

**Sermon or Lesson: 1 Timothy 6:5c-8** (NIV based)  
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Godliness With Contentment

INTRO: What is your purpose in life? What are you working at the hardest, spending the most time at achieving? What is the main thing you seek out of life? What are your goals in life?

ILLUSTRATION: show newspaper clippings of a new car, van, home, boat, motorcycle, etc.

Let's find out what God says about our life goals.

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READ: 1 Timothy 6:5c-8, with vv.3-5b for context

BACKGROUND: In our previous study of 1 Timothy 6:4b-5b, we learned that:

- - Directly correlating to their adopting of false doctrine, teachers of false doctrine are pervasively corrupted in their thinking and pervasively deprived of the truth. (v.5a-b)
- - And by their nature, teachers of false doctrines use debating and arguing as a primary means by which to establish themselves as credible teachers of Scriptures, a main objective that they want to achieve for themselves in life. (v.4b)
- - So consequently, through the debating and arguing about their false doctrines, teachers of false doctrines perpetrate a variety of evil behaviors in the churches and ministries that they are in from their striving to establish themselves as credible teachers of Scriptures. (vv.4c-5a)

v.5c - READ

[Lesson Question: What are their calculations and the results from the determination by teachers of false doctrines that godliness is a means to their financial gain?]

SECTION POINT: Teachers of false doctrines corrupt their godliness by supposing that godliness is a means to their financial gain.

**"and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain."**

- - Teachers of false doctrines "think" or "suppose" that possessing godliness can be advantageous in acquiring financial gain for themselves. (Strong's #3543)
- - They already have a deep and intense desire to be revered and respected as being authentic, credible, and highly-knowledgeable "teachers of the law", even though in reality "they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm". (vv.1:7; 6:3-4)
- - So, from their corrupted perspective and their tainted perception of the truth and reality (v.6:5), teachers of false doctrines decide and take ownership in this line of flawed reasoning, that godliness is a means to financial gain.

- - Subsequently, they implement their version of godliness in their life in a manner that cultivates and capitalizes on opportunities to make money that are generated from their type of godliness.
  - - They strategize that if they can successfully present themselves as a very knowledgeable teacher of Scriptures and as a man or woman of elevated godliness - looking, sounding, and acting godly - then other people will want to pay them money to minister to them.
  - - In effect then, teachers of false doctrines as well as some other persons in ministry try to monetize godliness, to financially capitalize on their reputation and status they are trying to build, establish, and exalt in the church or ministry.
  - - But God has a problem with this approach - the motivation for pursuing godliness is driven by an impure desire to financially gain for oneself.
  - - "No one" can successfully serve both masters - godliness and desire for wealth. (Matthew 6:24, from Strong's #3126 with AHD 'avarice')
  - - This and other perverted motives that teachers of false doctrines and some other ministry persons hold corrupt their thinking, their perspective, their doctrines, their speaking, their teaching, their behaviors, and their godliness.
  - - And thereby, the corruption of their godliness hinders them from attaining true godliness that God approves of. (cf. 1 Timothy 4:16; 5:22)
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## v.6 - READ

[Lesson Question: Why and how is the statement in verse 6 true?]

SECTION POINT: Living in godliness with contentment creates conditions from which God will bring blessings.

- - God says that the correct way to regard godliness is to connect it with contentment and then consider that composite as an end or completion or fulfillment of "satisfaction", rather than as a means toward acquiring something else that is desired. (Strong's #0841)
  - - In other words, put godliness into effect in your life comprehensively, which must include being content with what you have as long as you have the basic necessities of life.
  - - This perspective and approach to the conditions of your life will produce "great gain" for you, not necessarily financially or materially, but certainly spiritually and morally - great gain in relation to God and what proceeds from Him in the present and the future.
  - - We have a choice to pursue present financial gain, which comes at the expense of missing out on all of the benefits from God that come from pursuing contented godliness.
  - - We also have a choice to pursue contented godliness, which likewise comes at a cost - declining to act on opportunities that would materially raise the level of one's lifestyle and/or living conditions.
  - - But living by this choice of contented godliness significantly requires some living by faith.
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[Lesson Question: Analyze and explain how the principles in verses 7 and 8 provide reasons for the assertion in verse 6, and then draw a conclusion as to how we are to put all of this into effect in our life.]

SECTION POINT: Living in godliness with contentment requires a restructuring of our value system.

v.7 - READ

- - All of the material things in this life are temporal, existing for us only while we are in this life, after which we leave them all here and pass into the existence that God has awaiting us next.
- - We bring no material things with us when we are born, and likewise we take no material things with us when we die.
- - Therefore, during our life, we would be wise to carefully focus and invest our time, effort, and resources into aspects of life that will hold their value into the next life.
- - Considering that God is the One who determines and establishes all of the aspects of the next life, we will need to search Scriptures to ascertain, follow, and produce what He says will hold its value into the next life.

v.8 - READ

- - And while we are striving to live this life in ways that God says have long-term value, we are to structure and maintain our thinking to embrace the reality that technically all we need to survive are the basic necessities of life, of which two are "food and clothing".
  - - So if we have the basic necessities of life each day, then we are to "be content with that" and stay focused on pursuing in fullness the godly living that God says has value.
  - - Literally, concretely, and substantively, we shift our contentment off of material things and onto God, through faith.
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BIG IDEA: Each of us would be wise to restructure our value system to henceforth diligently and comprehensively pursue contented godly living that produces the things that God says have long-term value.

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IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS:

- - For those of us who teach or preach the Scriptures or lead a ministry, do you hold as a motive a desire to acquire financial gain from being godly?
- - Exactly what role does financial gain play in your ministry activities? Take a few minutes to truthfully identify every aspect in which financial gain plays a role in your ministry activities and functioning.
- - Do you use your godliness or manipulate within your ministry functioning in order for you to gain financially?
- - If you use godliness in any manner that is influenced by a desire for you to gain financially, then God says here in verse 5 that He regards your approach to godliness as being impure - defective. (cf. v.5:22)

- - And if your approach to godliness is defective, then your approach to doing ministry is also defective because it is fundamentally produced from your approach to godliness. (vv.6:9-10)

- - Essentially, you "have been robbed of the truth" to some degree, your thinking is at least somewhat corrupted, and consequently probably some of your doctrines are in error as well. (vv.5,3)

- - Perhaps you should take some personal time this week to thoroughly review and analyze your ministry activities and functioning to make all of the necessary corrections that stem from your motives so that your approach to godliness is pure and is not influenced by a desire for you to gain financially.

- - For all of the rest of us here, how do you regard godliness for your life?

-- Do you regard godliness in your life as a means for you to gain financially?

----- Or to gain material things?

----- Or to gain status or reputation?

----- Or to gain a position of authority?

----- Or to gain power to exert control?

----- Or to gain appeasement of a god you perceive as angry?

----- Or to gain appeasement of an angry spouse?

----- Or rather than actually possessing godliness in your life, do you instead merely project godliness as a façade in order to gain one or more of these desired results for yourself?

- - Where is your level of contentment?

- - Do you establish your contentment based primarily on material things that you want as you go through life? Or on status or reputation? Or on authority or control? Or on self-indulging? Or on some kind of physical or emotional high or ecstasy?

- - Have you ever achieved pervasive contentment in your life? And if so, was that contentment virtuously derived? And for how long? A week, maybe - when you went on vacation and became totally immersed in its very fun and enjoyable activities?

- - Do you now comprehend that pursuing contentment aside from God will ultimately prove to be futile for the long-term?

- - Do you now also comprehend that pursuing godliness without simultaneously establishing and maintaining contentment is deficient of what God intends and desires to bless you for?

- - Are you devoting your focus, time, and effort on pursuits that will ultimately prove to be futile for the long-term?

- - Be content with the basic necessities of life and pursue godly living that produces the things that God says have long-term value.

- - And for those of you who are not a true believer in Jesus as the Christ, that He died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins and rose from the dead, "what good will it be for you if you gain the whole world, yet forfeit your soul"? (Matthew 16:26)

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[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - Contemplate and list all of the things in your life that will be important for you in 100 years from now - when you have died. Then compare each of those to what has been important to you in your life up until now. Is there any insight you can glean from this comparison?

- - In regard to contentment and the acquisition of things, how much is enough? How much should we be content with? Where should we draw the line? Exactly where does God draw the line for contentment? Define specifics in your answers for each of these questions.

- - If someone were to ask you, "What is wrong with pursuing financial or material wealth as long as it does not consume us?", what would be your response to that question?]

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Works Cited:

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