

## Victory of the Lamb – March 3, 2019 - Let's Be Real –

### 1 Timothy 6:6-10 Empty . . . Halfway . . . Full – Pastor Bill Limmer

I received an email this past week that said, “You deserve an iPhone upgrade. And 50% off. So now enjoy.” **(pic on screen)** Oh my, I deserve a phone upgrade. I deserve it. I am a little suspicious because according to the email, I only deserve it until March 19. I am thinking they want new income more than I want a new phone but they did grab my interest because my phone is a dinosaur, it is like 2.5 million years old or in real time that is 2.5 years old. This morning we are going to continue our Let's Be Real season and we are going to consider the status of our hearts when it comes to contentment. Whether we are living like we are empty, half empty, half full or full. **1 Timothy 6:6-10 But godliness with contentment is great gain. <sup>7</sup> For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. <sup>8</sup> But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.**

How content are you? So here we go. Quick contentment quiz: Have you ever retaken a selfie? Is your PB&J sandwich good enough for you until you see a commercial with people eating at a 5 star restaurant? Do you ever have FB or Instagram Story envy?

Just by way of confession, I personally have spent the vast majority of my life with my heart discontent for one reason or another. I was discontent growing up in the desert, while many of you were having snow days, I was playing on rock hard brown grass. When I was in grade school, I couldn't wait to be in high school, when I was in high school I couldn't wait to be in college, when I was in college I couldn't wait to be at the Seminary, and you get the picture right. I have been discontent with my car, my snowblower, with what's on tv, my bank account, and more. Let be real, in my sin, I have even been discontent with God. Because I know what is best right? As I look back on the years of my life, there are two common themes: 1) I have been richly blessed and 2) I have been discontent.

We so often base our contentment on material/financial issues. Never in the history of the world have people have people had so much and still want so much more. We drive to the mall and as we park we see a really nice looking car and think, “I wish that were mine.” We are watching a television commercial this is all about what Alexa can do for us but we are looking at the appliances, the countertops, the kitchen island, the cabinets, the clock, the clothes the actress or actor are wearing, even the what kind of dog they have. In a couple of weeks some of friends are going to be going on spring break and we are going to see these pictures of beaches and when we look outside we are going to see snow or mud. Yeah us! **<sup>9</sup> Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. <sup>10</sup> For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.**

There is not only material/financial discontent, there is also relational discontent. For some of us, when we have relationship struggles it means we are going to keep the economy going by buying stuff to try to soothe our hearts or worse to get back. We see a group of our friends in a social media picture and we are thinking “why wasn't I invited,” or “I wish I could have gone.” We see our married friends and feel down cause we aren't married. Or people with kids, while we are still waiting to see if God is going to bless us with kids.

In addition to material and relational discontent there is also circumstantial discontent. Someone once said, life is 10% of what happens to you and 90% of how you respond. But we flip it and make about 90% of what happens to us and 10% on how we respond. I was texting back and forth with a really good friend on Thursday morning, some of you know him, a guy named Ben. We were both getting ready to go for our morning runs. Here is what some of the text look like. (picture of screen shot) Really, are you serious. I think Ben was pretty content going for his run. My goodness, I'm thirty-four years old and they have already made millions and they are twenty-seven. We are discontent if we have to work the weekends. I can relate, right.

Here is a key thing about contentment: Contentment is a learned behavior. Philippians 4:12,13 **I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. <sup>13</sup> I can do all this through him who gives me strength.** I am still on my way to learning, by God's grace. And I don't think I'm alone in that. I think the vast majority of us are struggling deeply with being content. Here is a thought: **CS Lewis said, "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.** You see you and I were created for eternity and we get so caught up in things that don't last, temporal things, temporal positions.

A key part of being content is having an attitude of gratitude. Enjoy what you have instead of longing for what you don't have. Enjoy what you have, but don't make life about what you have. Make it about the God who gave you what you have. Make it about the Creator instead of created things. And carry gratitude a step farther. Be thankful not only for what we have but for what others have too! When we look at others and are envious, we are resenting God's goodness in other people's lives while ignoring God's goodness in our own life.

Jesus understands what it is like to struggle financially, relationally and circumstantially. Jesus gave up everything for us, not just some of heaven's glory and riches but all of it. 2 Corinthians 8:9 **For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.** Did you see the blessing? You are already rich in Jesus. Relationally Jesus had a tough time. You want to talk about feeling all alone or being on the outside. The very people Jesus came to save rejected him, thought he was from Satan. And even on step further, he was abandoned by God. Matthew 27:46 **"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"** Jesus circumstances were not always good. Yet we often find him in prayer thanking God. Jesus circumstances were a real desert, empty of beauty. He was mocked, ridiculed, whipped, crucified, mocked, taunted, he was thirsty, tired, overwhelmed and died the death we deserved so that we could escape an eternity of painful circumstances. Luke 23:46 **Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.**

When you are acquiring more and more to try to prove your worth you are living under the law. But the gospel is about what Jesus has already acquired for us forgiveness of sins, peace with God, new life now, and an eternity in heaven. Jesus gave up everything, so that you could be rich spiritually, so that you could be forgiven of all of your sins and have the gift of eternal life. Do you realize that you have an "off-shore" bank account, something that no one has access to you but you? It's your spiritual bank account. You are rich, more than that you are wealthy. A wealth that will not fade away. You have a beautiful Savior, the God who will never turn his back on you even if everybody else does. He loves you with an

unconditional without end love. Jesus has given you the guarantee of eternal circumstances that are so great we often have to compare them in a negative sense because we have never experienced something so wonderful as heaven.

Ephesians 1:3 **Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.** We are children of God who owns everything. So everything will be our inheritance one day. So we can chill a little, right. It is not a case of grabbing now or it will be gone. It is a case of being patient now because the best is yet to come.