

週一嗎哪 午間查經分享祈禱會

MONDAY MANNA
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FINDING CONTENTMENT IN A WORLD OF DISCONTENT

By Robert J. Tamasy

Decades ago, long before the Internet and social media were a thing, a very wealthy man was being interviewed by a reporter. Toward the close of the meeting, the reporter looked at the billionaire industrial magnate and boldly asked, “Sir, how much is enough?” With a slight grin, the prominent business leader responded by holding two fingers slightly apart and saying, “Just a little bit more.”

That seems to be the motto of our materialistic times: “Just a little bit more.” Or to put it another way, too much is never enough. Because we have become conditioned to never be satisfied with what we have.

I remember a pro athlete who played for my favorite team. Let’s call him Mr. H. After signing the most lucrative contract in the history of his sport, he overflowed with gratitude for how much his team valued him and his talents. A few weeks later a player from a rival team was rewarded with an even richer contract. Suddenly, Mr. H was no longer happy or thankful –no longer the best-paid player in his sport, he began to complain. Like the wealthy businessman above, he needed more.

This is not a pitfall for only the incredibly rich, however. I remember early in my own career, whenever I received a raise in pay, I would feel excited and grateful. However, after a few weeks I would become accustomed to the new paycheck and grow impatient for my next increase in pay. Even if my boss had decided to triple my salary, before long that would not have seemed to be enough.

So, how are we to deal with this very human tendency? Should we resign ourselves to continually feeling dissatisfied and discontented? In studying the Bible, I have discovered a very different approach, including learning to find contentment in whatever we have. Here are a few of the things it teaches:

In reality, there will never be enough. King Solomon of Israel, writer of most of the book of Proverbs, acquired unimaginable wealth and yet he understood the trap of wanting “just a little bit more.” He wrote, “Death and Destruction are never satisfied, and neither are the eyes of man” (Proverbs 27:20).

Riches are temporary at best. There is a saying, “Easy come, easy go,” and that is certainly true of material wealth that can be lost as easily as it was gained. “Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint. Cast but a glance at riches and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle” (Proverbs 23:4-5).

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Right living brings a lasting reward. Money cannot buy everything, including inner joy and a sense of fulfillment for a life well-lived. At the same time, overemphasis on riches can bring misery. “The house of the righteous contains great treasure, but the income of the wicked brings them trouble” (Proverbs 15:6).

Learning to be content in all circumstances. The apostle Paul had experienced both prosperity and poverty during his life. He wrote that he “learned the secret of being content in any and every situation” (Philippians 4:12). In the process Paul concluded that, “godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.... For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil” (1 Timothy 6:6,10).

© 2022. Robert J. Tamasy has written *Marketplace Ambassadors: CBMC's Continuing Legacy of Evangelism and Discipleship*; *Business at Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today's Workplace*; *Pursuing Life With a Shepherd's Heart*, coauthored with Ken Johnson; and *The Heart of Mentoring*, coauthored with David A. Stoddard. Bob's biweekly blog is: www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. How would you answer the question, “How much is enough?”
2. If you were to rate yourself on a “contentment scale,” low being 1 and high being 10, what score would you give to yourself? Explain your answer.
3. What are some of the obstacles to finding and maintaining a sense of contentment in today's world? What factors, if any, in your workplace tempt you to always be striving for more?
4. For you, what does “godliness with contentment is great gain” mean? How would you define “godliness,” and what in the world does that have to do with achieving contentment in life?

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages: Proverbs 11:28, 13:11, 15:16, 18:11, 22:7; Philippians 4:10-13; 1 Timothy 6:6-10

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