

The Secret of Contentment

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THE SECRET OF CONTENTMENT

By Beatrice Ofwona

The market place is where you will win the world because it is a place of potential, a place brimming with souls that need salvation. The greatest power that will lead others to believe is the godly way that you live. The market place is where you will win the world because it is a place of potential, a place brimming with souls that need salvation. The greatest power that will lead others to believe is the way that you live, the testimony that you live. As you live out that which you believe, others will come to believe in what you believe, however, one of the godly foundations that the devil targets is that of contentment. This is because he knows that as a Christian, if you are living in contentment, he cannot get you, neither can he entice you with that which is carnal.

In 2Timothy 3:1-2 Paul speaks of the last days when 'People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy' These are the times that you are now living in and surely what he had in mind because everything around you today is about what you have, what car you drive or which side of town you live and that this is suddenly what defines you. Is it not sad that there are those that even think that godliness should be a means of financial gain? These too are mentioned in 1Timothy 6:5.

The greatest virtue now is about what you have or what you can afford to have. This generation

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has broken the foundations of that which was godly and introduced the love of worldly things. As such, everyone is running helter skelter to make much more this year than they did in the previous one. Despite being a born again Christian, you are not left out of the rat race as you try to conform to what the world expects of you in order to satisfy societal definition of success. You forget that once you embraced Christ, you were to be in the world but not to be of it. When you ask yourself who your hero is or who the person you most admire is, does the name come pegged with monetary success? If it does then you need to take time for a personal evaluation of what your godly values really are. Have you really died to the world and its possessions? Who really is your hero?

Paul advises us to be contented in our situations no matter where we are in life. In Philippians 4:11-13 he says 'for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need and I know what it is to have plenty. 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'. Paul knew his source of life and did not allow himself to be driven by life's demands on him. In 1 Timothy 6:6-9 he reminds Timothy that 'godliness with contentment is great gain'.

Godliness with contentment is what you need as a Christian yet many are the times that you fall into the trap of covetousness. There really is nothing wrong with having lots of money; it is the love of it that is disturbing. When you start worshiping that which you have and start putting it above those that you should be loving, especially God, then there is a problem. When you relinquish your life to your riches, then there too lies a problem because you can then get into temptations and traps set by the enemy. Marriages are then negatively affected because of the virtue of wealth that has been embraced at the expense of worshiping God. The enemy has slowly but surely slipped and sneaked in ideas that do not augur well with the brethren. Some single born again women will now even settle for proposals from rich none believers than from penniless believers! In this they fail to see the treasure that lies in the latter. Their folly is seen in the divorce rates that continue escalating in our world today much to the merriment of the enemy.

Jesus Christ, in Mathew 13:22 and through the parable of the sower, explains how the obsessional pursuit of wealth can be injurious to you as a believer; 'The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful'. You, like all the rest are caught up in this web of deceit. The more and more you hear of God's Word through the various channels, the less and less of it you are able to keep. You are caught up in the worries of the world and do not care for it any more. Yet some parts of China are in such dire need of the Word that the pastor has to travel for a whole week to listen to a sermon in other parts of the country in order to come and preach the same to his flock for a whole month; they have no bibles! You however, with all the technology surrounding you, do not care for it. The word has no effect or meaning in your life and you do not experience daily transformation from it. You are not contented with what you have because you still do not have it all. And when you make an economic kill you gloat over your efforts and ingenuity; you then strategize to gain more and push God to the periphery of your attention. Luke 12:15 warns you not to be like the rich fool who sat back and marveled at himself, but whose life God took away that very night. Is it a wonder therefore that others have nothing to admire in you despite your claims of being a born again Christian?

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If you are to be emulated, then you must rise to the godly standard that is required of you; that you should be the light and salt of the earth. This necessitates that you live in godliness and shed off what you want for what Christ wants of you.

Oh if only you could believe in God! If only you could believe in what He tells you about the plans He has for your life! Then you would also know that that which He has planned for you can not be taken away by anyone else if you lived in total obedience and submission to Him. Because what He has for you is all yours. It is not about your pursuits, or your wealth. It is not about you; it never has been and never will be! Your life is about Him, and that is why He created you! Be still and know that He is God. Be contented where you are, in plenty and in need. Your portion will eventually be yours. That which He has assigned to you, He will eventually release to you. Be trusting like the Psalmist who in chapter 16:5-6 say 'Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you made my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance'.

Pursue your dreams by all means but remember that everything revolves around the love of God and His purpose for you. This is the kind of Christian that God wants; one who is not driven by the world but rather one who believes that his security is in the Lord. Money is not bad; it is the love of it that is! Let your happiness not be pegged to your wallet. This is the kind of Christian who will make a difference in the market place; one whose security is neither in his bank account nor in his investments but rather in the Lord; one who will communicate contentment and peace even in turmoil.

Your life does not consist of the abundance that you have but in being content in the Lord because as long as you stay obedient to Him, He will let you have your portion in due season so long as you stay obedient to His precepts and His teachings. When you remain contented and still, others in the market place will see this and thirst for your God. They will look at you and know that there is something different about you. And when they come to God, He will be exalted.

In the market place, it is not so much what you say about God but rather about how you behave as a born again Christian. This is because some people will never give you an ear but will be watching you closely. Contentment is the greatest testimony of your faith in God and it should be your portion; you can then say like the psalmist in Psalms 23. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul"

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