

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Not What I Got

Bill Brinkworth

Although there are crimes and harm done against many, few see the root cause of most wrongdoing. The sin of coveting, or not being content with what one has, rears its ugly scowl on a daily basis. It is often the driving force in:

- Adultery — Someone is not happy with their choice in spouses, and wants a mate another has.
 - Arguments – Sometimes folks are not content with others' opinions of them, so they try to raise opinions of themselves by displaying a different intellect or personality
 - Cheating – One wants grades they do not have, without working for them.
 - Lies – To make others think better of them, countless lies have been told.
 - Murders — Many have been killed for another's possessions.
 - Robberies — Someone wanted something he did not have, but would not work for it.
 - Sexual crimes are committed to get one what they do not have without waiting for the right mate or to get the power over a person they do not have.
 - Taxes – To get others' money from them, without working for it, countless millions have been taxed.
 - Wars — Many wars have been started so others could obtain what another country had.
 - On and on the list could go of activities and problems spurred on by the sin of coveting
- ...

Coveting is sin no matter what is desired; be it money, fame, clothing, toys, houses, bicycles, education. It is the breaking of God's command.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."
Ex 20:17 Also: Deuteronomy 5:21, Romans 13:9

Although the grievous grasp of the sin of coveting has always been a temptation, it is very enticing today. The whole television industry is funded by ads feeding on man's weakness of wanting more. Stores line most streets displaying wares that are "new, improved, and better." Advertising works very hard to magnify one's discontent of what they have; so that others will purchase the newest item. On and on the temptations rage, pulling one in the direction of this "tolerated" sin.

Like any other sin, coveting is not acceptable in God's eyes. That is why God commands us to abstain from it. He wants us far from this sin, not because He wants to deny our having the pleasures of life, but because they often lead to an unsustainable appetite and lust that can never be satisfied.

The only way one can achieve victory over this sin is to first admit to God, that it is sin. He knows it is, but God wants us to humbly admit our short-comings and disobedience to Him. Discontentment is saying indirectly that we are not happy with what God has allowed us to have. Secondly, be content with what you have, and you will be happier. Be truly thankful for what you have, and thank the Lord for His allowing you to obtain it. Perhaps, this is why the scripture has far more verses on being thankful and giving praise, than it does on getting the things of this world.

There are times when new things are needed; and God certainly does not want us to live in purposeful poverty, when He can provide our needs. However, He does not want us to be led by lusts that never can be satisfied. Be happy with what you have.

“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” Philippians 4:11

“And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.” I Timothy 6:8

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Hebrews 13:5

“The man who covets is always poor.” — Claudian

Always Looking Down

Dr. Jeffers

A young man once picked up a coin lying in the road. Afterwards, in walking along, he kept his eyes fixed steadily upon the ground in hopes to find another. In the course of a long life he did pick up, at different times, a goodly number of coins, gold and silver.

After all those years, while he was looking for them, he saw not that the heavens were bright above him and nature beautiful around him. He never once allowed his eyes to look up from the mud and filth in which he sought his treasure. When he died, a rich old man, he only knew this fair earth as a dirty road to pick up money as he walked along.

“Though the home is a palace, yet to a discontented mind it is a prison.” — Henry

Never Enough

Edited from an article by Chrysostom

He that is greedy of gain will never be satisfied in his desires. He will not be satisfied because it is impossible to obtain all men's goods, and because whatever he may have obtained, he will count himself to have nothing.

The one that is content and happy with what he has been allowed to have will not have to punish his soul with endless desires and lust. I say punish, because nothing so completely answers the definition of punishment as a desire deprived of gratification.

He that lusts after riches and has increased his store, is often the sort of person that feels as if he has nothing. I ask, what is more complicated than this sin “disease”? What strange thing it is, though he has, he is not satisfied with the riches which are in his hold.

If he even could get all men's goods, his pain would be greater. Should he gain a hundred dollars, he would be vexed that he had not received a thousand. If he did receive a thousand, he would be grieved he had not ten thousand. The more he receives, the more he desires. So, then, the more he receives the more he becomes poor; since whoso desires more, is more truly poor.

“Those that will not be content with their allotments shall not have the comfort of their achievements.” — Henry

When I Met Jesus

Harry Todd

I was seeking real contentment
In this world of sin and strife;
All the things it had to offer
Never satisfied my life.

I thought that fame and fortune
Soon would bring me happiness,
But it only left me hopeless,
Full of heartache and distress.

In this life I was unhappy
And it left me in despair,
So I blamed the God in Heaven
For He didn't treat me fair.

But the God I had rejected
Showed His love so pure and true;
He reached down one day and saved me,
And He gave me a life a-new.

I now have real contentment
In this world of sin and strife;
When I met my Saviour, Jesus,
He satisfied my life.

So, if your life is empty
Then you need Jesus too;
He changed my life completely;
He will do the same for you.

“It is not the man who has too little, but the man who craves more, that is poor.”
— Seneca