

INTRODUCTION

Analysis provided by the word of God has exposed a flawed way of thinking; a wrong kind of thinking that is present in men of corrupt minds, lacking the truth. Such men suppose or think or imagine something that is not actually true. They wrongly think:

-that gain is godliness

-that gain and godliness are equivalent and interchangeable

-that we might make our decisions about religion, about worship, on the basis of what makes money, of what leads to worldly wealth, to carnal prosperity, to gain in the things of this world

We, the disciples of Jesus Christ, the congregation of the living God, are to identify such thinking as wrong, to reject it, and to withdraw ourselves from people who think and act like that.

Having identified that kind of thinking about godliness and gain as false, our Lord's apostle now puts those terms together correctly to tell us the truth on this subject:

Godliness with contentment is great gain.

TEXT

1 Timothy 6:6-11 Now godliness with **contentment [G841 autarkeia]** is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be **content [G714 arkeo]**. 9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 11 But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

I. What Godliness Is

- A. We have been over this more than once before, so I'll be brief on this
- B. The word in the Greek NT is *eusebeia*, which means literally "good reverence"
- C. The main synonym in English is "piety"
- D. Godliness is the sincere exercise of the one true religion, as revealed in the Bible
- E. Godliness is repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ
- F. Godliness is having no other Gods before Him, not making for yourself any images to worship, not taking the name of the Lord in vain, and remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy
- G. Godliness is loving the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength
- H. Godliness is worshiping the Lord in spirit and in truth
- I. Godliness is fleeing evil temptations to pursue righteousness
- J. Godliness is consenting to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledging they are good for us and authoritative over us, and refusing to hear anyone who teaches otherwise

II. What Contentment Is or What It Is To Be Content

A. From today's passage in 1 Timothy 6

1. Recognizing that riches are not inherent to us (verse 7)

a) in the past, when I was born, I didn't have any worldly riches

b) in the future, when I die, I won't have any worldly riches

(1) a person's body typically is buried in his best clothes, with some personal belongings buried with him; the very rich, such as the Egyptian pharaohs, were buried with very much worldly wealth

(a) but the person does not really have those items of worldly wealth

(b) in time, even those will rot away, or will be taken by others

(2) a person's body has to be left behind as his soul or spirit passes out of this world; the soul does not take any worldly riches with him

(3) that soul goes to heaven or goes to hell; in neither place does he have any worldly riches

2. Being satisfied with just the essentials (verse 8)

3. Not desiring to be rich (verse 9)

4. Not loving money or desiring money (verse 10)

B. From Luke 3:14 Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and **be content [G714 arkeo]** with your wages."

1. resisting all temptation to make money unjustly, and so

2. accepting as sufficient the pay or wages you can make justly

C. From Philippians 4:11-13 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be **content [G842 autarkes]**: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

1. learning to look to Christ's strength in all things

2. and so being able to accept from Him either poverty or wealth

D. From Hebrews 13:5-6

1. rejecting the coveting of what you do not have; embracing the promise of what you do have---the presence of God

2. not fearing what man might do to you, because of the promise that the Lord is your helper

E. Summary - Contentment is

1. Knowing that in Christ Jesus, God is with you to help you, to strengthen you, you do not covet what you don't have, and so

2. You don't desire to get rich or have lots of money; instead, you consider yourself rich already in Jesus Christ.

III. What It Is to Have Godliness *and* Contentment

A. It is gain

1. that is, profit or increase
2. not in the false sense that men of corrupt mind think; not that godliness is a means to worldly gain, or that godliness and gain are equivalent and interchangeable
3. 1 Tim 6:9 if we did not have godliness and contentment, we would be snared or trapped by sin, and so be plunged into destruction and drowned
 - a) illus. mouse and rat traps that drown the animals in a bucket
 - b) but when God grants us godliness with contentment, we are not trapped and drowned, but are saved
4. 1 Tim 6:10 if we did not have godliness and contentment, we would love and desire money; that would lead us to err or stray or wander from the faith, and so we would pierce ourselves with many sorrows or pangs or griefs; but when God grants us godliness and contentment, we do not stray from the faith looking for money, and so we are spared those griefs and in their place experience many joys in the household of faith

B. It is *great* gain

1. the Greek word here is *mega*
2. you have gone from having only the slight happiness that riches of this world can give to having all the happiness that God gives His children through Jesus Christ
3. you have gone from being a lame beggar sitting outside the temple, to being a worshiper entering the temple walking and leaping and praising God
4. you came into this world a sinner, in rebellion against God; spiritually you were pitiful, poor, wretched, blind, and naked; when God, by His grace, in His mercy, has so worked in you that you have repented of your sins, and are trusting in Jesus Christ; and when you are not coveting worldly riches, but are content with whatever God provides you, in eternal, spiritual things you have gone from being a blind, lame beggar, to being an heir with Jesus Christ of all good things in heaven and earth

IV. APPLICATION - 1 Tim 6:8 Having Food and Clothing, Let Us Be Content

A. Accept a standard of living in keeping with your income

1. Buy what you need, but do not try to buy too much
 - a) if what you have does not seem suitable to you, it is perfectly lawful and wholesome to buy something better
 - b) if your income is sufficient to buy things that are expensive, you might buy expensive things in all good conscience
 - c) but do not try to buy more than you can afford
 - d) e.g. Susan with the living room furniture
2. Work hard, but do not try to work too much
 - a) if your wages cannot buy you what you want to have, you might think that working during hours that you should be resting will make up the difference
 - b) but this can be done only occasionally, not frequently, and should be reserved for emergencies
 - c) Proverbs 23:4-5 Do not overwork to be rich; Because of your own understanding, cease! (5) Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.

B. Give thanks often for what you have

C. When you pray for worldly things, pray not for riches, but for what you need

1. Proverbs 30:7-9 Two things I request of You (Deprive me not before I die): 8 Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches-- Feed me with the food allotted to me; 9 Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the LORD?" Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.
2. "Give us this day our daily bread."

CONCLUSION

Jesus Christ has promised to be with me, and so He is, by His Holy Spirit living in me. With that precious presence, whatever portion of this world's good He has bestowed on me makes a perfectly ample supply, in which I can rejoice, whether I live in palace or prison. **Godliness with contentment is great gain.** Amen.

Jeremiah - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Philippians 4:4-7

Stephen - Scripture Reading - Acts 2:21-42

Dillon - Congregational Prayer

Allison - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 533 "What a Friend We Have In Jesus" - Alex lead

Rita - Trinity 207 "Christ Jesus Lay In Death's Strong Bands" - Andrew lead

Rita - Trinity 406 "I Hear Thy Welcome Voice" - Andrew lead

godliness

Gill:

all the graces of the Spirit of God; as faith, hope, love, fear, &c. the whole of internal religion, as it shows itself in outward worship, and in all acts of holiness of life and conversation

Clarke:

the true religion, Christianity

Bengel:

godliness...produces *autarkeia*, a mind contented with its lot

TYN Godliness is great riches if a man be content with that he hath.

GEN godliness is great gain, if a man be content with that he hath

KJV, NKJV, CSB godliness with contentment is great gain

ESV there is great gain in godliness with contentment

GREEK Is now gain great the godliness with contentment

contentment G841 *autarkeia* noun

Strong:

self satisfaction, that is, (abstractly) contentedness

from G842 *autarkes* self complacent, that is, contented

Philippians 4:11-13 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be **content**: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

-**"content" in all translations**

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all **sufficiency** in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

Hebrews 13:5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; **be content [G714 arkeo]** with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU."

Luke 3:14 Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and **be content [G714 arkeo]** with your wages."

Gill:

The word here used signifies "sufficiency"; and so it is rendered in the Vulgate Latin version: it designs a competency of the good things of this life; and what that is, is expressed in 1Ti_6:8 and such God gives to them that fear him, his godly ones, who shall lack no good thing convenient for them; for godliness has the promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come; and God does give to such all things pertaining to life and godliness, even all things richly to enjoy. The word indeed properly signifies "self-sufficiency", which in its strict sense, only belongs to God, who is "El-Shaddai", God all-sufficient and self-sufficient; but here it intends such a sufficiency as a man himself judges to be so; for this phrase does not so much design the thing itself, which is a sufficiency, as the opinion, the sense which the godly man has of it, who himself judges it, as Jacob did, to be enough; and such a man is content with what he has, and thankful for it, submits quietly to the will of God, and patiently bears every adverse providence: and this is now the fruit and effect of godliness, or true grace, and is a considerable part of that gain which godliness brings with it; and such a man is a happy man indeed, let his circumstances be what they will.

Clarke:

a competency, a sufficiency; that measure or portion of secular things which is necessary for the support of life, while the great work of regeneration is carrying on in the soul. Not what this or the other person may deem a competency, but what is necessary for the mere purposes of life in reference to another world; food, raiment, and lodging. See 1Ti_6:7.

VWS:

an inward self-sufficiency, as opposed to the lack or the desire of outward things. It was a favorite Stoic word, expressing the doctrine of that sect that a man should be sufficient unto himself for all things, and able, by the power of his own will, to resist the force of circumstances

great gain

Clarke:

if a man have the life of God in his soul, and just a sufficiency of food and raiment to preserve and not burden life, he has what God calls great gain, an abundant portion.

It requires but little of this world's goods to satisfy a man who feels himself to be a citizen of another country, and knows that this is not his rest.

JRY:

Recognizing that the Lord has given you enough, and understanding that to be happiness.