

97. Contentment Makes Truly Happy.

Godliness with contentment is great gain. 1 Tim. 6, 6.

God's apostle commands: "Let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as ye have." A man is content when he is satisfied with what God has apportioned to him, whether it be much or little, and when he is not continually craving things which God has not given him. Such contentment makes one truly happy. For such contented people cheerfully perform the labors and duties of the station and calling in which God has placed them and, without perplexing their minds, leave it to God to give the increase. They do not harass their minds with things of the past, which cannot be recalled or altered, or with things of the future, of which they know nothing, but, attending to the labors of the day, they leave past and future in the hand of God.

People who live so contented can nevertheless not enjoy perfect happiness, because in this vale of tears they remain surrounded by evils, but they live comparatively happy because they put up with evils and make the best of things that are not just as they would like to have them. Such contentment is indeed great gain.

How can a man acquire such contentment? It does not dwell in man by nature, neither can he acquire it by his own energy; God must give it; it is His gift, and of Him we must ask it. But if we are to ask God for this gift, we must first be able to lift up our eyes to Him with cheerfulness and confidence. We must know that our sins are forgiven. No man on earth can have a truly contented and quiet heart unless he knows that he has forgiveness of all his sins, that God has become his gracious and loving Father, and that he shall not be brought into the judgment of condemnation. No man can possess the gift of true contentment unless he is a Christian; but the Christian does possess it. And that is great gain. He can say: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."

Prayer.

O beneficent Father, let us not forget that all things we receive come from Thee and are Thine. For this very reason do Thou grant that we may never be dissatisfied with what Thou givest. We pray Thee to ward off from us whatever might render our livelihood difficult. Let each one be content and satisfied with his lot, that both rich and poor may recognize Thy power and may praise Thee. Grant that the rich do not place their trust in their wealth, that the poor enjoy the little they have in good health, and that we all may delight in Thy goodness. Amen.

I leave all things to God's direction,
He loveth me in weal and woe;
His will is good, true His affection,
With tender love His heart doth glow.
My Fortress and my Rock is He:
What pleaseth God, that pleaseth me.

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