

## Godliness with Contentment

*"But godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6).*

Godliness means living for God, piety toward God, or walking in fellowship with the Lord, while contentment means being happy with your allotment. This verse implies one can be godly without contentment.

What are the signs of discontentment? When we see envy, strife, or jealousy within a group, family, or church, discontentment is usually present. Apostle Paul writing to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 3:3 said, "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

While I was meditating on godliness with contentment, I heard in my spirit to go to 1 Chronicles 9:31. I had no idea what was there. I quickly opened my Bible and read the verse: "A Levite named Mattithiah, the firstborn son of Shallum the Korahite, was entrusted with the responsibility for baking the offering bread." I said to myself, "What has that got to do with contentment?" I read the whole chapter, yet I couldn't see anything on contentment. As I was about to leave this chapter, the spirit told me to hold on. I then noticed that each family was given a different assignment, such as mixing the spices, gatekeeping, baking, or singing, and they were all pleased with their allotments. The one who baked was not jealous of the one who sang; they were happy, so there was no strife or division. They were content with their allotments.

Imagine yourself working in the kitchen baking bread. Not as many people might notice you, compared to those collecting offerings or singing, but do not consider what you do for God inferior to others. Colossians 3:23-24 says, "And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. Knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ." God is about your faithfulness. He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Be content with what God has given you.

In Matthew 25, Jesus illustrated this with the parable of the talents. A master gave one of his servants five talents, another two talents, and the third one talent. When the master came back and they had to give their reckoning, the first had doubled his talents and so had the second. The master said, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" However, the third servant was not happy or content with what he was given and refused to use it. He compared his allotment to his colleagues' and became discontented. The master said to him, "You wicked, lazy servant!"

Discontentment can also happen in a family. Say you are happily married to your wife, who works as a clerk or secretary, and a colleague tells you that his wife is an accountant at the bank, making six figures. You start putting pressure on your wife to go back to school or change her profession. That can cause strife. I am not saying you should not encourage her to improve and earn more money. To be content does not mean complacency. When you are content, it means

you are happy with your lot or assignment. To be complacent means refusing to work to improve because you feel it is pointless.

Verse seven of our text says, "For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it." To have more money is good, but it does not necessarily give you peace or joy—we have seen famous and rich couples separate or divorce.

God, your maker, knew you before you were born. In Jeremiah 29:11, God said, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. New International Version puts this way: "I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. God has prepared all you will need to accomplish His purpose for your life; you must develop it and ask Him for help, and He will do it according to His plan for your life.

May the Lord help us to remain faithful and be content in whatever assignment He gives us. Amen!