

REVELATION 18

SURVIVING THE NINETIES PART THREE: CONTENTMENT

Read Vietnamese Pastor's wife story.¹

Now look at Paul's testimony:

I Cor 4:9-13

II Cor 11:23-27

Phil 4:11-12

What do both have in common? CONTENTMENT

Now, Open with me in your Bibles to Revelation 18:10-11, 15 and 19 we see the people of the Earth mourning over the loss of things. In a real sense:

- the desire for things more than God
- the desire for pleasure more than godliness
- the longing for more things than for Him who is to be all in all
- the desire for what others have when they have more or better things or situations than we have
- and the constant thoughts about things over the spiritual world

Each of these is a warning of a spiritual ill health called DISCONTENTMENT.

There is a plague sweeping America. It's not AIDS nor TB, its a dark cloud that overshadows all of life. It's called DISCONTENT.

What is the plague we face here in America? Its the plague of discontentment. Discontentment is like an infection. You can catch it by contact unless you are resistant.

1. What is contentment?

How many truly content people do you know? We all have seen the rich, the famous, the successful and the beautiful... but how many are truly content?

The old Puritans had a lot to say about contentment. Listen to one:

*Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God's wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.*²

¹ Swenson, *Margin*, pp.189-90.

² Jeremy Burroughs, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*,

Thomas Watson continues with:

*Discontent doth dislocate and unjoint the soul, it pulls off the wheels.
Discontent is a fretting humor, which dries the brain, wastes the spirits,
corrodes and eats out the comfort of life.*³

The New Testament mentions contentment five times. Two different greek words are used. Let's look at them and learn a lesson on being content.

- Luke 3:14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content [#714 satisfied] with your wages. (KJV)
- 1 Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment [#714 satisfaction] is great gain. (KJV)
 - Hebrews 13:5⁵ Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." (NIV)
- Philippians 4:11¹¹ Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content [#842 independent of external circumstances]. (KJV)
 - being willing to accept where God has placed me in life and willing to devote my energies to the advancement of His kingdom and not my own.
 - Paul was talking about choices we all make. As a Pastor I can either follow the plan God has laid down or my own. The Bible says:
 - feed the flock 1p5
 - equip the flock eph3
 - labor in the Word and doctrine 1tim5.17
 - not try to promote myself in an association, denomination or conference.
 - It would be much easier to make hospital calls and go to meetings of pastors all day and spend time in socials rather than laboring in the word.
 - It is far easier to talk to you than pray for you. It is far easier to entertain you than to speak the Spirit burdened Word of God at any cost to you.
 - Our family was called by God to leave our friends and family behind and serve God all our lives. We have only one mandate, to preach and teach the Word. We are here only because this congregation wanted to be fed and lead. When we become aware of that desire changing we know it is time for the Lord to move us on.

³ Thomas Watson, *The Art of Divine Contentment*,

- There is a famine of the regular systematic preaching of God's word in our land. We are committed to a life of the ministry of the Word
- 1 Timothy 6:8⁸ And having food and raiment let us be therewith content [#842 independent of external circumstances] . (KJV)
 - not wanting too be like, have or do what others are doing!

Do Study Of Seven Keys To Protect Contentment from I Timothy 6:

1. Remember things are only temporary v.7.
2. Only seek necessities, wait for the rest v.8.
3. Avoid a consuming desire for prosperity v.9-10.
4. Flee materialism v.11.
5. Cling to eternal life v.12-16.
6. Fix your hope on God v.17.
7. Give until it hurts v.18