

How Content Are You?

➤ = next PowerPoint Slide

➤ Intro:

- **content:** “Desiring no more than what one has; satisfied” (American Heritage Dictionary)

- **illus.: song #70** (supplemental), **Mansion Over The Hilltop:**

- **by Ira Stanphill**

1. I'm satisfied with just a cottage below,
A little silver and a little gold;
But in that city where the ransomed will shine,
I want a gold one that's silver lined.

C. I've got a mansion just over the hilltop.
In that bright land where we'll never grow old;
And someday yonder we will never more wander,
But walk the streets that are purest gold.

- **His inspiration for this song** came from a preacher in Dallas, TX, by the name of Gene Martin. Here is his story
(ourdailoywalk.org):

- **A man of considerable means, facing imminent bankruptcy, took a driving trip** through a rural part of the country.

- **Here, one particular house caught his attention.** It was badly in need of paint and repairs of every kind. Most of the windows had oil paper to replace the broken glass. Parts of the roof and shingles were missing. He wondered how the house was still standing.

- **Out front, playing in the yard, was a young girl about 8 or 9,** who was poorly dressed. The traveler felt an urge to stop and talk. During the conversation, he mentioned how sorry he was that the young girl had to live in such poor surroundings.

- **The girl replied,** “Why, haven't you heard? My daddy just inherited a fortune and he's building us a mansion just over that hill over there. Don't know when it will be done, but I won't have to live in this house forever.”

- **review words, chorus last**

- **lesson:** How content are you? – **as content as you sung in the song, vs. 3**

➤ **Are you content when experiencing trials?**

- **illus. vs. 2, Mansion Over The Hilltop:**

Tho' often tempted, tormented and tested
And, like the prophet, my pillow a stone,
And tho' I find here no permanent dwelling,
I know He'll give me a mansion my own.

- **2 Cor. 12:9-10 content with weakness** – when weak we are strong

➤ - **illus.: 2 Cor. 11:23b-29a** Paul's trials

- **illus.: 2 Cor. 12:7-10** thorn in flesh, keep him from exalting himself, after receiving revelation of paradise

➤ - **Are you content enough to rejoice in the trials you experience?** – glorify God, testimony of faith, testimony of the power of God in your life

- **If you were in Paul's shoes, what would your attitude be?** – content with weakness?

- **Rom. 5:3-4** . . . we also **glory in tribulations**, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts. . . . (NKJV)

- **Ja. 1:2-4** Consider it all **joy**, my brethren, when you **encounter various trials**, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

➤ **Are you free from the love of money, and content with what you have?** – same attitude nec. when exp. trials

➤ - **illus:** rich man finds lazy fisherman beside boat – contentment is great gain – don't put off till tomorrow, the blessings you can have today with contentment

- **pic:** young fisherman, shore, gazing out to sea

➤ - **illus:** Ali Hafed, India, **not content** with his wealth, lost it all looking for diamonds – vanity of discontentment – many exchange a contented life, searching for more wealth, and end of morally bankrupt

- **pic:** hope diamond from Golconda

➤ - **Heb. 13:5a** free from the love of money (not covetous), **content with what you have**

- **Heb. 13:5-6** **How** are we content – **source** of our confidence - our **attitude** – **God** helps us, not afraid

- **1 Pet. 5:6-7** **humble** yourself under the mighty hand of God, **casting all your anxiety on Him**, because He cares for you

➤ - **Are you so content you don't love money? Are you content with what you have?**

- not anxious, not worried about money or material possessions, focused on the important things of life rather than the material

- happy even if you never have another material possession

- **Are you content with your wages?** – free from the love of money, content with what you have (above)
 - **Lk. 3:10-14 content with your wages**
 - **ambitious, but content**, if never move up in your job and never have more money, even if have less money, still content – be content with what you have, not with who you are, smell the roses, enjoy life
 - **often we don't enjoy the blessings we have, because we're too busy grasping for blessings we don't have**
 - **illus.: poor girl**

- - **Matt. 6:19-21, 25, 33-34 content, storing up treasure in heaven, seeking God and His righteousness first, trusting in God to give us the necessities of life – life isn't about \$**
 - **illus.: two salesmen working in the same office**
 - one man worked as much as he could, lied to make sales, didn't feel guilty if he over sold people to get a higher commission, never went to church and rarely did anything for others, he was consumed with making more money
 - other salesman worked a reasonable number of hours but was the best employee he could be, turned down promotions that would take him away from his family too much, never lied or cheated, sold people what they needed no matter what he made, was very involved at church, regularly visited people in need and helped them
 - **Which of the two men were content with their wages?**

- - **Are you content with your wages?**
 - doing your best at work, with having your priorities in order, putting God first, storing up treasure in heaven rather than *preoccupied* with building your wealth upon earth

- **Are you so content, you'd be happy as a homeless person – homeless family? – ultimate test**
 - **1 Tim. 6:6, 8** content with just food and clothing
 - - content as a homeless person, living in a car or shelter, perhaps like some people in the Bible who begged (e.g., other countries without welfare)
 - **pic: Asian beggar**
 - - content as a poor resident in a 3rd world nation
 - **pic: poor children in Raub, Malaysia**

- **1 Tim. 6:7 attitude – soon material wealth will not matter – death is a great equalizer**
 - **Ja. 4:14** you are a **vapor** that appears for a **little while**, then **vanishes** away
 - **What if we waste our lives?**

- **Have you learned the secret to contentment?** – Christ – investing everything in Him
 - **Phil. 4:11-13** learn secret, content in every circumstance you may find yourself

- - **What is the secret?**
 - **Phil. 4:4-9** rejoice in the Lord (Jesus), pray, think on spiritual things, practice things taught by apostles

- - **Have you learned the secret to being content in every circumstance?**
 - Living that way?
 - **If you have, you're content, no matter what's happening!**
 - trials, poverty, temptation
 - content, happy, enjoying the blessings you have, seeking God and His righteousness first

- **Summary / Inv.**
 - **learning contentment is imperative** to faithfully serving God, storing up treasure in heaven, not preoccupied with earthly wealth
 - **Matt. 16:26** “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

- - **inv.: How content are you? – mansion over the hilltop**
 - begin learning to be content, storing up treasure in heaven