

January 18/19, 2025

"The Contented Heart"

Pastor Jeff Manion



**Beyond the
Weekend**

SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2025 Focus: 50 Key Truths

Each Friday, explore a key truth about our Christian faith and how we can live in light of this truth.

Day 1 [1 Timothy 6:6-10](#) | The Contented Heart

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 1 Timothy 6:6-7

Paul writes a letter to his young protégé, Timothy, who lives and ministers in the city of Ephesus. First-century Ephesus is a central hub for worldwide trade and business. As a result, the city is quite prosperous, and the average resident of Ephesus has access to extravagant goods and resources. In this materialistic culture, Paul teaches Timothy that true gain comes through godliness and contentment.

Like the Ephesians, we live in a consumeristic culture that tempts us with endless opportunities to acquire more. However, Paul's words should remind us today about the danger of greed and the blessing and joy of contentment. Happiness (at least long-term happiness) does not come through more stuff. Instead, it comes through being deeply satisfied with God and his work and presence in our lives. When we pursue godliness with contentment, we discover that basic necessities paired with God's presence bring genuine and lasting joy.

TODAY: Begin or continue the 30-day gratitude journal challenge. Start today's entry by writing down what you believe will make you happy. Then, list three things you're already grateful for. Spend time talking with God about what you discovered. Confess any faulty desires or expectations and ask him for a heart that finds hope and satisfaction in him alone. Pastor Jeff mentioned the Dollar Street resource this weekend, which you can explore [HERE](#).

Day 2 [Ecclesiastes 5:10](#) | The Danger of Comparison

Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless. Ecclesiastes 5:10

If anyone knows what it means to have lots of money and possessions, it's King Solomon. Yet, he observes a sobering truth about the nature of material desire when looking back on his life. Those who love money and wealth are never truly satisfied but always crave more. The word "never" is a strong and absolute term. It implies a rule of life that is true at all times. His declaration exposes the futility of finding contentment through accumulating riches.

We all find ourselves on a spectrum of either struggling financially (difficulty paying for life's necessities) or not struggling. Regardless of where we find ourselves on the spectrum, we must fight for contentment. The danger on either side of the spectrum is comparison, which can erode our contentment and joy. Rather than comparing ourselves to others, we're called to be thankful for what God gives us while fostering financial margin and generosity.

TODAY: In your gratitude journal today, write down three financial blessings God has provided, no matter how small. If you find yourself toward the "struggling" end of the spectrum, consider enrolling in [Financial Peace University](#), a personal finance course based on biblical principles. If you find yourself more in the "not struggling" part of the spectrum, consider attending [Flourish](#), an event hosted by Pastor Jeff Manion, to discover what a biblically generous life can look like.

Day 3 [Hebrews 13:5-6](#) | Relative Simplicity

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." Hebrews 13:5

The author of Hebrews instructs his readers about their relationship with money. He gives them two connected commands—to live free from the love of money and be content with their current circumstances. These two instructions go hand in hand. The author of Hebrews knows a love of money fuels dissatisfaction. The love of money is the spirit of "more." Contentment, however, is the spirit of "enough." It's recognizing God's hand of blessing and being satisfied in him and his provision.

Relative simplicity is closely tied to a spirit of contentment. To live with relative simplicity means living on less than we can afford to spend. It is committing to spending less than we can afford on cars, vacations, or in general. It's a choice to live a more modest lifestyle than what our income might otherwise dictate. Simplicity is ultimately a mindset that stems from contentment. It is to be so satisfied in God and his provision that we do not need to spend our money on more, instead choosing generosity.

TODAY: Review your recent spending, considering your last month or two of expenses. In your gratitude journal, list three ways your current resources are sufficient. Then, identify one way to foster greater simplicity with your money moving forward. Thank God for what he's already provided as you seek his help to live more simply.

Day 4 [Hebrews 13:5-6](#) | True Security

So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?" Hebrews 13:6

The author of Hebrews gives his readers a powerful foundation for contentment. After instructing them to resist loving money, he uses an important word: "because." He connects this command to God's unwavering promise. Their ability to live free from the love of money was rooted in something far more significant—the guaranteed presence of the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, who promised never to abandon his people. Their confidence is in God's help, not their money.

We don't have to love money because the love of God is enough. God promised to never leave us or forsake us. Our ability to live a contented life will be primarily based on remembering the truths of the gospel and God's great love for us. God loved us enough to send his only Son to live and die in our place. It is his love that then compels us with a sense of security and has the power to transform our lives from living for ourselves to living for him ([2 Corinthians 5:15](#)). As believers, we must learn to remember the truths of the gospel and the one whose love is better than life ([Psalm 63:3](#)).

TODAY: In your gratitude journal, write down three specific ways God has demonstrated his faithfulness in your life. Then, join the Ada Bible Worship Team as they sing "[Firm Foundation](#)." Let the lyrics remind you that "He's never let me down. He's faithful through generations." As you worship, ask God to help you remember that he is enough.



Day 5 [Exodus 34:6-7](#) | Question 3: What does it mean that God is holy?

Answer: God's holiness means he is set apart from sin and evil, perfect in his nature and character.

The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished. Exodus 34:6-7

God makes a profound self-declaration at a critical moment in Israel's history. They have just broken two of his commandments ([Exodus 20:3-4](#)) and worshipped a golden calf (see [Exodus 32](#)). God reveals his holy character—he is set apart from all evil and sin, yet simultaneously abounding in love and compassion. His holiness isn't just about moral perfection; it encompasses his complete otherness from creation. God exists in his own category—uncreated, eternal, independent and infinite—while everything else is created, time-bound, dependent and finite. This passage shows that God's holiness doesn't make him distant or uninvolved. Instead, his holiness is perfectly balanced with his compassion, grace and faithfulness while maintaining his justice and righteousness.

This revelation of God's holy character transforms how we understand both his love and justice. When we grasp that God is holy—completely set apart from sin and evil—we begin to appreciate the magnitude of his grace toward us. His holiness means he cannot overlook sin, yet his love moves him to forgive and restore. This is why the cross of Jesus is so significant—it's where God's perfect holiness and perfect love meet. We can approach our holy God with confidence because he has made a way through Christ. His holiness sets the standard for our lives, while his grace enables us to grow in holiness.

TODAY: Take time to reflect on God's holiness. Thank him for his grace, which allows you to approach him despite your sin. Ask for forgiveness and for the Holy Spirit's help to grow in holiness. Choose one specific area where you can pursue holiness today through your actions and attitudes.