

MAKING LIFE  
**WORK**  
REAL SOLUTIONS FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

PART 9: HOW TO PRACTICE CONTENTMENT

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**THE CARNAL MIND:**  
WHAT MAKES ME HAPPY

**MONEY:** A NICE HOME, AN EXPENSIVE CAR, DESIGNER CLOTHES...

**POWER:** A PRESTIGIOUS JOB, FAME, INFLUENCE...

**RELATIONSHIPS:** FRIENDS, A SPOUSE, CHILDREN...

**FREEDOM:** TO DO WHATEVER I PLEASE...

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WE LIVE AT A TIME WHEN PEOPLE HAVE GREATER ACCESS TO THE THINGS THEY BELIEVE WILL BRING HAPPINESS, BUT MOST PEOPLE NEVER ACHIEVE IT...

...IN FACT, **ONLY 20%** SAY THEY ARE HAPPY.

WHAT BUYS HAPPINESS? JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE!

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# DOES GOD WANT US TO BE HAPPY?

The Bible teaches something  
far better than happiness—  
**CONTENTMENT!**

**“GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN.”**  
1 TIMOTHY 6:6

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## CONTENTMENT WHAT IT IS & ISN'T

Contentment **IS NOT** the  
acquisition of what you need.

*Contentment **IS** the appreciation  
of how much you already have.*

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## CONTENTMENT WHAT IT IS & ISN'T

Contentment **IS NOT** the joy that comes  
from having the best of everything.

*Contentment **IS** the joy that comes from  
making the most of everything you have.*

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# CONTENTMENT

## WHAT IT IS & ISN'T

Contentment IS NOT freedom to do what I want.

Contentment IS the deep satisfaction of doing what God wants.

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# LEARNED CONTENTMENT

"I HAVE LEARNED TO BE CONTENT WHATEVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES. I KNOW WHAT IT IS TO BE IN NEED AND WHAT IT IS TO HAVE PLENTY. I HAVE LEARNED THE SECRET OF BEING CONTENT IN ANY AND EVERY SITUATION, WHETHER WELL FED OR HUNGRY AND WHETHER LIVING IN PLENTY OR IN WANT. I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES ME STRENGTH."

PHILIPPIANS 4:11-13

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# The Carnal Culture

Life's great purpose in a consumptive culture is to get "my" needs met.

Desire is elevated to the level of need, and need is promoted need to the status of rights.

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# The Gospel Culture

The Gospel is a critical tool for assessing which desires and needs should give life meaning.

The Gospel filters our needs, then calls us to surrender our rights so we can enter into contented living.

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## STEPS TO CONTENTMENT

1

I must clarify that contentment is not settling.

**CONTENTMENT DOES NOT NULLIFY MY DESIRE FOR ADVANCEMENT, ACHIEVEMENT AND PROSPERITY**

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**“COMMIT YOUR WORK TO THE LORD, AND THEN YOUR PLANS WILL SUCCEED.”**

PROVERBS 16:3

**“LAZY PEOPLE WANT MUCH BUT GET LITTLE; HARD WORKERS WILL PROSPER AND BE SATISFIED.”**

PROVERBS 13:4

**“A HARD-WORKING PERSON WILL BE SUCCESSFUL AND STAND BEFORE KINGS.”**

PROVERBS 22:29, LB

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# STEPS TO CONTENTMENT

2

I must redefine what is really important.

**"THE BLESSING OF THE LORD MAKES ONE RICH,  
AND HE ADDS NO SORROW WITH IT."**

PROVERBS 10:22

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**"ENJOY THE SPOUSE OF YOUR YOUTH."**

PROVERBS 5:18

Learned contentment stops me from looking elsewhere for the perfect spouse and helps me see that God has already provided a spouse who's perfect for me.

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**"THERE IS A WAY THAT APPEARS TO BE  
RIGHT, BUT IN THE END IT LEADS TO DEATH."**

PROVERBS 14:2

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**“HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO LIVE PURE LIVES, WHO FOLLOW THE LORD’S TEACHINGS. HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO KEEP HIS RULES, WHO TRY TO OBEY HIM WITH THEIR WHOLE HEART..”**

PSALM 119:1-2

Learned contentment calls me to reject the sweet poison of culturally defined happiness and redefine how to be happy through a Biblical lens.

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## STEPS TO CONTENTMENT

3

I must proactively demonstrate generosity.

**“THE GENEROUS PROSPER AND ARE SATISFIED; THOSE WHO REFRESH OTHERS WILL THEMSELVES BE REFRESHED.”**

PROVERBS 11:25

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**“IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.”**

ACTS 20:35

*“The most obvious lesson in Christ's teaching is that there is no happiness in having or getting anything, but only in giving.”*

HENRY DRUMMOND

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Nothing in the nature lives for itself:  
rivers don't drink their own water;  
trees don't eat their own fruit; flowers  
don't spread fragrance for themselves.

## LIVING TO GIVE FOR OTHERS IS GOD'S RULE OF NATURE.

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## STEPS TO CONTENTMENT

4

I must cultivate godliness.

*"God is concerned more with your holiness  
than with your happiness."*

GARY THOMAS

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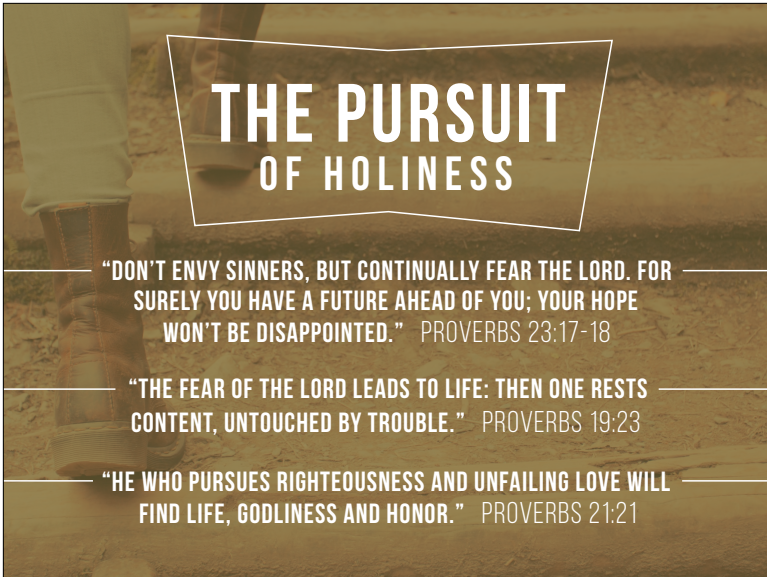
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## THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

**"DON'T ENVY SINNERS, BUT CONTINUALLY FEAR THE LORD. FOR  
SURELY YOU HAVE A FUTURE AHEAD OF YOU; YOUR HOPE  
WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED."** PROVERBS 23:17-18

**"THE FEAR OF THE LORD LEADS TO LIFE: THEN ONE RESTS  
CONTENT, UNTOUCHED BY TROUBLE."** PROVERBS 19:23

**"HE WHO PURSUES RIGHTEOUSNESS AND UNFAILING LOVE WILL  
FIND LIFE, GODLINESS AND HONOR."** PROVERBS 21:21

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# STEPS TO CONTENTMENT

5

I must practice noticing.

"BETTER TO HAVE LITTLE WITH FEAR FOR THE LORD THAN TO HAVE GREAT TREASURE AND INNER TURMOIL. A BOWL OF VEGETABLES WITH SOMEONE YOU LOVE IS BETTER THAN STEAK WITH SOMEONE YOU HATE."

PROVERBS 15:16-17 (NLT)

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**AS I PRACTICE NOTICING** HOW I HAVE ALREADY BEEN BLESSED, AND I WILL QUIT NOTICING WHAT I DON'T HAVE.

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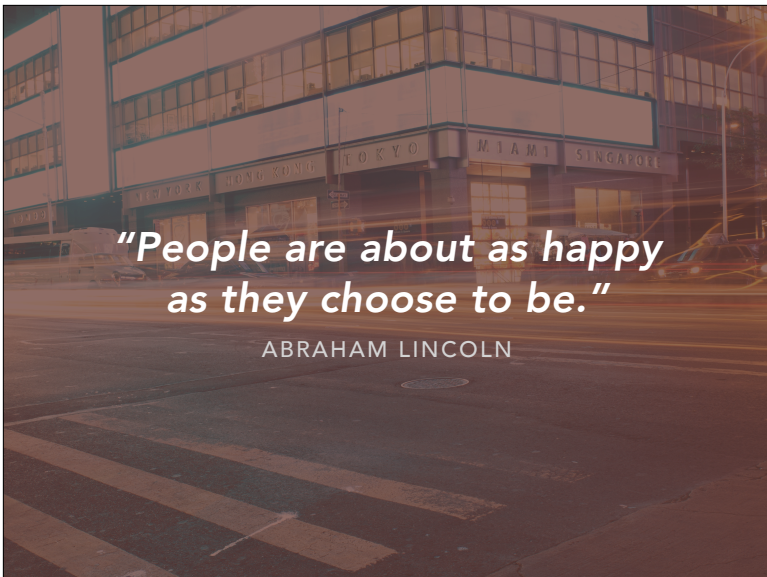
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***"People are about as happy as they choose to be."***

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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“BE CONTENT WITH WHAT YOU HAVE. FOR GOD HAS SAID,  
‘I WILL NEVER FAIL YOU. I WILL NEVER FORSAKE YOU.’ ”  
HEBREWS 13:5

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PRACTICE **CONTENTMENT**  
THIS WEEK, BECAUSE YOU HAVE  
**JESUS**, WHICH IS EVERYTHING  
YOU NEED FOR A **HAPPY LIFE!**

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PART 9: How To PRACTICE CONTENTMENT

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