family counselor who used to live in west KY, and preach on the radio when I was young, gives some ways to learn satisfaction, inner peace and contentment, in order of importance.

### I. MAKE A "ROAD MAP" OF YOUR LIFE.

- A. A husband and wife should sit down and discuss what you want to attain in life.
  - 1. What is the most important for your peace of mind?
  - 2. Where do you want to be five years from now, ten, twenty?
  - 3. Be willing to write down your Priorities.
  - 4. Make sure that your goals are practical and important.
- B. This is emphasized by the apostle Paul (Eph. 5:15-16).
  - 1. Jesus emphasized that we should count the cost (Lk. 14:25-33).
  - 2. We should think and plan before we act.

## II. **DO NOT COMPUTE YOUR SUCCESS IN DOLLARS.**

- A. In our society, almost everything is given a price-tag.
  - 1. Many think that lots of money means contentment, joy, no problems and serenity.
  - 2. We have a tendency to spend all that we make (sometimes before we make it).
  - 3. We recognize the need for earning to provide needs, don't measure the success of a life by the money it earns.
- B. Sometimes those who focus on making money never enjoy their family or earnings.
  - 1. They may become too busy for the Lord's service.
  - 2. Jesus warned that the soul is more important. Mt. 16:26
- C. If one's focus is on earning money, there may never be the enjoyment of family, money, social groups or the church.
  - 1. Their job may become their wife.
  - 2. Their wife becomes their mistress.
  - 3. Their children become wards of their mother.
  - 4. The father looks upon himself only as a paycheck.
  - 5. Statistics show some fathers spend less than 20 minutes a day w/ their children.
  - 6. Some spend even less time w/ God's word and service.

## III. **GREENER PASTURES ARE NOT ALWAYS JUST A LITTLE FARTHER DOWN THE ROAD.**

- A. Going somewhere else do not always relieve problems.
  - 1. Some think another job will be easier and better.
  - 2. Some look for another marriage to solve problems.
  - 3. Some think another community will be a happier place to live.
- B. Paul's prison epistles do not show depression or despair from the circumstances.
  - 1. The letter to the Philippians is known as "the epistle of joy."
  - 2. He is rejoicing, grateful, and encouraging others in all of these letters written in prison waiting to appear before Nero (Phil. 4:11-14).

## IV. **PRACTICE RELAXING, MEDITATING AND DOING NOTHING OCCASIONALLY.**

- A. God knows "our thoughts afar off" (Psa. 139:2,3).
  - 1. David here speaks of leisure time as well as work.
  - 2. God is hard to hear when we get too busy (Psa. 46:10).
- B. Sometimes we get so busy doing that we rarely stop to plan.
  - 1. "The faster I go the behinder I get" (Psa. 46:10).
  - 2. Take time for introspection.

## V. **COUNT THE BLESSINGS THAT YOU ALREADY HAVE.**

- A. The selfish look around and see something they do not have and focus on that: they are dissatisfied and distressed.
- B. The loving and godly person sees others who have needs and tries to help them.
  - 1. They think of their blessings and are thankful.
  - 2. They see others with more difficulties than their own.
  - 3. They are grateful, serving and loving: they are happy.
- C. We can choose to focus on our blessings or troubles.
  - 1. We can focus on what we have, or on what we want.
  - 2. We decide whether we focus on ourselves or on others.
- D. We all have things to be thankful for.
  - 1. We can read and write.

2. We have God's word and time to study it.
  3. Our nation allows us the freedom to study and worship.
  4. We have access to Bible teaching and lectures.
  5. There are opportunities to work in the Lord's service.
  6. All of these things can bring contentment and joy.
- E. Or we can focus on ourselves and self-gratification which is depressing.

**VI. USE CAUTION IN PUSHING YOUR CHILD...**

**...TO PLAY EVERY GAME JUST "TO WIN."**

**...AND THAT "WINNING IS ALL THAT MATTERS."**

- A. One of the worst lessons that we can teach children is to focus on beating other people, or winning, rather than helping.
1. We should use games to teach moral values and principles of helping and sharing.
  2. The emphasis on winning teaches selfishness and self-gratification.
  3. It also teaches "do as you please" rather than "do as you should."
- B. The focus on playing games more than productive activity destroys proper work attitudes.
1. Sometimes responsibilities to "teams" and "playing games" are emphasized over work.
  2. Even more often, it is emphasized over church services and the Lord's work.

**VII. PLAN SOME RECREATION AND DIVERSION FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY.**

- A. I grew up on a farm where the cows had to be milked and hogs fed every day.
1. Sunday afternoons were about the only leisure time we had.
  2. About one Saturday a month we took off in the afternoon and went to town.
  3. We really treasured those times of leisure.
- B. As our family was growing up, we lived in Illinois w/Martha's family in TN and mine in KY.
1. All traveling was to visit family.
  2. Occasionally the family could go w/me to a professional convention.
- C. But sometimes we should plan some activity or trip that is different from usual obligations.
- D. Jesus taught the need for an occasional diversion for rest (Mk. 6:30-32).

**VIII. RECOGNIZE YOUR LIMITATIONS.**

- A. Regardless of how talented we may be in some area, no one can do everything well.
1. We are all limited in some areas.
  2. We need to be realistic in evaluating our abilities.
  3. We are responsible for developing our abilities for beneficial uses.
    - a. The focus of our physical abilities for play rather than productive purposes is selfish.
    - b. We should seek to use them for the benefit of God and our fellowman.
- B. We need to recognize our limitations in some areas.
1. There seems to be a natural to try harder where we have limited abilities. (Or just me?)
  2. There is usually more profit in developing our abilities than our weaknesses.
- C. We need to use our abilities for the greatest blessing (1Tim. 4:8).
- D. We should not be resentful of the blessings of others.
1. Aseph described this frustration at the wicked prospering in Psalms 73:12-13.
  2. But then he considered their end (Psa. 73:17,18).

**CONCLUSION.**

- A. Contentment is not having all you want, but being happy with what you have.
- B. Contentment is the recognizing what is of eternal importance and focusing on that.

- C. Contentment is being grateful for what we have rather than greedy for what we don't have.
- D. Contentment is focusing on helping others rather than helping ourselves.
- E. Jesus showed all these characteristics (Mt. 20:28).