

Great Gain

1 Timothy 6:6

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FOCAL Read Together 1 Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

Recently someone sent me a poem that I thought was very nice. Perhaps you've read it. It said:

**Mary had a little Lamb,
It's fleece was white as snow.
And everywhere that Mary went,
The Lamb was sure to go.
It followed her to school each day,
T'wasn't even in the rule.
It made the children laugh and play,
To have a Lamb at school.
And then the rules all changed one day,
Illegal it became;
To bring the Lamb of God to school,
Or even speak His Name!
Every day got worse and worse,
And days turned into years.
Instead of hearing children laugh,
We hear gun shots and tears.
What must we do to stop the crime,
That's in our schools today?
Let's let the Lamb come back to school,
And teach our kids to pray!**

I think that's a cute - and appropriate poem. The solution to America's ills is indeed in telling others about Jesus Christ. We need to teach our children that **Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. That no one can come to God the Father *except* through Christ.**

I want to say this with all the love I can, and I hope you hear my heart. I do not believe that Madeline Murray O'Hare took prayer out of school. I do not believe that the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) took prayer out of school. I do not believe that the courts - nor the the United States government - took prayer out of school. The world was never supposed to support Christianity. The **Roman Emperor Constantine** made Christianity part of the state religion when he came into power. He started out to use the state to Christianize pagans, but he paganized Christianity. Jesus told us that the world would always be at odds with His followers, just as the world was at odds with Him. He warned His followers:

John 15:18-20 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. {19} If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. {20} Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

How do we get prayer back into our schools? If we are Christians then we take accountability for our children. We teach our children to pray. When you teach your children to pray and to have a saving relationship with God through Jesus Christ then you put prayer back into school. When you pray over your meals at home, your children will learn to pray over their meals at school. When you attend Mid Week Prayer Meeting at your local Church with your children then you teach them that

prayer is important to you. No school will stop your child from bowing his or her head before a big test to say a discreet prayer. No teacher will stop your child from reading his or her own Bible while on lunch break. No court can stop you from displaying the Ten Commandments in your own front yard as long as the display does not block traffic or create a hazardous situation.

Dear friends, we live in a beautiful - but corrupted - world. Our Lord knew this. **Godliness with contentment is great gain.** Those who act godly, in a Christ like manner, will often be misunderstood. But those who are godly are called to be both salt and light. Salt enhances the flavor of what it touches, but in order to touch anything it must come out of the bottle. Light chases away the darkness, but only when light is open and moving toward the darkness. If you are God's Children by faith in Christ then I encourage you to live godly lives. Be like Jesus, and teach your children to be like Jesus.

1. What Brings Great Gain?

FOCAL 1 Timothy 6:6 **But godliness with contentment is great gain.**

Unless you've been asleep your whole life, you must know that we live in a corrupted world. It's a beautiful world - I've seen many wonderful sunsets, and seen many wonderful things in it. The other day I sat on the porch with one of our members and watched the hummingbirds flying around their yard. What beautiful creatures! So tiny, and yet so precise. While on vacation my wife and I

visited a zoo, and wondered at the zebra, the camels, the kangaroos, and the other wildlife we saw. It is a beautiful world - and to believe that all of this world, with all of its complexity, just "happened", is stupid beyond measure. How can such variety, such precision, just happen? How can just the human eye, with its ten million nerve endings and numerous muscles, just happen? They can't. All that you see must have been made by Someone bigger than you or I. All that you see had to have been designed by a Designer, conceived by a Conceiver, and made by a Maker. God exists.

But creation is flawed.

ILLUSTRATE A Christian man wanted to build a zoo that represented the Millennial Kingdom of God.

Isaiah 11:6-9 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. {7} And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. {8} And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. {9} They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

The Bible tells us that there will be a day when there will be peace on earth for a thousand years when Jesus comes back. Someone asked the Christian businessman how his

project was coming. He replied, "I'm having a lot of trouble with it. The lion is getting along fine, but I have to put a new lamb in the display every morning!"

Our world is beautiful, but flawed, fallen, and far from perfect. Lions eat lambs. In nature we see that only the strongest survive. Wild cats chase herds of animals, and usually pull down - and eat alive - the youngest, the oldest, and the weakest. Spiders trap - and then cruelly kill - insects. Things prey on other things.

Among mankind we see things we cannot explain. Children die in their cribs. People starve all over the world. People are mean to one another even in Church. That disturbs me more than anything, the meanness that I see all about. The Bible says that we are "**by nature the children of wrath**" (Ephesians 2:3). Only a fool would believe that humanity is *naturally* good. Both history as well as the Bible shows that we are all naturally bad. The only way we will ever be blessed is when we understand that **great gain only comes through godliness**. The Bible says:

CONTEXT 1 Timothy 6:8-10 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. {9} But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. {10} For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

People chase after riches, but the Bible says that riches are **temptation and a snare**.

Money may look beneficial at first, but the truth is that money - untempered by godliness - destroys a life. Money gives false security. The Bible says:

Proverbs 18:10-11 **The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. {11} The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as a high wall in his own conceit.**

ILLUSTRATE The rich man trust in his wealth. Those who chase after money are chasing a snare. I saw a fish the other day called an **angler fish**. This thing is the ugliest fish I ever saw! It looked like death eating a cracker. This thing buried itself in the sand then, sticking out its ugly face, it sprouted something that looked like a fishing pole with a worm on it from its head. It would wiggle that wormy pole until a fish was drawn to it. One a fish bit at the worm the angler fish pounced out and swallowed its prey.

That's what money does to the unwary.

Money **tempts** people into chasing after it, then like a **snare traps you into foolish lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition**. People die and go to hell because they love money. The Bible tells us that **the love of money is the root of all evil**. People steal money. People murder for money. People abandon their families for money. People neglect their eternal souls for money.

Ecclesiastes 5:12-14 **The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep. {13} There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. {14} But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.**

Rich people do not own their money, but their money owns them. They stay up late at night worrying about it, while never worrying about their own souls. The Lord said:

Jeremiah 9:23-24 **... Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: {24} But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD**

Oh Beloved, what a joy it is to know the Lord, to be godly. The Lord designed us to be godly. The Bible says that when the Lord created us He said:

Genesis 1:26 **God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion ...**

We were made to rule over creation.

We were not made to be possessed by our possessions. We were made to rule the world. We were designed to be godly, to be like God!

Man is made in the image of God. We are *designed to be godly*. We are designed to follow God, and to be like God.

Satan wants to rob you of your potential. **Adrian Rogers** once said that humans have three enemies. We have an **external foe, the world**, that wants to drag you down to where it is. The world chases after riches. It sells its soul for money, which is no more than paper, and for gold, which is no more than rocks. God paves heaven with the rocks that we cheat and lie for. We also have an **internal foe, the flesh**. We are naturally drawn toward evil, and must supernaturally combat these tendencies if we want to live peaceable lives. And then there is our **infernally foe, Satan, the accuser of the brethren**. Satan wants to drag us away from God. Satan is on the membership rolls of many local Churches. When you hear two people arguing over money in a business meeting, there you see the devil at work. **Judas Iscariot joined the disciples so that he would have access to the money, and money eventually led Judas to a terrible death**. Dear friends, the love of money destroys. But

FOCAL 1 Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

Here is where joy is. It is not found in money. It is not found in your possessions. It is found in GOD. The word

godliness begins with the word **GOD**, and your life cannot begin until you get God in your life.

2. The Source Of Godliness

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You say, "All right, David, you've convinced me. **Godliness with contentment is great gain. Fine. But how do I become godly?**" I'm glad you asked. Godliness is not something you can gain by being good. It is not something you can work your way toward, though once you are godly you are required to work. The Source of GODliness is GOD. The Bible says:

CONTEXT 1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

Godliness is a MYSTERY. What is a mystery?

A mystery is something that is not known nor understood, but it becomes revealed and is discovered in time. When you read a "mystery" you wonder "whodunnit" until you get to the last page - then it is revealed. Godliness is a mystery to the world, for the world will not read the Book. The world believes that Godliness is *doing* something in your own power.

ILLUSTRATE Some people say "I don't drink, I don't cuss, and I don't run around sexually - I must be godly". No, that's not true. A *gatepost* doesn't do these things

either, and its not godly. The source of godliness cannot be me, nor you, nor any normal human born on the face of this earth.

O.K., *whodunnit?* Read the Book. We are told:

CONTEXT *Whodunnit?* 1 Timothy 3:16 ... God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

God was manifest in the flesh. The words "was manifest" is the *aorist passive indicative* of φανερωω, (pronounced: *fan-er-o'-o*), which means "to make visible or to reveal that which was hidden".

Eternal God was not *born*, but He *became flesh*. God became Man. The Bible says that:

John 1:1, 14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. {14} And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Eternal God - the Word - was manifest in the flesh. He willingly chose to become like us - yet was without sin. God became man, the Son of God became the Son of man. Why? So that He could make payment for our sins. So He could make it *possible* for all who believe in Him to be godly and live godly lives. **God was manifest in the flesh, and was justified in the Spirit.** Jesus lived a

just life. He kept every law of God and of man. There was never any sin in Him. He was tempted:

Hebrews 4:15 [Jesus] was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Jesus was tempted by **infernal foe, Satan**. Satan came to Jesus and said:

Matthew 4:9 All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Jesus rebuked the devil, and refused to sin. "**Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.**" (Matthew 4:10). Jesus was tempted by the world. Peter tried to talk Jesus from going to the Cross, but Jesus said:

Mark 8:33 Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

Tempted and tried, Jesus refused to sin. Jesus went to the Cross - not for His sins - but for yours and mine. Here is the Source of Godliness, Jesus Christ our Lord. It was He Who was **seen of angels**. The **Angel Gabriel** announced His coming, and brought shepherds to see Him as God lay manifest in a manger. Jesus was **preached unto the Gentiles**. The Bible says:

John 1:11-13 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. {12} But as many as received him,

to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: {13} Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

The devil wants to destroy and mislead every man, but God wants to bless every man, woman, and child who will come to Him. The Jews thought Jesus came to save Israel from Roman bondage. Jesus never came to save a civilization, He came to save people. He came to

Matthew 1:21 shall save His people from their sins.

If you will say "yes" to Jesus then you will become one of His people. He will save you from your sins. He will come to you and make you godly, and teach you that **godliness with contentment is great gain**. He Who was **received up into glory** calls you to believe on Him.

3. Every Coin Has Two Sides

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How many sides does a coin have?

Have you ever noticed that every coin has two sides? It has a front and a back, a heads and a tails, a obverse and a reverse. Even so, every Scriptural promise has two sides. Think about it:

Trust and Obey

Moses told Israel, "God sent you to go up and take possession of the land, but you rebelled against Him. You did not TRUST Him nor OBEY Him." (Deuteronomy 9:23)

Confess and Believe

The Bible tells us that to be saved we "must CONFESS with our mouth that Jesus is Lord, and BELIEVE in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead. If we do these things we will be saved." (Romans 10:9-10)

Believe and Be Baptized

Whosoever BELIEVES and IS BAPTIZED will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:16).

Faith and Works

FAITH, if it does not have WORKS, is dead, being alone (James 2:17).

Every single Scriptural coin has two sides. The coin in our text today is **GODLINESS with CONTENTMENT**. If you are truly GODLY, then you will be CONTENT, and true GODLINESS will always lead to CONTENTMENT.

This life brings disappointments to everyone. But your happiness should never be based on the things of this

world. As we have seen before,

1 Timothy 6:7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

If you are Godly, then your portion will not be the things of this world. If you are Godly, then your portion will always be GOD.

Godliness is not a MYTHery, it is a MYSTery that is resolved in Jesus Christ.

Godliness can be mimicked. Jesus condemned the Pharisees as hypocrites. Who were the Pharisees? They were people who attended Church regularly. They tithed, and Jesus praised them for their faithfulness in tithing. They prayed, and they fasted, and they fulfilled all religious ritual. And yet, they were not content, for their godliness was no more than a sham. Jesus said of the Pharisees:

Matthew 23:27-28 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. {28} Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Why was the godliness of the Pharisees condemned by Jesus? Because they sought their righteousness apart from God. Dear friends, please remember that

GODliness begins with GOD. Only God can make someone Godly.

No man can make another man godly. I could preach till I was blue in the face and I could not make you godly. I can no more make a Christian than I can make a star - and neither can you. So many people try to be godly by living their lives by the law. The Apostle said:

Galatians 2:16^{NIV} know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

How does one *become* godly? You need to call on the same God Who created the universe. You need to believe His promise, and call upon the Name of Jesus Christ for salvation. The Pharisees sought salvation *apart* from Christ. They are those who are spoken of in:

2 Timothy 3:5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

They seek godliness through their own efforts. Dear friends, you cannot make yourselves godly - but you can call upon God Who will make you like Him. The day that you bend your knee to Jesus Christ and, recognizing Him as both Lord and Savior, is the day you will be saved. God Who looks at the heart responds to the sincere call by moving on the life of the believer. You

are made - by God - to be

2 Corinthians 5:17 ... a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Christians are changed by the operation of God, blessed be His Holy Name! Once saved, the Christian is commanded to obedience.

The Bible says:

CONTEXT 1 Timothy 6:11-12 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. {12} Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Those who are godly are called to *exercise godliness*. They are to *flee* the sinfulness of this world, to *follow* a way of life that is Christ honoring, and to *fight the devil* while **laying hold on eternal life**. Mentally grasp the truth that the godly belong with God in eternity. This world is not my home, and neither is it yours. Dear friend, if you are happier running with the hounds than you are fellowshiping with other believers in the Church, *then you belong where you are happy*. If you hate to come to Church and hear the preacher praise Jesus for thirty minutes, then you'll never be happy in Heaven where we praise God for all eternity.

If you are Godly, then you know that

CONTEXT 1 Timothy 4:8 ... godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

and you will exercise godliness. You will seek the Lord Who loved you and gave Himself for you. I pray that God will lead you to seek Christ and godliness in Him, both now and forever more.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



