

Breaking Free from the Money Trap

Live Simply

Cultivating Contentment

I Timothy 6:6-8

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Jan. 21, 2018

In **I Timothy 6:6-19** God tells us what to do so that we can keep from stepping into the money trap. God calls us to live simply by cultivating contentment.

I. Learn How to Celebrate What You Do Have Instead of Focusing On What You Don't

I Timothy 6:6 “But godliness with contentment is great gain.”

Paul was affirming that those who think godliness leads to great gain were correct, as long as that godliness is coupled with contentment!

He's defining wealth or gain in a way that our world cannot fathom, because his letters and mind were filled with the riches of knowing Christ and the eternal inheritance that we have.

Without contentment butted up against whatever you have, it'll never be enough!

Stinginess is not the reason most of us don't give away more money. It's fear. No matter how much we have, we think we might need more. That's our sinful default setting from birth which won't go away on it's own. It's something we have to lean into and learn to overcome.

In **Philippians 4:10-13, 19**, Paul gives his personal testimony of how he had to learn this.

II. Never Let What Used to Be Luxuries Turn into Necessities

Keep recognizing they are luxuries and not necessities. The sinful heart keeps shifting everything up, so that what used to be luxury is now a necessity.

I Timothy 6:8 “And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.”

Paul was using ‘food and clothing’ as symbols of life's necessities. His expression is a figure of speech known as a synecdoche, in which part of something refers to the whole. Jesus did the same thing in the Sermon On the Mount.

Matthew 6:25, 31-33 “Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?... Therefore, do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ... For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

The human heart has the power to blind you to how much you have, because we're usually looking up at others ahead of us in our socioeconomic bracket instead of looking around us at others who have far less.

We do need Christians living at every level so that we can reach every body for Christ.

I Timothy 6:17-18 makes that clear.

"If our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we wish we could do and cannot do because our giving expenditure excludes them." –C.S. Lewis

If you're a Christian that's been shaped by the Gospel, the older you get, the more successful you are, and the more money you have, the more distance there should be between how you could be living and how you do live, because you're kingdom-minded.

III. Recognize that Everything You Have in this Life is a Given Not a Gotten

I Timothy 6:7 "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."

We enter the world naked and exit the world naked. Everything we have in between is on loan. You can't hang onto anything in this life as a source of security.

Being naked in this sense is to be vulnerable, insecure, and defenseless. Paul is reminding us that we come into this world as a helpless, vulnerable baby and in our final moments before we die our lives are just as helpless and vulnerable.

- Do you have the riches of Christ that can never be taken from you or will you be standing before God spiritually bankrupt?

When you put your faith in Jesus Christ, you are clothed with peace, safety, forgiveness and the righteousness of Christ that could never be bought with money but was paid for with the precious blood of Jesus.