

Hebrews 13:5-17: Contentment, Leaders & Following Jesus.

I. (5-6) Contentment.

Covetousness is the opposite of *contentment*. Often **covetousness** and greed are excused or even admired in today's culture, and are simply called "ambition."

Contentment is satisfaction within ones means and God's provision, necessities and not luxuries.

Contentment makes poor men rich, discontentment makes rich men poor. Franklin.

To be content doesn't mean you don't desire more, it means you're thankful for what you have and patient for what's to come. Tony Gaskins

Luke 3:14 - *Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."*

Philippians 4:11-13 - *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

1 Timothy 6:8-11 - *And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*

Someone asked millionaire Bernard Baruch, "How much money does it take for a rich man to be satisfied?" Baruch answered, "Just a million more than he has."

"Here it is – 'For he has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you.' This is the reason why we must not be covetous. There is no room to be covetous, no excuse for being covetous, for God has said, 'I will never leave you, nor forsake you.' We ought to be content. If we are not content, we are acting insanelly...(Spurgeon)

Real contentment comes only when we trust in God to meet our needs and to be our security.

II. (7, 17) Follow your leaders.

“We are told to recognize and follow godly leadership in the body of Christ, leadership shown to be legitimate by faithfulness to the **word of God** and by godly **conduct**. Just as much as a church needs godly leaders, it also needs godly *followers*.”

We are simply told to obey those who rule over us. When speaking on the authority of God’s Word, leaders do have a right to tell us how to live and walk after God.

We obey and submit to our leaders because God put them in a place of responsibility and accountability over us.

Cooperative conduct is not only a joy to leaders, but it is profitable for the whole body. It is for our own sake that we should obey and submit to God-appointed leaders.

1 Corinthians 11:1 - *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*

Hebrews 6:11-12 - *And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

III. (8-16) Follow Jesus.

God is immutable, never changes in nature at any time; He’s the same in eternity past and eternity future. There are those who were carried away by strange or false teachings and were deviating from the grace of God.

We have an altar, the Cross; and it is an altar that those who cling to the Levitical (or other false and strange belief) system have no **right** to.

Part of animal sacrifices were burnt outside the camp of Israelites, likewise, Jesus suffered and died outside the city gate of Jerusalem, so we have to follow Him there, in suffering, b’s’e we belong to the eternal city yet to come.

Matthew 16:24 - *Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*

John 12:26 - *“If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*