

True Success

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.”

I Timothy 6:6

Introduction:

1. I fear our Christianity is weak, carnal, hypocritical, powerless, and pathetic in the sight of God.
2. I shall continue in the same course I began several weeks ago with Christ’s call to perfect you.
3. Everyone is concerned, worried, and committed to being a success; but what is a success?

I. The Text in Its Context

- A. The previous context condemns a false idea that gain is godliness (6:1-5).
 1. Honorable employment protects God’s name and doctrine (6:1).
 2. Believing masters deserve the same and better service (6:2).
 3. These rules are to be taught and exhorted in the churches (6:2).
 4. If any man teaches contrary to Scripture, avoid him (6:3-5).
 - a. Wholesome words are Christ’s and not Dobson or Gothard.
 - b. There is a precise and true doctrine according to godliness.
 - c. Such men are also proud - though ignorant of the truth.
 - d. He prefers sinfully debating vain questions and words.
 - e. His life philosophy is that gain indicates godliness.
 - f. Observe our commandment to withdraw from such men.
 5. It is a fallacy of our generation to buy into this false philosophy.
 - a. Results may not prove anything (Eccl 9:1-3; Psalm 73).
 - b. The LORD may be silent at times (Psalm 50:16-23).
 - c. Judgment, exceptions, unseen other factors, etc. influence.
 - d. Many say of success by another, “He must be living right.”
 - e. Salary, position, or gain do not prove godliness; neither wealth and size of churches; nor national success or riches.
 - f. Time and chance do more than wisdom and skill (Ec 9:11).
 - g. The wicked often have better success in general (Ps 17:14).
- B. The following context teaches our attitude to money and riches (6:7-10).
 1. Two axioms of life: we both come and leave with nothing (6:7).
 - a. Therefore, anything you have is by the goodness of God.
 - b. Therefore, all efforts to accumulate or accomplish are vain.
 2. There be two necessities with which believers can be content (6:8).
 - a. Houses and other large things create unnecessary evil care.
 - b. Any man, especially in our nation, can easily acquire these.
 - c. Our trip – from nothing to nothing – needs only these two.
 3. The pursuit of riches is a deceitful and dangerous purpose (6:9).
 - a. What is worse than a rich man? A man who wants riches?
 - b. Consider the full weight and terms of this sober warning.
 4. The love of money leads to all sorts of evil and troubles (6:10).
 - a. “All” is limited by context and usage – its sense is all sorts.
 - b. The great danger of money is the heart toward it (Ps 52:10).

II. The Text in Its Teaching

- A. Godliness is required.
 1. Godliness is being like God and pleasing Him well in all things.
 2. Godliness must include a great seeking of God Himself (He 11:6).

3. Godliness is holiness, for God is holy if anything (I Peter 1:15-16).
4. Godliness is the opposite of worldliness (James 4:4; I Jn 2:15-17).
5. Godliness is spiritually minded, not carnally minded (Rom 8:5-8).
6. Enoch walked with God and pleased God (Gen 5:21-24; He 11:5).
7. David had a heart that was like God's heart (Acts 13:22; Psalms).
- B. Contentment is required.
 1. Contentment is happiness and satisfaction with what you have.
 2. Discontentment brings adultery, stealing, etc. (i.e. Amnon, Ahab).
 3. Coveting (desiring) what we do not have is a great evil (Col 3:5).
 4. Paul had learned to be content in any condition (Philippians 4:11).
 5. Care about things and serving Christ do not mix (Matt 6:24-30).
 6. Is the whole world a good exchange for your soul (Matt 16:24-26)?
 7. Obtaining your covetous objectives will not bring joy (Eccl 5:10).
 8. It's easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye (Mat 19:23-26).
 9. "Give us this day our daily bread" is a wise prayer from the Lord.
- C. They work together for great gain.
 1. We are not talking about ordinary gain but rather GREAT GAIN.
 2. The LORD should create contentment, not covetousness (He 13:5).
 3. Seek God's kingdom and righteousness over things (Mat 6:31-34).
 4. You can find your life and save your own soul (Matt 16:24-26).
 5. The parable of the rich man and his barns fits well (Luk 12:13-21).
 6. Job and Habakkuk and Psalm 4:5-8 and Moses (Heb 11:24-26).
 7. Godliness includes contentment, for they do not exist separately.
 8. Yet you do not have to be content with your level of godliness!

III. The Application

- A. Recognize we live in the most materialistic generation and society ever.
- B. Reject the American religion of more, More, MORE as true success.
- C. We will have to be different – in fact and appearance and reputation.
- D. Prove your goals by God (Rom 12:1-2). What are you seeking in life?
- E. Prove your priorities by Scripture. Remember Solomon's wise priorities.
- F. The simpler the life, the better. Obligations consume time, energy, etc.
- G. Set (you choose) your affection on things above (Col 3:2; Matt 6:19-21).
- H. Reject the false notion that rich Christians are an ideal thing (Matt 6:24).
- I. Would you rather be the rich man or Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)?
- J. Let the "I gotta get ahead" syndrome drive you to spiritual progress.
- K. Let the "My children are going to have it better" drive you to godliness.
- L. Do everything to the glory of God and Christ (I Cor 10:31; Col 3:17-24).
- M. Life is short and will end before you wish, so be wise (Psalm 90:10-12).
- N. Show your children and teach your children the priority of godliness.
- O. Each day has choices: hours, projects, second jobs, investments, positions, promotions, responsibilities, extra effort. Prioritize them by godliness.
- P. My philosophy is house trailer with godliness, a godly woman, and peace.
- Q. We seek invisible things above natural sight and lusts (II Cor 4:17-18).
- R. Everything will be burned – your toys have a "hot future" (II Pet 3:1-18).
- S. Choose whom ye will seek and serve – the LORD or mammon.