

Our Discontent And God's Goodness

Psalm 145

Introduction:

1. Failure To Recognize God's Goodness Creates **Discontent**
 - Discontent = Not recognizing the goodness of God in our life leads to the belief that we lack something in life
2. Failure To Recognize God's Goodness Leads To **Envy** (Prov 14:30; 23:17; Ps 37:7)
 - Envy – Coveting what we don't possess
 - a. The Manifestation Of Envy
 - Envy Focuses On Another's Power (Num 16:3; Ps 106:16)
 - Envy Focuses On Another's Possession (Gen 26:12-14)
 - Envy Focuses On Another's Popularity (1 Sam 18:7-9)
 - Envy Focuses On Another's Performance (Acts 4:14-17)
 - Envy Focuses On Another's Profession (Phil 1:15-16)
 - Envy Focuses On Another's Privilege (Lk 15:25-30; Gen 37:3-11)
 - Envy Focuses On Another's Praise (Gen 4:4-5; Esth 5:12-13)
 - b. The Malignancy Of Envy
 - Envy Brings Destruction (Prov 14:30; Gen 4:8; Job 5:2)
 - Envy Brings Division (1 Cor 3:3-4)
 - Envy Brings Depravity (James 3:16)
 - Envy Brings Denunciation (Gal 5:19-21)
3. Failure To Recognize God's Goodness Leads To **Jealousy** (Prov 6:34; 27:4; SS 8:6)
 - Jealousy = Coveting what you do possess in fear of losing it
 - The Difference Between God's Righteous Jealousy And Man's Sinful Jealousy
 - God Is Jealous That No Other Gods Are Worshipped (Ex 20:4-5; 34:14; Dt 6:15; Isa 42:8)
 - God Is Jealous In Protecting His People (Nahum 1:2; 2 Cor 11:2)
 - Man's Sinful Jealousy (Gen 4, 27, 37; 1 Sam 18; Acts 5, 13)

I. Individually, Our Life Praises God's Greatness (1-3)

¹ I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. ² Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever. ³ Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.

II. Generationally, Our Lives Shares God's Goodness And Greatness To The Next (4-9)

⁴ One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. ⁵ On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. ⁶ They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness. ⁷ They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant **goodness** and shall sing aloud of your righteousness. ⁸ The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. ⁹ The Lord is **good** to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.

- A. God Defines Good – God Is The Ultimate Determiner Of Goodness (Lk 18:18-19; Ps 52:1,3)
- B. God Does Good – We Should Not Consider God The Source Of Pain, Suffering And Evil In Our Life (Ps 4:6; 27:13)
- C. God Dispenses Good – He Is The Ultimate Benefactor Of Goodness (Ezra 3:11; Nah 1:7; Rom 2:4; 11:22)

- D. God Distributes Good Gifts – He Is The Ultimate Source Of Everything Good (Jas 1:17; Mt 7:11)
- E. God Directs Things For Good For Those Who Belong To God (Rom 8:28; Gen 50:20)

III. Universally, We All Benefit From God’s Goodness In Our Lives (10-21)

A. God’s Good Works Are Praiseworthy (10-13)

¹⁰ All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your saints shall bless you! ¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, ¹² to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The Lord is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.]

B. God’s Good Works Are For Our Benefit (14-16)

¹⁴ The Lord upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. ¹⁶ You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

C. God’s Good Works Are Righteous And Kind To Those Who Call Upon Him (17-21)

¹⁷ The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works. ¹⁸ The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. ¹⁹ He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them. ²⁰ The Lord preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. ²¹ My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

Conclusion: How Can I Have Victory Over Sins Of Discontentment, Envy And Jealousy?

1. Choice: Take Responsibility For Your Choice To Envy (Envy Is A Choice) (Prov 3:31; 1 Pt 2:1)
2. Comparison: Toss Away Your Tendency To Compare Yourself With Others (Gal 5:26)
3. Carnality: Type Your Envy As A Sinful Work Of The Flesh (1 Cor 3:3-4)
4. Charge: Target Your Zeal Towards The Lord (Prov 23:17)
5. Charity: Transform Your Heart With Love Towards Others (1 Cor 13:4)
6. Contentment: Thank God For The Privileges And Opportunities You Do Have (Lk 15:31-32; Phil 1:15-18; Phil 4:11-13)
 - Contentment Is Learned (Phil 4:11)
 - Contentment Is Independent Of Our Circumstance (11b-12a)
 - Contentment Is Possible In Every Situation (12b)
 - Contentment Is Finding Strength In God To Be Satisfied In Every Circumstance (13)

Discussion:

1. Do we manifest our discontent more through jealousy or envy? Why? What triggers these emotions?
2. How does 1 Timothy 6:5-11 put contentment in perspective for us?
3. When is godly jealousy appropriate in our lives?
4. Relate at least 3 reasons that “Life is Good” because “God is Good” for you.
5. How does God’s goodness relate to His other attributes like “love,” “righteousness,” “justice,” and “mercy”?

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Psalm 145

About Psalm 145

- This is the last of the alphabetical Psalms (examples: Psalm 111, 112, 119)
- Each verse begins with the successive letter of the alphabet except for *Nun*
- The absence of one letter means that our praise is not complete here on earth
- Yahweh – 9x
- Steve Lawson: "Psalm 145 is a summons to every believer to practice this pursuit—the unending praise of God." (*Holman Old Testament Commentary - Psalms 76-150* . B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.)

Scripture Reading: Left – Praise, Right - Antiphony

- Individually (1-3) – 1-2 Praise, 3 Antiphony
- Generationally (4-9) – 4-7 Praise, 8-9 Antiphony
- Universally (10-21) – 10-11 Praise, 12 Antiphony, 13 Praise, 14 Antiphony, 15-16 Praise, 17-20 Antiphony, 21 Praise

- ¹ I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever.
- ² Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever.
- ³ **Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.**
- ⁴ One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.
- ⁵ On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.
- ⁶ They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness.
- ⁷ They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.
- ⁸ **The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**
- ⁹ **The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.**
- ¹⁰ All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your saints shall bless you!
- ¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power,
- ¹² **to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.**
- ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The Lord is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.]
- ¹⁴ **The Lord upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.**
- ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season.
- ¹⁶ You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.
- ¹⁷ **The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.**
- ¹⁸ **The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.**
- ¹⁹ **He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.**
- ²⁰ **The Lord preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.**
- ²¹ My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

PRAYER

Introduction:

- Kermit the Frog made famous the song "It's Not Easy Being Green".
- We are green with envy
- Shakespeare called jealousy the "green sickness"
- We think the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence

1. Failure To Recognize God's Goodness Creates Discontent

- **The Definition Of Discontent = Not recognizing the goodness of God in our life leads to the belief that we lack something in life**
- Jerry Bridges makes us question how we handle circumstances beyond our ability to change:
 - An unfulfilling or low-paying job
 - Singleness well into midlife or beyond
 - Inability to bear children
 - An unhappy marriage
 - Physical disabilities
 - Continual poor health

The Folly Of Discontent - by Jeremy Burroughs (Puritan preacher in the 1600's):

1. *It takes away the present comfort of what you have, because you have not something that you would have.*
 - *What a foolish thing is this, that because I have not got what I want, I will not enjoy the comfort of what I have!*
2. *By all your discontent you cannot help yourselves, you cannot help yourselves, you cannot get anything by it.*
 - *Who by taking care can add one cubit to his stature, or make one hair that is white to be black?*
3. *Discontent and murmuring eats out the good and sweetness of a mercy before its comes.*
 - *Discontent is like a worm that eats the meat out of the nut, and then when the meat is eaten out of it, you have the shell.*
4. *Discontent makes our affliction a great deal worse than otherwise it would be.*

2. Failure To Recognize God's Goodness Leads To Envy

- **Envy – Coveting what we don't possess**
- "Envy is an expression of anger, frustration and resentment from being personally discontent in light of someone else's successes, opportunities or advantages."
- Jerry Bridges: "Envy is the painful and oftentimes resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by someone else. Sometimes we want that same advantage, leading to the further sin of covetousness." And sometimes we just resent the other person having something we don't have." (*Respectable Sins*, p. 149)

Proverbs 14:30 "A sound heart is life to the body, But **envy** is rottenness to the bones"

Proverbs 23:17 "Do not let your heart **envy** sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day"

Psalm 37:7 Quiet down before GOD, be prayerful before him. Don't bother with those who climb the ladder, who elbow their way to the top. (The Message)

- **Zelos**

- **Positive Usage:** Eying and emulating someone else's advantage as a motivation to improve one's self. To possess a zeal spurred on by competition. (John 2:17 ; Rom 10:2 ; II Cor 7:7,11, 9:2, 11:2; Phil 3:6 ; Col 4:13 ; Heb 10:27)

2 Corinthians 7:7 When he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more

2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.

- **Negative Usage:** Eying someone else's advantage with disdain. To arouse a zeal that motivates one to sin by attacking or humiliating the one he/she is jealous of. (Acts 5:17, 13:45; Rom 13:13; I Cor 3:3, 12:20; Gal 5:20; Jas 3:14,16)

- "Zelos its evil sense refers to envy, the desire to make war upon the good which it beholds in another, and thus to trouble that good and make it less; or, where there is not vigor and energy enough to attempt the *making* of it less, there may be at least the *wishing* of it less; with such petty carping and fault-finding as it may dare to indulge. (Kenneth Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*)

Acts 5:17-18 ¹⁷ Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with **indignation**, ¹⁸ and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison.

Acts 13:45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with **envy**, and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul.

Romans 13:13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and **envy**.

James 3:14,16 ¹⁴ But if you have bitter **envy** and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth... ¹⁶ For where **envy** and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

- **Phthonos**

- *Phthonos* is the meaner sin,... being merely displeasure at another's good." (Kenneth Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*)

- Mt. 27:18; Mk 15:10; Rom 1:29; Gal 5:21; Phil 1:15; I Tim 6:4; Tit. 3:3; Jas 4:5 ; I Pet 2:1

Matthew 27:18 For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.

Romans 1:29 ...full of envy...

a. **The Manifestation Of Envy**

Traits Of Envious People: (Les Carter, *Mind Over Emotions*, p. 52)

- Work extremely hard to present themselves right and good
- Find it easy to examine others with a critical eye
- Have hidden feelings of inferiority
- Readily complain about not getting fair treatment or good breaks
- Have an insatiable desire for success
- Need much overt recognition of their achievements
- Enjoy the feeling of being in control
- Tend to be status-conscious
- Are impressed by titles
- Cringe at the idea of examining their own weaknesses
- Find it hard to pay compliments
- Have difficulty giving generously
- Tend to hold grudges
- Keep score of their own good deeds and of the good deeds of others
- Prefer to avoid successful people
- Are willing to pass along negative rumors about a successful person
- Often put on a false front in order to appear impressive
- Have frequent fantasies of what it would be like at the top
- Prone to hold "pet peeves"

1. **Envy Focuses On Another's Power (Num 16:3; Ps 106:16)**

Numbers 16:3 They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"

Psalms 106:16 When they envied Moses in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD

2. **Envy Focuses On Another's Possession (Gen 26:12-14)**

Genesis 26:12-14 ¹² Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the LORD blessed him. ¹³ The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous; ¹⁴ for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines envied him.

Ie/ The walk into the church's parking lot will make one envy – see the new car, the new clothes and the new hairstyle

3. **Envy Focuses On Another's Popularity (1 Sam 18:7-9)**

1 Samuel 18:7-9 ⁷ So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." ⁸ Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" ⁹ So Saul eyed David from that day forward.

4. **Envy Focuses On Another's Performance (Acts 4:14-17)**

Acts 4:14-17 ¹⁴ And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. ¹⁵ But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, ¹⁶ saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name."

- The Sanhedrin, the religious rulers of the Jews, became envious of the miraculous performances of Peter & John.
- Ie/ You envy the advancement of the new employee over you
- Ie/ You share your SAT score with someone hoping their score is lower than yours
- Ie/ You envy the person that beat you out for the sports team, student body officer or scholarship
- Ie/ Pastors share about the size of their church attendance, budget and property

5. **Envy Focuses On Another's Profession (Phil 1:15-16)**

Philippians 1:15-16 ¹⁵ Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: ¹⁶ The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains

6. **Envy Focuses On Another's Privilege (Lk 15:25-30; Gen 37:3-11)**

Luke 15:25-30 ²⁵ "Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷ And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' ²⁸ "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I

might make merry with my friends. ³⁰ But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'

Genesis 37:3-4,11 ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. ⁴ But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him...¹¹ And his brothers envied him.

7. **Envy Focuses On Another's Praise (Gen 4:4-5; Esth 5:12-13)**

Genesis 4:4-5 ⁴ Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, ⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Esther 5:12-13 ¹² Moreover Haman said, "Besides, Queen Esther invited no one but me to come in with the king to the banquet that she prepared; and tomorrow I am again invited by her, along with the king. ¹³ Yet all this avails me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

"Envy Went To Church" by Elva McAllaster
(quoted in David Jeremiah's Slaying The Giants In Your Life, p. 194)

Envy went to church this morning.
Being legion, he sat in every other pew.
Envy fingered wool and silk fabrics,
Hung price tags on suits and neckties.

Envy paced through the parking lot
Scrutinizing chrome and paint
Envy marched through to the chancel with the choir
During the processional...

Envy prodded plain-jane wives,
And bright wives married to milquetoast dullards,
And kind men married to knife-tongued shrews.
Envy thumped at widows and widowers,
Jabbed and kicked college girls without escorts,
Lighted invisible fires inside khaki jackets.

Envy conferred also this morning
With all of his brothers.
He liked his Sunday scores today
But not enough;

Some of his intended clients
Had sipped an antidote marked Grace
And wore a holy flower named Love

b. The Malignancy Of Envy

1. Envy Brings Destruction (Prov 14:30; Gen 4:8; Job 5:2)

Proverbs 14:30 A sound heart is life to the body, But *envy* is rottenness to the bones

Genesis 4:8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

Job 5:2 For wrath kills a foolish man, and envy slays a simple one.

2. Envy Brings Division (1 Cor 3:3-4)

1 Corinthians 3:3-4 For you are still carnal. For where there are *envy*, strife, and divisions among you are you not carnal and behaving like mere men. For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?

3. Envy Brings Depravity (James 3:16)

James 3:16 For where *envy* and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

ie/ David Jeremiah recounts an old legend about the devil crossing the Libyan desert and comes across a group of his demons. These demons were frustrated in their attempts to tempt a holy man to sin. They tried every weapon of seduction possible – doubt, fears, futility, etc. After Satan listened, he told them to step aside and watch the master at work. He whispered 2 sentences in the ear of this man: "Have you heard the news? Your brother was just promoted to bishop of Alexandria." Immediately, the holy man's mouth sank and frowned – the devil one.

4. Envy Brings Denunciation (Gal 5:19-21)

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, *jealousies*, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, *envy*, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like... those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

3. Failure To Recognize God's Goodness Leads To Jealousy

- Cyprian of Carthage: "To be jealous of what you see to be good and to be envious of those who are better than yourself seems in the eyes of some people only a slight, petty wrong. Being thought a trifle of small account, this sin isn't feared. Not being feared, it's not taken seriously. And not taken seriously, it's not readily shunned. In this way it becomes a dark and hidden mischief. Since the prudent don't see it as something to guard against, it can secretly trouble the minds of those who don't take sufficient precautions

against it. So let's consider where, when, and how jealousy begins. We'll more easily shun this mischievous evil if we recognize both its source and its magnitude." ("Beware Of Jealousy And Envy," <http://www.navpress.com/magazines/archives/article.aspx?id=11055>)

a. **The Difference Between Jealousy And Envy**

- The word *zelos* relates to both concepts. It has to do with zeal and intense fervor.
- "Jealousy" is a form of "zeal"
- Jerry Bridges: "*Jealousy* is usually defined as intolerance of rivalry." (*Respectable Sins*, p. 151)
- **Envy** – Coveting what you don't possess in frustration of not measuring up
- **Jealousy** – Coveting what you do possess in fear of losing it

Proverbs 6:34 "For *jealousy* is a husband's fury; Therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance."

Proverbs 27:4 "Wrath is cruel and anger a torrent, But who is able to stand before *jealousy*?"

Song of Solomon 8:6 "*Jealousy* as cruel as the grave; Its flames are flames of fire, A most vehement flame.

- Shakespeare: "It is the green-eyed monster" (*Othello*)
- Lehman Strauss: "There is a difference between jealousy and envy in Scripture. They are two entirely different words in the Greek New Testament. Jealousy involves the desire to have what somebody else has. That may be wholesome, particularly when we desire to develop in our own lives the positive spiritual qualities we see in others, or when we seek to enjoy the spiritual riches which are ours in Christ just as we see others enjoying them. In like manner, God wants what is His: the exclusive devotion of His people. It is only right and good that He should. But for us, jealousy may degenerate into something bad, as when we feel frustrated and bitter because we cannot obtain what we want, or when we find fault with those who have what we want or who keep us from getting it. God is not capable of experiencing that sinful jealousy. The point is, jealousy can be either good or bad.

"On the other hand, envy is nearly always bad. It is a feeling of displeasure over the blessings others are enjoying and it makes us want to deprive them of that enjoyment. Jealousy wants what others have, while envy wants to keep them from having it. It is a vicious and malicious trait which Solomon calls "rotteness to the bones" (Proverbs 14:30 KJV)." ("A Jealous God")

b. **The Difference Between God's Righteous Jealousy And Man's Sinful Jealousy**

- **God's Jealousy**
- God is zealous about protecting His glory and His people.
- Man can be properly jealous when we are zealous about protecting God's glory and those who are precious to us.

- A father can be jealous for his children's purity.
- A wife can be jealous for her husband's faithfulness.
- A believer can be jealous that only God is worshipped shun idols.
- Elaine Creasman writing for Discipleship Journal: "God eagerly and passionately pursues a monogamous love relationship with me. He isn't jealous because He is fearful or greedy. Rather, He wants to guard against anything that could come between us. His goal is to keep me faithful and protect our love relationship from rivals, so I can know the fullness of His love that is mine through Christ (see Eph 3:16–19)." ("A Holy Jealousy," May/June, 1996, <http://www.navpress.com/magazines/archives/article.aspx?id=12154>)

1) God Is Jealous That No Other Gods Are Worshipped (Ex 20:4-5; 34:14; Dt 6:15; Isa 42:8)

Exodus 20:4-5 ⁴ "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; ⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a **jealous** God

Exodus 34:14 for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is **Jealous**, is a **jealous** God

Deuteronomy 6:15 "For the LORD your God is a **jealous** God among you"

- What do we love more than God? Is it right that God is jealous over that?
- What idols do we harbor in our lives? Should God be jealous?
- Who or what are we depending on more than God? Should God not be jealous?

Isaiah 42:8 I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.

2) God Is Jealous In Protecting His People (Nahum 1:2; 2 Cor 11:2)

Nahum 1:2 "God is **jealous**, and the LORD avenges; The LORD avenges and is furious. The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies"

2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am **jealous** for you with godly **jealousy**. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

c. Man's Sinful Jealousy (Gen 4, 27, 37; 1 Sam 18; Acts 5, 13)

- Lehman Strauss: "[Jealousy] has overtones of selfishness, suspicion, and distrust, and implies a hideous resentment or hostility toward other people because they enjoy some advantage. It is possessive, demanding, and overbearing; and that is repulsive. It stifles freedom and individuality, it degrades and demeans, it breeds

tension and discord, it destroys friendships and marriages. We view jealousy as a horrible trait and we hate it." ("A Jealous God")

- Cain was jealous of Abel (Gen 4:1-16) – led to murder
 - Esau was jealous of Jacob (Gen 27) – led to family division
 - Joseph's brothers were jealous of Joseph's favored position with their father (Gen 37) – led to slavery
 - Saul was jealous of David (1 Sam 18:5-16) – led to self-destruction
 - The Sadducees and high priests were jealous towards the Apostles (Acts 5:17-18) – led to forsaking Christ and the truth
 - Jews of Antioch of Pisidia were jealous of Paul & Barnabas' crowds (Acts 13:44-45)
- **What should the negative emotions of discontent, envy and jealousy point to? God's Goodness!**
 - Not a question of what we **deserve**, are **owed**,
 - **Main questions: Is God good? If so, is God good enough?**

IV. Individually, Our Life Praises God's Greatness (1-3)

- ¹ *I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever.*
- ² *Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever.*
- ³ *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.*

- V. 1 – He is both God and King – not just our Creator, but our Ruler
 - David the Psalmist is proclaiming his individual relationship and connection to God
 - David has written 75 of the 150 Psalms
 - "**extol**" = to lift up to a high place, elevate
 - What's on your top shelf? Usually what you prize the most is elevated on the top shelf
 - Though David is king, God is His King
 - "**ble**ss" = *barak* – to bend a knee, to bless
-
- v. 2 – every day and ever and ever
 - As long as he is living and through eternity, every moment He will praise God
-
- V. 3 – Greatness – unsearchable – too immense for any mortal to grasp

V. Generationally, Our Lives Shares God's Goodness And Greatness To The Next (4-9)

- ⁴ *One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.*
- ⁵ *On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.*
- ⁶ *They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness.*
- ⁷ *They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant **goodness** and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.*
- ⁸ *The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*
- ⁹ *The Lord is **good** to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.*

- V. 4 – Each generation is to pass down a praise to the next
 - This is one of the blessings of a multi-generational church

- Warren Wiersbe: "One of the important obligations of the older generation is to pass on to the younger generation the truth about the Lord. Whether we admit it or not, every local church is one generation short of extinction, and we must obey 2 Timothy 2:2." (*Be Exultant*, Victor Books, 2004, p. 211)

2 Timothy 2:2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

Psalm 71:18 So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.

... to prevent

Judges 2:10 And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel.

- V. 4 Commend
- V. 5 Meditate
- V. 6 Speak/declare
- V. 7 Pour forth, sing
 - "pour forth" means "flow like a bubbling spring" = effervescent
 -
- Antiphony – God's grace, mercy, wrath, love, good
- V. 9 – **Good to ALL**
 - H.C. Leupold: "Israel was often so preoccupied with itself that it forgot or overlooked the fact that God was concerned about all that were His creatures. It redounds to His rich praise that His interest is of such a universal breadth." (*Exposition of the Psalms*, Baker Book House, 1991, p. 977)
 - God is good even to His enemies.
 - Steve Lawson: "God is good to all, even to his enemies, showing them common grace. He is not merely good to the good, but he shows favor to the undeserving, delaying his judgment, extending further opportunities to repent." (*Holman Old Testament Commentary - Psalms 76-150*. B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.)

Matthew 5:45 For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Acts 14:17 Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."

A. God Defines Good – God Is The Ultimate Determiner Of Goodness (Lk 18:18-19; Ps 52:1,3)

- In days of relative values, "goodness" is as diverse as opinion holders.
- What makes "good" good?

- Hebrew *Tob* & *Tub* describe God's goodness (Hebrew words)
- Greek *Agathos* & *Kalos* are NT words
- John Frame: "A good person is one who acts to benefit others ... God is the chief example of goodness." (*The Doctrine Of God*, P&R Publishing, 2002, p. 410)

Luke 18:18-19 ¹⁸ Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹ So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me **good**? No one is **good** but One, that is, God.

Psalm 52:1 David writes " Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The **goodness** of God endures continually."

- Wayne Grudem: "The goodness of God means that God is the final standard of good, and that all that God is and does is worthy of approval." (*Systematic Theology*, p. 197)

"... 'good' can be understood to mean 'worthy of approval,' but we have not answered the question, approval by whom? In one sense, we can say that anything that is truly good should be worthy of approval by us. But in a more ultimate sense, we are not free to decide by ourselves what is worthy of approval and what is not. Ultimately, therefore, God's being and actions are perfectly worthy of his own approval. He is therefore the final standard of good. Jesus implies this when he says, "No one is good but God alone" (Luke 18:19)."

Psalm 52:3 You love evil more than **good**, Lying rather than speaking righteousness. Selah

Ie/ Euthyphro's Dilemma

- Plato's character in his *Dialogue*, Euthyphro, asked if something is good because the gods will it or do the gods will it because it is good?
- Is goodness merely arbitrary?
- Are the gods bound to what is good?
- John Frame: "... some have argued that if we say 'God is good,' but then make God the standard or criterion of goodness, we make the initial claim meaningless. If we say both 'God is good' and 'Good is whatever God is,' then God's 'goodness' could be anything at all. When we make God our standard of goodness, he could hate the righteous, reward wickedness, and betray his friends, but those actions would be good, simply because God did them." (p. 405)
- The key to this argument is a third option splitting the 2 options which is: Goodness is based on the character of God. God's attribute of goodness is the basis and standard of what is good. Thus goodness is not arbitrary nor is God a slave to an outside moral standard.
- William Lane Craig: "Moral options are grounded in the nature and character of God Himself. God's nature is 'the good.'" Thus, God could not have willed otherwise. God's divine commandments flow necessarily from His own nature. Therefore they are not

arbitrary, but necessary expressions of God Himself.” (Podcast: “The Problem Of Evil, Part 4,” Reasonable Faith Ministries, 8/26/07)

- John Frame: “Since goodness is not a human person, some conclude, it must be something impersonal, an abstract object. But when we think of goodness as an attribute of God, we must surely think differently ... God’s goodness is strictly his own. It is not shared by anybody else, but God has imaged it in the creation. Before creation, only God existed, and his goodness was not shared with anyone but the persons of the Trinity. Indeed, it was nothing less than God’s own nature. So God’s goodness is God, and therefore personal.” (p. 406)

B. God Does Good – We Should Not Consider God The Source Of Pain, Suffering And Evil In Our Life (Ps 4:6; 27:13)

Psalm 4:6 There are many who say, 'Who will show us any **good**?' Lord lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.

Psalm 27:13 I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the **goodness** of the LORD in the land of the living.

C. God Dispenses Good – He Is The Ultimate Benefactor Of Goodness (Ezra 3:11; Nah 1:7; Rom 2:4; 11:22)

- A.W. Tozer defines God's goodness as: "that which disposes Him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and full of good will toward men. He is tenderhearted and of quick sympathy, and His unfailing attitude toward all moral beings is open, frank, and friendly. By His nature He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people." (*Knowledge of the Holy*, p.88)
- John S. Feinberg: “As for God, he is morally good, but he also gives his creatures material good to meet their everyday needs.” (*No One Like Him*, Crossway Books, 2001, p. 366)
- Heb. *Hesed* = lovingkindness, compassion, goodness
 - John Frame: “Goodness ... is a very broad concept, but love is more narrowly focused on benevolence. But though love is narrower, it is also theologically richer.” (*The Doctrine Of God*, p. 414)
- Heb. *Yatab* = to be good, pleasing
- Heb. *Rason* = pleasure, delight, favor, good will, acceptance of others

Ezra 3:11 He is **good**, for His loving-kindness is upon Israel forever.

Nahum 1:7 The Lord is **good**, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him

- Gr. *Chrestotes* = kind, helpful

Romans 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His **goodness**, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

Romans 11:22 Therefore consider the **goodness** and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, **goodness**, if you continue in His **goodness**. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

- John S. Feinberg: "When we look at the biblical concept of divine goodness, one major idea stands out. It is that God is concerned about the well-being of his creatures and does things to promote it. Of course, God is interested in doing what is morally good and right, but biblical writers capture that idea by referring to his righteousness and holiness. Moreover, because he does what is righteous and holy in his dealings with all, the result is promotion of their well-being." (*No One Like Him*, p. 366)

D. God Distributes Good Gifts – He Is The Ultimate Source Of Everything Good (Jas 1:17; Mt 7:11)

James 1:17 Every **good** gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

Matthew 7:11 If you then, being evil, know how to give **good** gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give **good** things to those who ask Him!

E. God Directs Things For Good For Those Who Belong To God (Rom 8:28; Gen 50:20)

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for **good** to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Genesis 50:20 As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

VI. Universally, We All Benefit From God's Goodness In Our Lives (10-21)

D. God's Good Works Are Praiseworthy (10-13)

¹⁰ *All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your saints shall bless you!*

¹¹ *They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power,*

¹² *to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.*

¹³ *Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The Lord is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.]*

- Glory, kingdom and power emerges as a theme
- "For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever" (not in the Lord's Prayer in the Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4)
- "kingdom" = 4x, "dominion" = 1x
- V. 13 the parenthesis is suggested by the LXX (Septuagint = Greek translation of the Hebrew OT used by Jesus) for the missing alphabetical letter *Nun* (but is really a reworking of v. 17) – it's not in the original Hebrew

E. God's Good Works Are For Our Benefit (14-16)

14 The Lord upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.

15 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season.

16 You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

- V. 14a – He strengthens the weak
- V. 14b – He promotes the humble
- V. 15 – He feeds the patient
- V. 16 – He satisfies everything that's alive and has needs

F. God's Good Works Are Righteous And Kind To Those Who Call Upon Him (17-21)

17 The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.

18 The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

19 He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.

20 The Lord preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.

21 My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

Conclusion: How Can I Have Victory Over Sins Of Discontentment, Envy And Jealousy?

1. Choice: Take Responsibility For Your Choice To Envy (Envy Is A Choice) (Prov 3:31; 1 Pt 2:1)

Proverbs 3:31 Do not envy the oppressor, and choose none of his ways

1 Peter 2:1 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking

2. Comparison: Toss Away Your Tendency To Compare Yourself With Others (Gal 5:26)

Galatians 5:26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, *envying* one another.

Ie/ A friend of mine who has gotten to know a famous and hugely successful preacher told me that he does not envy the life of that successful preacher. He is so driven and under so much pressure, that it takes a toll on his family and is under great pressure to put out for the publishers, the radio and the church. This successful preacher can handle it because that is the fulfillment to God's call. But it isn't an enviable life for the rest of us who might love the acclaim but would be crushed by the pressure.

3. Carnality: Type Your Envy As A Sinful Work Of The Flesh (1 Cor 3:3-4)

1 Corinthians 3:3-4 ³ For you are still carnal. For where there are *envy*, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? ⁴ For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?

4. Charge: Target Your Zeal Towards The Lord (Prov 23:17)

Proverbs 23:17 Do not let your heart *envy* sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day

5. Charity: Transform Your Heart With Love Towards Others (1 Cor 13:4)

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not *envy*, love does not parade itself, is not puffed up.

ie/ Several years back, a teenage girl confided in me that she was envious of another girl in the same fellowship group. She resolved to pray for the spiritual success of that other girl. That was a positive way to love the one you are envious of.

6. Contentment: Thank God For The Privileges And Opportunities You Do Have (Lk 15:31-32; Phil 1:15-18; Phil 4:11-13)

Luke 15:31-32 ³¹ "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. ³² It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'

Philippians 1:15-18 ¹⁵ Some indeed preach Christ even from *envy* and strife, and some also from goodwill: ¹⁶ The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; ¹⁷ but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁸ What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

ie/ F.B. Meyer shares the story of his struggle with jealousy being in the same London town as Charles Spurgeon who drew great crowds across the town. Then in 1904, G. Campbell Morgan, an American, took a church in London which drew great attention – as Morgan was a world-wide known Bible expositor.

Meyer: "It was easy to pray for the success of G. Campbell Morgan when he was in America. But when he came to England and took a church near to mine, it was something different. The old Adam in me was inclined to jealousy, but I got my heel upon his head, and whether I felt right toward my friend, I determined to act right."

Meyer prayed daily about reviving his pulpit as he worried about losing members to these 2 hot preachers. God brought him to a point of contentment where he was able to write: "See how the Lord helped me out of my difficulty. He (Spurgeon) and Mr. Morgan were so popular, and drew such crowds, that our church caught the overflow, and we had all we could accommodate."

- Cyprian of Carthage: "Concerned about this risk, the Lord—not wanting anyone to fall into the snare of death through jealousy—gave a careful answer when His disciples asked Him who

among them would be the greatest. Jesus replied: 'He who is least among you all—he is the greatest' (Lk. 9:48). With this reply, Jesus removed all grounds for jealousy. He plucked out and tore away every cause and occasion for gnawing envy.

"A disciple of Christ must be neither jealous nor envious. With us there can be no contest for exaltation. It's from humility that we grow to the highest attainments. In this way, Christ taught us how to be pleasing to God." ("On Jealousy and Envy")

- Puritan Richard Baxter: "Direct. XVI. When your desires are over eager, bethink you of the mercies which you have received already and do possess. Hath God done so much for you, and are you still calling for more, even of that which is unnecessary, when you should be giving thanks for what you have? This unthankful greediness is an odious sin. Think what you have already for soul and body, estate and friends; and will not all this quiet you, (even this with Christ and heaven,) unless you have the other lust or fancy satisfied, and unless God humor you in your sick desires?" ("Directions Against Sinful Desires and Discontent")

- **Is God good?**

Philippians 4:11-13 ¹¹I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 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.

- a. **Contentment Is Learned (Phil 4:11)**

Philippians 4:11 ¹¹I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

- Contentment isn't natural to man, it is learned
- It requires a continual mindset of focusing on being satisfied with our relationship with God
- Puritan Richard Baxter: "Ask your hearts seriously whether God in Christ be enough for them, or not? If they say, no, they renounce him and all their hope of heaven; for no man takes God for his God that takes him not for his portion, and as enough for him: if they say, yea, then you have enough to stop the mouth of your fleshly desires, while your hearts confess that they have enough in God. Should that soul that hath a filial interest in God, and an inheritance in eternal life, be eager for any conveniences and contentments to the flesh? If God be not enough for you, you will never have enough. Turn to him more, and know him better, if you would have a satisfied mind." ("Directions Against Sinful Desires and Discontent," <http://www.puritansermons.com/baxter/baxter21.htm>)

- b. **Contentment Is Independent Of Our Circumstance (11b-12a)**

Philippians 4:11b-12a ^{11b} whatever the circumstances. ^{12a}I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty.

- "Contentment is surrender. Paul could be content, he could be patient, because he had given up any right or demand on the people and circumstances around him. For

us, when life goes wrong, our impatience shouts, 'It's not my way, not my timing, not my outcome!' Contentment, on the other hand, holds out open hands before a holy God and says, 'God, Your way, Your timing, Your outcome.'" (Timothy Sanford, "Learning Contentment," Discipleship Journal, Issue #97 January/February 1997)

c. Contentment Is Possible In Every Situation (12b)

Philippians 4:12b ^{12b}I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

- Poor vs. Rich
- Single vs. Dating/Marriage
- Last generation X-Box vs. New generation X-Box
- Strict family vs. permissive family
- Church focusing on God's righteousness vs. World focusing on sin

d. Contentment Is Finding Strength In God To Be Satisfied In Every Circumstance (13)

Philippians 4:13 ¹³I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

- When we are unable to produce an inner attitude of contentment, we come to God and He gives us the ability to be content
- Is salvation enough, or are we expecting something else from God?
- Is seeking after God boring compared to the world? Then you haven't really found God. He's more exciting than what the world has to offer.
- That's why "FAITH" is important.

2 Corinthians 9:8 ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work

Discussion:

1. Do we manifest our discontent more through jealousy or envy? Why? What triggers these emotions?
2. How does 1 Timothy 6:5-11 put contentment in perspective for us?
3. When is godly jealousy appropriate in our lives?
4. Relate at least 3 reasons that "Life is Good" because "God is Good" for you.
5. How does God's goodness relate to His other attributes like "love," "righteousness," "justice," and "mercy"?

Appendix 1: Contentment and 1 Timothy 6:5-11

1 Timothy 6:5-11 ⁵and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. ⁶But godliness with **contentment** is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸But if we have food and clothing, we will be **content** with that. ⁹People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have

wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. ¹¹But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

A. If Godliness Is Our Goal, Contentment Is Our Reward; If Materialism Is Our Goal, Discontentment Is Our Plight (5-6)

1 Timothy 6:5-6 ⁵and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. ⁶But **godliness** with **contentment** is great gain.

- “constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to great gain.”
 - False teachers taught the being godly is a means to financial wealth
 - Or under the guise of godliness one pursues financial gain – the sale of indulgences by the Roman Catholic Church -
 - Ie/ Similar to the philosophy of the Health & Wealth Gospel propagates today
 - “There [Paul] ‘turned the tables’ on the Stoics by declaring that genuine *autarkeia* is not *self*-sufficiency but *Christ*-sufficiency.” (Gordon Fee, cited by George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, NIGTC, p. 253)
- “godliness”
 - Being like God
 - Content in God for our every need
- “contentment” = Gr. αὐτάρκεια = *autarkeia* = auto - self and the Gr. word for "sufficient"
- *Makarios* - means "happy, fortunate, blissful"
 - Homer used it to describe a wealthy man
 - Plato - one who is successful in business
 - used to speak of the Greek gods who were happy within themselves because they stood above the afflictions of poverty, disease, misfortune and death
 - it does not describe a person who looks for happiness in outward circumstances but finds happiness within themselves
 - there is contentment with ones circumstance
- ie/ "In secular Greek, the Island of Cyprus was called the "*makarios*" isle, the blest isle. The idea was that those who lived on Cyprus never had to leave its shores in order to have all they needed to be content. They had natural resources and minerals. They had a beautiful place to live with fruit and flowers. The island was self-contained. No one had to search for the needs and wants of life." (Haddon Robinson, *The Christian Salt and Light Company*)
- all we need is contained in God
 - **Q: How is godliness related to contentment?**
 - **Q: What do we really want more of? God or money?**

- More of God = godliness
- More of Money = greediness
- You can have money, but if you have more of God – we view money as a steward
- If you have money, but have less God – we view money as an entitlement, something we deserved or earned for ourselves
- Greed – never enough
- Ie/ Billionaire Howard Hughes asked how much is enough – response: One dollar more.
- Ie. Solomon got lost in his greed

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 ¹⁰I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my work, and this was the reward for all my labor. ¹¹Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.

- Jerry Bridges: "Acceptance means that you accept your circumstances from God, trusting that He unerringly knows what is best for you and that in His love. He purposes only that which is best. Having ten reached a state of acceptance, you can ask God to let you use your difficult circumstances to glorify Him. In this way you have moved from the attitude of a victim to an attitude of stewardship. You begin to ask, 'God, how can I use my disability (or whatever the difficult circumstance may be) to serve You and glory You?' (Respectable Sins, p. 75)
- Viktor Frankl, a Jewish psychiatrist and Nazi concentration survivor: "The way in which a man accepts his fate and all the sufferings it entails, the way in which he takes up his cross, gives him ample opportunity—even under the most difficult circumstances—to add a deeper meaning to life."

B. We Were Born To Be Taken Care Of – God Will Take Care Of Us (7)

1 Timothy 6:7 ⁷For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

- Birth begins with no possessions
- Death ends with no possessions
- And the Lord takes care of us in this lifetime
- You can't take it with you.
- You never see a hearst carrying a U-Haul
- Ie/ Many Asian religions hold to Ancestor Worship which burns paper homes, cars and money for the deceased to use in the after-life. They're trusting the next generation to take care of them in this superstition than the Eternal God? We have a better alternative.

C. What More Do We Really Need Besides Basic Sustenance? (8)

1 Timothy 6:8 ⁸But if we have food and clothing, we will be **content** with that.

- We will be content (future tense, taken care of forward) with food and clothing.
- "food" (Gr. *Diatrophas*)
- "clothing" (Gr. *Skepasmata*) = original word means "shelter" or "covering"
- "content" (Gr. *Arkeo*) – future tense
- What do we really **need?** Food, clothing and a roof.
- IE/ When we go on vacation – just bring clothes and money for food. Whatever is in our suitcase and carryon is what we really need for a week or 2.
- IE/ Travel to Bibleville for 4 months – just bring essentials, not a lot of extras

Matthew 6:11 Give us today our daily bread.

D. God Frees Us By Providing Every Need; Greed And Temptation Destructively Traps (9)

1 Timothy 6:9 ⁹People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.

- Those "who want to get rich" – greed
- "fall" – *empipto* – continuous falling
- "temptation" – enticement to sin
 - Gr. *Epithumia*
 - *Epi* = over
 - *Thumia* = desire
- "trap" (Gr. *Pagis*) = snare, trap
 - Imagery of Satan laying a trap for men
- "foolish" (*anoetous*) – senseless
- "harmful" (*blaberas*) – damaging to one's character
- "plunge" (*buthizo*) – sink, downward course
- Result: "ruin and destruction"
 - "ruin" (*olethron*) = general destruction
 - "destruction" (*apoleian*) = "destruction of the soul" (Homer Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 189)

IE/ Jack Benny when approached by an armed robber is confronted with: "Your money or your life!" Jack Benny paused. The robber impatiently asked "Well?" Jack replied, "Don't rush me"

IE/ Old, rich man in misery - visited rabbi who took him by the hand and led him to a window

Rabbi asked: "What do you see?"

Man: "I see men, women, and children"

Rabbi led him to a mirror: "Now what do you see?"

Man: "Now I see myself"

Then the rabbi said "Behold, in the window there is glass, and in the mirror there is glass. But the glass of the mirror is covered with a little silver, and no sooner is the silver added than you cease to see others, but you see only yourself."

- Beware of the silver in your life - don't let it blind you to others.

E. Loving God Is Foundational To Contentment And Joy; Loving Money Is Foundational To Evil And Grief (10)

1 Timothy 6:10 ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

- "love of money is a root of all kinds of evil"
 - "love of money" = *philarguria* (love = *phileo*, silver = *arguria*)
 - **Not what you own, but what owns you**
- "wandered from the faith"
- "pierced themselves with many griefs" – picture of plunging themselves with a sword (harkari style) with grief

Ecclesiastes 5:10-12 ¹⁰Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. ¹¹As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them? ¹²The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep.

- V. 10 – love money – never satisfied
- V. 11 – the more you have, the more people who will try to leech off you
- V. 12 – the more you have, the more you worry about what you have

- MONEY WILL BUY: (written by anonymous)
 - A bed, but not sleep.
 - Books, but not brains.
 - Food, but not appetite.
 - A house, but not a home.
 - Medicine, but not health.
 - Amusement, but not happiness.
 - Finery, but not beauty.
 - A crucifix, but not a Savior.

F. Pursue The Inner Qualities Of Godliness, Flee The Traps Of Greed And Lust (11)

1 Timothy 6:11 ¹¹But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

- "flee" = tense: keep on fleeing, don't stop, look and get distracted – keep running

- If you run **from** something, then you have to run **to** something
- **Righteousness** – live being “right” with God
Mt 6:33 "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness"
- **Godliness** - 8th and final time used in this epistle
- **Faith** - daily walk of trusting in Christ
- **Love** - AGAPE – sacrificial
- **Patience** - *hupomone* - to remain under, steadfast under difficult circumstances
- **Gentleness** - not weakness, but power under control
- “Hedonism” – pursue please, avoid pain
- Hedonistic paradox: get everything you want – bored; not get everything you want – frustrated

Appendix 2: What's Your Contentment Quotient?

The following quiz can help you examine your personal level of contentment.

T F I struggle frequently with envy or jealousy toward others.

T F I'm satisfied with my marriage and family.

T F I like the way my standard of living compares with my friends'.

T F I often feel like something is missing from my life.

T F My paycheck is sufficient to meet my needs and most of my wants.

T F Most of my dreams and goals for my life have been fulfilled.

T F I feel good about my job.

T F I often struggle with disappointment about how my life has turned out.

T F Most of the time I feel inferior to other people.

T F My present life is pretty much in line with my expectations.

T F I'm easily irritated when things don't go my way.

(by Timothy L. Sanford, “Learning Contentment,” Discipleship Journal, Issue #97, January/February 1997)