



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – May 18, 2024

The Lord be with you.

It's been said that all of us are living in one of two tents. We're either living in discontent or content. Which one of those two tents would you say that you're living in today? Discontent or content?

Now, the tent that scripture is urging us to live in to put down our tent stakes is content to be content today. I'm reading from the Apostle Paul's little letter to his young friend, Timothy who is doing hard duty in the pagan cesspool that is ancient Ephesus. Timothy might have wished for an easier place to serve Jesus. He might have wished for an easier place to live his life.

But in first Timothy chapter six, verse six, Paul writes to his young protege. He says there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment, there is great gain and the word is also translated elsewhere as profit. I mean, there is great profit, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment. Now, I know the contentment. I mean, it almost sounds countercultural in the world that you and I live in as every day we are being bombarded with advertising that says that that happiness, that real joy in life.

Well, it has to do with accumulating wealth and more possessions. I mean, every day we're getting fed the message that, that we need more. We need the newest, I mean, from the time we are little Children. Well, we just tend to measure our worth, our well being compared to how others are doing. And then there is the Apostle Paul writing from a Roman prison of all places. As he says, there is great gain in Godliness combined with contentment.

Now, the Greek word translated contentment. It has the idea of sufficiency. It has the idea of enough. The Greek philosopher Aristotle, he he said that contentment is freedom, it's freedom from all things having need of nothing, it is sufficiency, it is enough. It is freedom.

Now choosing to live in contentment. I mean, it's not a lack of ambition, it's not a passive acceptance of the way things are. But whether contentment is the calm acceptance of God's providence of God's God's provision. I mean, it's like we find in the great King David in Psalm 23 verse one where David says, the Lord is my shepherd, I want for nothing.

You see contentment comes from knowing that we are the sheep of God's pastures that the shepherd leads us. He cares for us. He provides for us. So that means that at any moment in our lives, we can say the Lord is my shepherd. I want for nothing today. God looks at the



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big picture and if it's something that I really needed today, then I would not lack it. I mean, we, we, we trust the Shepherd's love for us. We, we trust the Shepherd's care for us and we choose to live in contentment.

You know, the Bible has quite a lot to say about living in contentment. For instance, here's what the book of Hebrews chapter 13 verse five says, he says, keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have for the Lord has said, I will never leave you or forsake you. So we can say with confidence, the Lord is my helper, regardless of what Madison Avenue is trying to tell us regardless of what Hollywood is flaunting before us. We can choose, we can choose to live in the freedom of contentment, free from all things fully sufficient in the Lord who is our shepherd in whom we have no want.

So Lord, we come to you today with grateful hearts for your faithfulness and your everlasting love. Help us to learn that you do provide all of our needs, help us to find joy in the blessings that you have given us trusting in your perfect plan for our lives, help us to find our greatest joy, our contentment, our sufficiency in your presence and doing your will. We ask this Lord for your glory and for our eternal joy in the name of Jesus Amen.

And you know, the Apostle Paul was right. He knew of what he spoke. There is great gain in godliness combined with contentment.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.