

The Secret to Absolute Contentment

(Hebrews 13:5, NIV) *Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."*

Are you unsatisfied with your life? Would it be better if you could change just one or two things? What's the solution? How can you have absolute contentment?

The answer, like so many of the "big" challenges, is very easy, but like many easy answers, at face value, you may not like it.

Be thankful for what God has given you.

Those things we lack, or think we lack, are sinful expressions of idolatry. "God, You alone are not enough to give me all I need. All the blessings I have now are just not enough, even though you have given them freely, totally without my worthiness or merit. Eternal life is a good start, but let's go car shopping!"

The reason we feel we're lacking things is because we fail to recognize all we have as gifts from God. As long as you think you've earned what you have, you will be unsatisfied. As long as you feel you deserve, or as we Americans like to say, "have a right to" something, you won't be content, because there will always be something else: a kinder spouse, more money, a faster computer, a better car, more children, "more normal" relatives, or whatever is your idol-of-the-day.

The greater problem rests in the source of discontent: sin. We are not happy because we covet (ie want what is not ours) our neighbor's possessions, and we covet because those "things," or as you've heard in the past, "stuff," becomes the source of our happiness.

Instead, consider all you have as "what God has given me." God has given me a family who loves me in spite of my failings. God has given me material wealth greater than the majority of people on earth. God has given me a church to hear His Word preached and taught purely. God has given me skills that I may work to serve my fellow man and my family. And God has given me Jesus, His Son, to face His wrath for my sin, even my sins of covetousness and idolatry, so that just as Jesus rose on the third day to live forever, so God has given me that same eternal life. There is nothing else I need.