



FINDING CONTENTMENT

BIG IDEA: The family of God is called to model a different way of life to the outside world.

DATE: Wednesday, October 22 and Sunday, October 26, 2025

SCRIPTURE: 1 Timothy 6:6-19

OPENING QUESTION

What is something that makes you happy? What would most people say they need to feel secure and peaceful?

A steady job with good benefits provides most people with confidence in their economic security. Good reports from a doctor contribute to a sense of physical wellbeing. Being surrounded by smart, competent, and responsible people can also make us feel safe. Also, healthy relationships free of strife contributes to our sense of peace and security.

ASK: Now how would you define contentment?

Today we are going to look at how as Christians we are to model a different way of life, especially in where we find our contentment and sense of security. Knowing our purpose in life helps us to walk confidently into the future.

SETTING THE STAGE

Paul concludes his first letter to Timothy with a timeless charge for believers to recognize they are called to live transformed lives for Christ. Furthermore, the family of God is called to model this different way of living to the outside world. Paul calls Timothy and the believers in Ephesus to have the courage to do so. The same call from Paul extends to us today.

This final section can certainly be seen as an indictment against modern Western society, in which people are absorbed by the relentless pursuit of wealth. Our society often views money as the highest and greatest good. People trip over one another in their pursuit of riches and financial security. They bring about their own ruin by their greed.

Ironically, all of this is done in the name of *contentment*. The old saying that “money can't buy happiness” is given lip service today, but not much else. In fact, most of the messages we receive from the world are that if we just had a little bit more money... *then* we would be truly happy. Life soon becomes the pursuit of happiness regardless of the cost to anyone else. We feel it is a basic human right. But in reality, it is a basic human wrong.

Paul tackles these misguided pursuits head-on. He provides specific details to Timothy on how to organize the church into a healthy community where God's grace is worked out and brings contentment to all its members. He gives instruction on pursuing worthwhile virtues that will

actually lead to contentment and makes it clear that genuine faith in God, our good Creator, leads us in an entirely different direction than our self-centered pursuits.

STUDY THE BIBLE

1 Timothy 6:6-19

⁶ Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. ⁷ After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. ⁸ So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content. ⁹ But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

¹¹ But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have declared so well before many witnesses. ¹³ And I charge you before God, who gives life to all, and before Christ Jesus, who gave a good testimony before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴ that you obey this command without wavering. Then no one can find fault with you from now until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. ¹⁵ For, *At just the right time Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only almighty God, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords.* ¹⁶ *He alone can never die, and he lives in light so brilliant that no human can approach him. No human eye has ever seen him, nor ever will. All honor and power to him forever! Amen.*

¹⁷ Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. ¹⁹ By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.

DISCUSSION

READ: 1 Timothy 6:6-10

Paul asserts that the true sign of godliness is contentment. What does he consider necessary to achieve this state of contentment? (see verses 6-8)

According to Paul, what happens to those who only desire to be rich? What does he state is the root or source of all this evil? (see verses 9-10)

How does loving money lead to destruction?

- Scores of marriages and families break apart when someone chases wealth instead of relationships.
- The mountains of debt accumulated from the desire for material things threaten to leave people without resources.
- Those who end up in the lap of luxury often find themselves there without the deeper purposes of life to give them meaning.

ASK your group to reflect on this question without answering out loud: If someone examined our calendars and bank statements, what kind of values would be revealed? Would they be any different from a nonbeliever?

READ: 1 Timothy 6:11-16

Paul exhorts Timothy to not only reject the false teachings in the church but also to flee from the false belief that wealth brings contentment. What qualities does he state that Timothy should instead pursue? What should he seek to possess? (see verses 11-12).

The titles Paul bestows on God affirmed God's sovereignty. What characteristics of God does Paul emphasize in this passage? (see verses 15-16).

What phrases does Paul use to remind Timothy of whom he serves?

How does worldly wealth compare to the riches of God's grace?

READ 1 Timothy 6:17-19

There is evidence that the Ephesian church included a sizable contingent of well-to-do believers. There were also slaves, widows in need, and people from all socioeconomic levels. What is Paul's concern with this well-to-do contingent? What advice does Paul offer Timothy for discipling them? (verses 17-19).

How do we show others that our faith isn't in our wealth?

- Just as our neighbors see where we live and the cars we drive, they also should be able to observe the way we live—in faith and service to Christ.
- Generosity includes service and performing good works, not just giving money to a cause.
- If we have visible means of support, those who are rich in worldly goods also must also bear witness to their invisible support found only in Jesus Christ.

What is more important than building financial security? (verse 19) Are you generously stewarding the blessings God has given you?

RESPONSE

Circle up in groups of 3 and discuss these thoughts together:

- In what area of your life do you currently lack contentment? (maybe your job, house, finances, friendships, family, faith, health, etc.)
- How can you pursue true contentment throughout your day? Do you tend to focus on the positives or the negatives?
- Commit to pray for one another this week in the pursuit of contentment and generosity.

PRAYER EXERCISE: Ask your group to open their hands as a symbol of surrender as you pray. Lord, we know that everything above nothing is a gift from You. Help us to release any grip we have on what we think we need for contentment or security. Help us live with our hands and hearts open and ready to give generously to those in need. Guide us to be wise and good stewards with our blessings. May we find our true contentment not in the temporary but the eternal. Lord, we want to model a different way of life to the outside world, so they are drawn to You. Amen.

VERSES 6-8

Paul issued a warning against greed and depending on one's wealth for security. He reminded Timothy that true *contentment* can only be found in *godliness*. The word *but* contrasts his next statement with what he had written previously regarding those who "think that godliness is a means to financial gain" (v. 5). These depraved persons had deviated from the sound teachings of Christ in pursuit of personal wealth.

In verse 3 Paul equated teachers of false doctrine with people who rejected proper teaching about godliness. They sought to give legitimacy to their materialistic values (v. 5). Paul reminded Timothy that true *gain* lies not with one's affluence but by being contented with godliness. The term *godliness* involves an attitude that focuses on God and results in a devout life. Paul had already written about the importance of godliness several times in this epistle. (See 2:2; 3:16; 4:7,8; and 5:4.) He also used the term in 6:11. He wanted the church to understand that the proper goal in life was not one's financial status but a right relationship with God.

The biblical view of contentment is quite different from the Stoic concept of accepting whatever comes one's way as inevitable and unchangeable. Paul equated contentment with godliness. Believers can be content with a life focused on the Lord. We view whatever we have materially as being received from God's hand. As such, we can be at peace.

Paul's statement in verse 7 could be a paraphrase of Job 1:21. The first half acknowledges that everything we have has come from God because *we brought nothing into the world*. Even life itself is a gift from the Lord.

Many people wrongly equate success with having a certain standard of living. Some people spend their lives trying to amass wealth and possessions. Many people wrongly equate success with having a certain standard of living. Paul reminded Timothy that having *food and clothing* was sufficient. Anything else was a blessing but unnecessary. Therefore, believers should *be content with that*, meaning the basic necessities of life.

Paul's words echo Jesus' message in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus specifically pointed to these two issues of food and clothing. Christ taught His followers to seek first God's kingdom, trusting the Father to provide their daily needs (Matt. 6:25-34).

VERSES 9-10

Notice the contrast between those who are content with God's provision versus *those who want to get rich*. The emphasis is on their desires. Paul was not denouncing people who had been blessed materially, but he wanted believers not to fall into temptation by having wealth as their goal in life.

The lust for affluence is a *trap*. Paul used a word picture that portrays persons who lust for wealth as falling into a snare much like a wild animal being trapped as it pounces on the bait. Instead of finding fulfillment, they are taken captive by their *many foolish and harmful desires*. They are slaves to their lusts, always wanting more and never being satisfied.

Notice the three parallel terms: *temptation*, *trap*, and *desires*. While each word has attributes distinct from the others, they lead to the same result: *ruin and destruction*. These twin terms repeat similar

meanings to emphasize the devastation that these people will experience. This statement does not mean that people who pursue riches will not gain much material wealth or that they will fail in business. Instead, they lose spiritually. Having gained the whole world, they miss what is most important. (See Matt. 16:26.)

Paul did not denounce money itself; *the love of money* is the problem. A materialistic value system creates a desire for financial gain that is *a root of all kinds of evil*. Paul did not list examples but merely recognized the wide range of sins associated with greed. Some people *are eager for money*. The words *eager for* connotes reaching out with strong desire to take something. Even believers can fall prey to this lure. After previously being a steadfast companion, love for the world eventually led Demas to forsake Paul (2 Tim. 4:10). Like Demas, some people who crave money had *wandered from the faith*. Paul did not mean they had lost their salvation. Rather, they were like sheep who wandered away from the shepherd as they sought greener pastures. These believers followed their desires into unfruitful lives. Instead of finding contentment, they ended up restless and wounded.

Instead of falling into such deception, believers can find purpose and contentment by pursuing godliness. Focusing on the kingdom of God and His righteousness, we can be at peace knowing He will provide all we really need. (See Matt. 6:33.)

TRUE RICHES (1 TIM. 6:11-16)

VERSE 11

Paul used the word *but* to contrast Timothy with the materialistic people described in the previous verses. While those persons were motivated by greed, Paul knew Timothy was a *man of God*. Perhaps no greater compliment could be paid than to be known as a person who belongs to God. Although Timothy was still relatively young, his devotion to the Lord had gained the respect of Paul and the church.

Paul encouraged Timothy to *flee from all this*, referring back to the cravings for money that trapped other people. Certainly this phrase could be applied to many temptations, including sexual enticements, but the context focuses on materialistic desires. The word *flee* pictures someone running away to escape danger.

Not only should Timothy flee desires that could destroy him, Paul wanted him to *pursue* positive qualities that would build him up. Timothy should seek godly characteristics with the same intensity that he should take flight from sinful ones. Paul did not try to give an exhaustive list of character traits but offered six important ones that characterize a godly person.

The first three qualities describe one's relationship with God. *Righteousness* is not the self-righteous arrogance of people who believed they merited God's favor because they follow religious rules. True righteousness is bestowed by God through faith in Christ. (See Phil. 3:9; Rom. 3:22.). Similarly, *godliness* is not the personal piety of the law-keeper, but a heart that desires to please God. Both qualities require *faith*, sincere trust in God demonstrated by obedience.

The second group of qualities focuses on Timothy's relationship with other people. To *love* with God's love begins with receiving the love of Christ and allowing that love to flow to others. *Endurance* applies to the believer's perseverance in difficult circumstances. Finally, Christians should seek to be known for *gentleness*. This characteristic should not be mistaken as weakness but the strength to deal with others humbly rather than harshly.

VERSE 12

Timothy should also *fight the good fight of the faith*. The word for *fight* means to strive or contend with diligence. The term suggested an imagery from athletics, similar to usage in other epistles. (See 1 Cor. 9:25; Col. 1:29.) This was a *good fight*, worthy of commitment.

Similarly, Timothy should *take hold of the eternal life* to which he was *called*. Paul was not saying Timothy was not saved. He wanted the young preacher to live with an eternal perspective as he resisted the false teachers and led the church. Timothy already *made a good confession* of his salvation. He was not timid about his profession of faith but made it *in the presence of many witnesses*. He was not boastful but grateful for the life he had received in Christ.

VERSES 13-14

Paul charged Timothy with a strong admonition. He again invoked the heavenly witnesses of *God* and *Christ Jesus*. In using this familiar formula, Paul was not emphasizing the distinctiveness of the two, as if Jesus were not equal with the Father. Instead, he used these designations to appeal to these two Persons of the Godhead.

Paul referred to God as the *One who gives life to everything*. Paul also made the point that Jesus *before Pontius Pilate made the good confession*. This dual reference built on what Paul had previously said about Timothy in verse 12. Timothy could not have eternal life had it not been given by God through Christ. Similarly, Timothy's profession was preceded by that of Jesus who did not shy away from His declaration of truth even when confronted by a powerful opponent.

Paul charged Timothy to *keep this command*. By *command*, Paul was referencing the previous statements regarding Timothy's faithfulness in verses 11 and 12. This was not a suggestion. Paul earnestly called Timothy to take this admonition seriously. The phrase *without spot or blame* further emphasized the fidelity Paul expected from Timothy. The first term emphasized the moral nature of his charge while the second focused on the need to live beyond reproach or criticism.

Paul did not necessarily expect Timothy to live *until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The early church expected Christ to return at any moment. However, this phrase meant that Timothy should carry out the command for the rest of his life. He was to persevere faithfully regardless of the circumstances or consequences.

VERSES 15-16

God would bring about the Second Coming *in his own time*. Paul was content to trust God. He alone is *the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords*. This three-fold appellation emphasized God's sovereignty over all things, including the timing of Christ's return.

Continuing the exaltation of God, Paul rose higher in eloquent descriptions of His glory. Unlike any other, *God alone is immortal*. Only God is without beginning or ending. He also *lives in unapproachable light*. This description did not mean God is not approachable; otherwise we would have no hope of effective prayer or communion. Rather, this phrase emphasized God's holiness. In Him is light and no darkness at all. (See 1 John 1:5.)

No one has seen or can see God, but He has revealed Himself in the Son. (See John 1:18; 1 John 4:12.) When Moses wanted to see God, he was told that no human could see the face of God and live (Ex. 33:20).

This doxology reflects the adoration of God with which Paul began this epistle (1 Tim. 1:17). Paul

continually found himself overwhelmed by the majesty of God. He closed his praise with ascribing to God *honor and might forever*. God is worthy of worship, and He alone has everlasting authority. The exultant *Amen* was not merely the benediction of a prayer but a glorious cry that what was been said is true.

We can endure difficulties and opposition to our faith in the knowledge that our God reigns.

Believers live in the promise of eternal life. We can endure difficulties and opposition to our faith in the knowledge that our God reigns. The life He gives us in Christ can never be lost. His power not only provides our life in Christ but preserves us as well.

STEWARDS OF GOOD WORKS (1 TIM. 6:17-19)

VERSES 17-19

Paul directed Timothy to *command* the wealthy believers to remember God's grace and the responsibility that comes with it. The phrase *in this present world* distinguishes financial wealth as opposed to spiritual riches. These persons were not to be *arrogant* because of their material possessions, especially in relation to other believers.

Believers of financial means should focus their hope on God rather than on *wealth, which is so uncertain*. Investments can be lost. Possessions can be destroyed or stolen. Only God is sure. Whatever we have has come from Him who provides us with all things. He gives us these things to enjoy, so we give thanks for His provision and use our blessings to glorify Him.

Believers should focus on doing *good* instead of on increasing their riches for personal pleasure and security. We should seek to be stewards of God's gracious provisions. Our good stewardship over whatever He has put into our hands reflects our acknowledgment of God as the source and ultimate owner.

Real wealth is found *in good deeds*. Believers are to be *generous and willing to share*. A significant characteristic of first-century believers was their willingness to give financially to help others, even when it meant selling personal property to do so. (See Acts 4:34-35.)

Jesus taught that we should not focus our efforts on amassing treasure on earth but instead on laying up heavenly treasure that cannot be destroyed or stolen (Matt. 6:19-21). He knew the correlation between one's treasure and one's heart. Paul also encouraged believers to store up treasure as *a firm foundation for the coming age*. He was talking about spiritual treasure based on love for Christ and for one another. Our love for Christ is demonstrated by our ministry to each other. (See Matt. 25:35-40.)

The phrase *the coming age* should be understood in light of the result of storing up spiritual treasure—to *take hold of the life that is truly life*. Some translations render this phrase "eternal life." While the coming age obviously relates to eternity, we should not see Paul equating good works as part of gaining eternal life. Instead, these acts of love are reflective of hearts that have been transformed by Christ. In other words, believers are to use what they have to bless others. People who have been born again naturally will share with other believers who are in need.