

## What the Bible Says About Money Contentment and Peace

I'm currently writing a series about what the Bible has to say about money. The last post was about debt. I explored whether or not it is a sin to be in debt, how debt limits opportunities, and the challenge of facing difficult times, or trials in our lives.

This week is about contentment and peace. One of the most well known scriptures on the subject is from the book of Philippians. Paul wrote this book while in prison and gave us an incredible example of faith to follow.

*I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity....I can do all thing through Him who strengthens me (Philippians 4:11-13).*

### ***Culture discourages contentment***

There is a great encouragement for discontentment in our society today. Sounds crazy, doesn't it? Why would anyone want to encourage us to be discontent?

Let's think about it for a moment. For example, advertisements do a great job of first telling you why you need their product and then sharing the solution.

Perhaps it's because you're thirsty. Or, maybe it's because you have a problem and need a solution. Or, you'll be better looking if you have the latest fashions of clothing. Yes, the job of the advertisement is to establish some discontentment in some area of your life and communicate how they can serve that need.

### ***Formula for contentment***

But it may not just be the advertisers that creates discontentment. An article by Crown Financial Ministries mentions that we are not born intuitively content. Rather, we have to learn how to become content with our situation. The article provides what I think is a key formula to getting to this point.

*Knowing + Doing + Trust = Contentment*

First, we must know that God requires us to handle money and possessions wisely. Secondly, we must act upon these requirements. Yes, knowing is just part of the equation. We must then take action as financial stewards. Finally, we have to trust that God will provide exactly what he knows is best for us.

I see contentment becoming an issue in a couple of different ways. First, we can be discontent about our possessions. Perhaps we always want something new, or something we don't have. We may not act upon those feelings, but it's a constant battle within and it disrupts peace in our lives.

Next, we have all the feelings of discontentment but take it to the next step and act upon those feelings. This may include purchasing something we can't afford. We initially get that sense of relief, but then later our hearts are discontent again as we move from the new item to yet something else we need to have.

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### *Coveting and greed*

If we want something that is owned by someone else, we are coveting what that other person possesses. Greed is the excessive desire for something.

So, in the above example, the coveting can lead to discontentment. We see our neighbor's new car and want what the same for ourselves. If we can't stop thinking about the new car (it fills all of our thoughts) and have an excessive desire for it; we are at that point experiencing greed.

Excessive thoughts, or greed, most commonly come in wanting to acquire more money. All reason and logic can go out the door at this point because the person desires the money above everything else. Several things start to become impacted such as relationships and ethical decisions.

### *Abundance of possessions isn't in the plan*

The Bible says life does not consist of the abundance of possessions.

*Then he said to them, Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions (Luke, 12:15, NIV).*

If we go back to the equation provided by Crown, we have to know our requirements in managing money, act upon or perform those requirements and trust God to provide what He knows is best for us.

So, the neighbor's new car may look great. It may be the car we've always wanted. But, we have to determine if it is affordable, or a wise decision to purchase.

Perhaps not, and so we have to wait until we've saved enough money knowing God will provide if it's meant for us to have the possession. Or, perhaps it is within our budgetary limits and will not result in debt.

### *Simplifying life*

Have you ever stopped to think about how much work goes into owning some possessions? Some possessions take all of our time and energy from us. I know that a lot of possessions require more space. Some possessions require ongoing maintenance. And some possessions steal all of our time away from family and friends.

So, how do we know when contentment becomes an issue? According to Crown, some of the warning signs may include the following: constant worry about financial matters, consumed with thinking about money, no contentment about anything and financial arguments with your spouse.

First, I think it's important to realize or rather focus on the fact that we can't take anything with us when we pass away. Steering our focus to possessions, wealth, etc. is any empty pursuit.

*What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul (Mark 8:36-37)?*

And second, we can try to live a simple life. We sometimes just make it too complicated!

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*Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12).*

Now I don't take this to mean we should all pack up, roll up our sleeves and go work on the land with our hands. Rather, I think about how difficult we make it for ourselves sometimes. As I suggested, some possessions steal all of our time away from family and friends. The constant pursuit of them leads to wanting more. If we are able to slow down and find peace and comfort in what has been provided, we can begin to live a more simple life know matter where we live.

### ***Is it wrong to be wealthy?***

I think it's important to mention there is nothing wrong with being wealthy. But we must have the proper attitude towards the possessions that have been entrusted to us.

*Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share (1 Timothy 6:17-18).*

### ***What do you think about what the Bible says about being content?***

*Each of the posts from the Bible and Money series are based on principles discussed during Money Map Coaching sessions and the [Money Map Coach participants' guide](#). You can learn more about [Money Map Coaching at Crown Financial Ministries](#). You can also visit my [Money Map Coaching page](#).*