

QUICK REVIEW - Looking back over your sermon notes, which particular point or passage of Scripture most challenged, confused or caught your attention?

MY STORY

1. Have you ever experienced the blessing of someone's unexpected generosity toward you? (What happened?)

2. At times our stress with finances can be unduly heightened because we've raised the bar too high on what we consider to be essential needs. What are some typical things we might say "we need," but in reality are just luxuries?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Our priorities often drive the extent of our financial freedom, contentment, and generosity even more than whether we are prosperous or in need. How can the following verses help us keep a healthy perspective?

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." [18] But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. ^[NIV]

Proverbs 23:4-5

*Do not wear yourself out to get rich;
have the wisdom to show restraint.
[5] Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone,
for they will surely sprout wings
and fly off to the sky like an eagle. ^[NIV]*

Luke 16:10-12

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. [11] So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? [12] And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? ^[NIV]

Jeremiah 9:23-24

*This is what the Lord says:
"Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom
or the strong man boast of his strength
or the rich man boast of his riches,
[24] but let him who boasts boast about this:
that he understands and knows me,
that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness,*

*justice and righteousness on earth,
for in these I delight,"
declares the Lord. ^[NIV]*

2. In Matthew 6:25, Jesus illustrated a number of distractions that can cause us to lose contentment and even become greedy or money hungry. If you had the opportunity to rewrite this verse, what distractions would you add to make it apply even more specifically to you?

Matthew 6:25

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?" ^[NIV]

3. The Bible is quite clear that Christians are to help those in need. How do the following verses help us discern between various needs and which ones we should jump in to fix and which ones to let go?

Matthew 25:37-40

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? [38] When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? [39] When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

[40] 'The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' ^[NIV]

Jeremiah 22:15-16

*"Does it make you a king
to have more and more cedar?
Did not your father have food and drink?
He did what was right and just,
so all went well with him.*

*[16] He defended the cause of the poor and needy,
and so all went well.*

*Is that not what it means to know me?"
declares the Lord. ^[NIV]*

2 Thessalonians 3:6-10

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. [7] For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, [8] nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. [9] We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. [10] For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." ^[NIV]

1 Timothy 5:8

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. ^[NIV]

Micah 6:8

*He has showed you, O man, what is good.
And what does the Lord require of you?*

*To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.* ^[NIV]

Can we be too generous as Christians? (Explain your answer.)

TAKING IT HOME

Focusing on what God has given us is one way we can increase our level of contentment no matter what situation we find ourselves in. Take a minute and think about what God has provided for you relationally, materially, and spiritually. Spend some time thanking Him for these things.

Are there any new steps of generosity you would like to take as a result of this week's teaching and study?