

Get Over Your Selfie
Contentment Over Greed
LEADER NOTES
Sunday, October 27th, 2019

“Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God — truly righteous and holy.” Ephesians 4:21-24 NLT

Hi LifeGroup leaders! As you prepare to launch into week 2 of this series, keep in mind the overall goal of the LifeGroup study for these six weeks - to help your group members “get over” areas of their life that can keep them from experiencing God’s best for their lives. The goal of this week’s study is to help your group members get over greed and experience godly contentment. As a leader, you can help your group members see how greed may be getting ahold of their life and you can help them to define and move toward contentment. That’s the plan! As your group meets, remind them of the overall goal for this series, and the topic for this week, then do the icebreaker together. Have fun!

Series question: How do I get over myself and experience God’s best?

Three steps: Focus on Jesus, get rid of the old, put on the new (God’s righteousness).

ICEBREAKER: What possession did you long for as a kid or teen? When I was a teen I really wanted an ATV (All Terrain Vehicle). I had posters of ATVs in my bedroom and I dreamed of bouncing along trails in the woods. I never did get my ATV, but I did have a moped for a little while. 😊 How about you? Was there something you longed for and dreamed about having as a kid or teen? Did you get it? Did the experience match your expectations?

VIDEO: Watch this week’s video – Contentment Over Greed

<https://www.lifegroupleaders.ca/studies/>

STUDY:

Read the notes in the text box below and ask someone in your group to read today’s question.

We live in a world that is constantly telling us that we cannot be content with what we have. This mindset causes us to be jealous, to never be satisfied with what we have, to have our mind set on ourselves. God has a plan for contentment no matter what our position, our possessions and our passions. It is the plan we need to embrace.

Today's question: How do I get over a natural bent toward greed and embrace contentment?

CONTENTMENT IS A SEEMINGLY ELUSIVE STATE OF BEING

- marketing, side bars on our website,
 - without it we will be unimpressive
 - never ending quest for fulfillment
 - discontentment breeds impatience
 - use the credit card in the now rather than save
 - we live in a microwave age when we get it all fast
 - we can tend to compare and contrast when we see what others have and we do not have
- Why do you think contentment is so often elusive for us? Is it because we define contentment wrong, or maybe because our culture defines it wrong and we buy in?

We are more influenced by chasing after contentment than we realize. Like the frog in the kettle, we don't notice the impact of the world, our flesh and Satan. The world constantly advertises to us that we need more to be fulfilled. Like a toddler, our flesh screams for more. Satan tells us lies that we need more to be fulfilled. Contentment is elusive because we seek contentment in the wrong places, based on the messages we receive and believe.

THE PROBLEM WITH GREED

1. God designed us to live in a society where we enjoy people and use things but often we enjoy things and use people. How might you know that you are enjoying things and using people? What are some warning signs?

What thoughts occupy my mind? Am I thinking mostly about things rather than people? How do I spend my free time? Am I pulling myself away from relationships and chasing after things? Warning signs can be a lack of the fruit of the Spirit in my life (see Galatians 5:22-23), tension in family relationships, lack of intimacy in my relationship with God.

2. Greed for more undermines our contentment. In their book, *Our Money Problem*, Brad Hewitt and James Moline write, "Our culture makes it nearly impossible for any of us to be content. There is always a new iPhone or iPad or iSomething coming out. When everyone else is sprinting full-out in a race for more, it's tough to stand on the sidelines."

READ: Luke 12:15. "Then he [Jesus] said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.'" NIV

- How have you seen greed infiltrate our society and even your own life?

PURSUIING CONTENTMENT OVER GREED

Contentment defined: Contentment is the state of being mentally or emotionally satisfied with things as they are.

- What do you think of this definition? Is there anything you would add to it or take away?

READ the following verses out loud as a group:

1 Timothy 6:6-8

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we bought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing we will be content with that. NIV

The Apostle Paul writes that “godliness with contentment is great gain (or “great wealth” – NLT)”. In these verses, Paul is contrasting true godliness to false teachers of his day who pretended to be godly for their own benefit, for personal gain. (vs. 5) It is good to be godly, Paul says, but to truly be godly we must pursue contentment over greed.

- What does it look like to be content with what we have? Do we ignore advertising, drive past the store, cut up our credit cards? Some of these may be practical steps that could help fuel contentment, but they are not the heart of the issue. What do you think is at the heart of being content?

True contentment is rooted in a relationship with Christ. The Apostle Paul said, “I have learned the secret of being content in every and in every situation ... I can do everything through him who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:12

- For some of us to be content, we may need to give some of our possessions or money away. When do you think this would be appropriate? How would you know if this is helping you become content?

EMBRACING THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST

Contentment is not just a philosophical outlook but a real dependence on the sufficiency of Christ. As a group, read the following Scriptures about how all we need is in Jesus.

“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.” 1 Timothy 4:8 NLT

“And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.” 2 Corinthians 9:8 NLT

“My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” 2 Corinthians 12:9 NLT

**“ ... I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.”
Philippians 4:11-13**

“Don’t love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, ‘I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.’” Hebrews 13:5

- Which of these verses speak to you particularly in your own journey of moving from greed to contentment?

THREE WAYS THAT WE CAN MOVE TOWARD CONTENTMENT

1. Trust God Completely

READ Hebrews 13:5-6

“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.’ So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’” NIV

There is a powerful link to experiencing God’s presence when we give up greed and pursue contentment in Him alone.

- Why do you think contentment and trust are so closely intertwined?
- What might it look like for a single mom who is struggling financially to live out these verses? What might it look like for a middle/upper income family to live this out?

To be content, I must trust that God is in control, that He loves me and that He will provide me with what I need.

For a single mom who is struggling financially, contentment might be trusting God even when she doesn’t know how the bills are going to be paid or how she will provide for her children.

The body of Christ can be God's way of supporting mom's and others who are looking to God for help.

A middle/upper income family must remember that they are just as dependant on God as a person who has no position or possessions. Our ability to earn an income, our savings, our health, can all be gone tomorrow. We should live each day in the posture of dependence on and trust in our loving heavenly Father.

2. Remember this Life is Temporary

READ: Matthew 6:19-21

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is there your heart will be also.” NIV

- How does giving to others remind us life is temporary?
- When we give it away, our heart focus changes. In what ways have you experienced this or seen this in others?

When we give we are reminded that what we own is only temporary. Giving helps us to let go of what will not last and to see reality from God's perspective, an eternal view of things. Our possessions and our lives on earth will soon pass away, but God's kingdom will last forever.

“I wish everyone could become rich and famous and do everything they ever dreamed of so that they could see that it is not the answer.” Jim Carey

3. Be Thankful for Whatever You Have

READ: 1 Timothy 6:6-8

“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.” NIV

- Gratitude is a key to living above it all. Gratitude affects your attitude. How have you experienced this in your life?

- A practical exercise this week could be to spend some time walking around your home and thanking God for everything you have. How might this help you pursue contentment?
- Another practical exercise is to be generous with what you have, to give something away. What might it look like for you to try this?

PRAY

- Have your group get into groups of two or three. Ask each other – “What is one takeaway for you from this study?” Pray for each other, that God would give you power and intentionality to throw off greed and the put on godly contentment.

LIFEGROUP VIDEO SCRIPT – Contentment Over Greed

Hey there Creekside LifeGroups! Welcome back to our series called, “Get Over Your Selfie”. My name is Jeff and I’m your host for the next five weeks. If this is your first time joining in, welcome! I’m so glad you’ve decided to be part of a LifeGroup for this series. Whether you are new or you’ve been in a group for years, here’s what I know. God wants to change your life this fall. God wants to grow you to be more like His Son, Jesus, and a key way He’ll do that is through the people you’re sitting with in your group. There’s a statement we love to say around here at Creekside when it comes to growing our faith – it’s this – We’re Better Together! Let’s all say that out loud, right there in your group. Are you ready? “We’re Better Together!” Yes! We grow our relationship with God better when we are in relationship with others who have the same goal. We’re Better Together. The people in your group can be your greatest asset this fall to help you to grow. As you read from the Bible each week and talk about how to live out what you’re reading, as you pray for each other and encourage each other, God will use your group to help you grow. To get the most out of this group time over the next weeks, I encourage you to do three things. # 1 - **Show up** – make a commitment to attend group as often as you can. # 2 - **Participate** in the conversation by giving your insights to the questions and by reading the Scriptures. And # 3 - **Open Up** about your life. Be open with your group about your struggles and challenges – we all have them. Be open about how your group can pray with you to grow. Show up, participate, open up. As you do these things, God will work in your life to change and grow you this fall.

Our LifeGroup study is called, “Get Over Your Selfie”. The goal of this series is for you to think about this question – “How can I get over myself and experience God’s best for my life?” To address that question we’re looking at six areas God wants to help us “get over”. Our topic today is Contentment over Greed. God wants to help us get over our natural inclination toward greed and to experience contentment. We live in a world that is constantly telling us that we

can't be content with what we have. This mindset causes us to be jealous, to never be satisfied with what we have, to think primarily about ourselves. God has a plan for contentment no matter what our position, our possessions and our passions. God longs for us to get over our greed and experience true contentment in Him.

There is a powerful story in Luke chapter 12 about how important it is to experience contentment over greed. In this account, Jesus is teaching a crowd of people and someone in the crowd calls out to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." In Jesus' day, when there was a dispute between siblings over money, often it was a rabbi like Jesus who would help resolve the dispute. Typically the older brother would receive a double portion of the inheritance, so maybe this person was the little brother. Hey Jesus, help me get some money. Here's what Jesus says in response – "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." (12:15) Isn't it interesting to see here how Jesus views greed in our life? He says, "Watch out! Beware! Be on your guard against it!" In your group discussion you'll have opportunity to think about areas where greed might be getting a grip. "Watch out!" Jesus says. "Look out for it. Realize how greed can get ahold of your life."

Jesus then goes on to tell the crowd a story, he says, "A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. He said to himself, 'What should I do? I don't have room for all my crops.' Then he said, 'I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have enough to store all my wheat and other goods. And I'll sit back and say to myself, 'My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink and be merry!' But God said to him, 'You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?' Here's Jesus' conclusion to this story, he says, "Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God." (12:16-21 NLT) The rich man pursued greed over contentment. Jesus said, you've sold yourself out. You've chased after greed, rather than a relationship with me.

In Luke 12:29-31, Jesus says this, "... don't be concerned about what to eat or drink. Don't worry about such things. These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but your Father already knows your needs. Seek the kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need." NLT

Now you might be thinking, "Really?" "Don't be concerned about what I'm going to eat? Don't worry about how I'm going to get by?" Is that even realistic? Well this is why you're together in group. In your study time you're going to look at some other Scriptures that talk about moving from greed to contentment. What would it look like for me to get over myself and experience God's best in this area of my life? That's your question. So, enjoy your study time together and I'll look forward to seeing you next week as we continue our series, "Get Over Your Selfie"

Contentment Is a Sign of Spiritual Maturity

By Rick Warren

“It is better to be satisfied with what you have than to be always wanting something else” (Ecclesiastes 6:9b GNT).

Instead of being regretful, we need to be grateful. Instead of complaining, we need to remember that everything is a gift from God.

The [Bible](#) says in [1 Corinthians 4:7-8](#), *“Isn’t everything you have and everything you are sheer gifts from God? So what’s the point of all this comparing and competing? You already have all you need”* (MSG).

Envy always asks, “Why them?” “Why does he have better health?” “Why does she have a job and a husband, and I have neither?”

Gratitude says, “Why me?” “Why do I get to drink clean water when so much of the world doesn’t?” “Why am I not under persecution? Why am I not thrown into prison for my faith?”

Envy is based on the myth that you must have more in order to be happier. It’s just not true. Happiness is a choice. If you’re not happy now, you’re not going to be happy with more. I could give many testimonies of people who have a lot more than you, and it doesn’t make them happier. You are as happy as you choose to be.

[Ecclesiastes 6:9](#) says, *“It is better to be satisfied with what you have than to be always wanting something else”* (GNT). This is called contentment. All of us need to learn contentment.

Why? Because by nature you are not a contented person. None of us are! It is not *natural* to be contented. It is *mature* to be contented. Babies are discontented. Unless everything is going their way, they’re not satisfied. Maturity is learning to be content when things are not going your way. It’s better to be satisfied with what you have than to always want something more.

Let me clarify: Envy is not desire. Desire is good. Envy is not ambition. Ambition is good. You ought to be ambitious and work for good things in your life. Envy is not a dream. You ought to have a dream in your life. Envy is not setting goals. Dreams, ambitions, goals, and desires are all things that God puts in you.

Envy is resenting other people who have something already and thinking that you can’t be happy until you get it, too. Both of those are lies. Instead, learn to be grateful for who you are and what you have. Everything you have is a gift from God!

[Playtoday's audio teaching from Pastor Rick >>](#)

Talk It Over

- What is something you can do today to practice gratitude?
- When you're tempted to resent someone because of what that person has or is, how can you turn it into gratitude? What should you say to that person?
- Why do you think God makes happiness a choice?

Discontentment isn't a problem with our circumstances—it's a heart issue. It's time to lay greed aside, focusing on what we can give others instead of what we have for ourselves.

Question: "What does the Bible say about contentment?"

Answer: One dictionary defines *contentment* as "the state of being mentally or emotionally satisfied with things as they are." Today it is rare that we find anyone who is truly content with his or her condition in life. The Bible has a great deal to say about contentment—being satisfied with what we have, who we are, and where we're

going. Jesus said, “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?” ([Matthew 6:25](#)).

In essence, Jesus is telling us to be content with what we have. Moreover, He has given us a direct command not to worry about the things of this world. Then He adds, “For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” ([Matthew 6:32-33](#)). From Jesus’ words, we can deduce that lack of contentment is sin and it puts us in the same category as those who do not know God.

The apostle Paul was a man who suffered and went without the comforts of life more than most people could ever imagine ([2 Corinthians 11:23-28](#)). Yet he knew the secret of contentment: “I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength” ([Philippians 4:12-13](#)). The writer to the Hebrews adds, “Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we may boldly say: ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’” ([Hebrews 13:5-6](#)). Yet people continue to seek after more of the things of this world, never contented with their lot in life. The bumper sticker that reads “He with the most toys wins!” epitomizes the world’s cravings for more and more.

The latest global statistic shows that if one has a roof over his head and a meal on his table he is richer than 93 percent of the world’s population. If a person wears a pair of shoes he is richer than 75 percent of the people in the world. In the United States alone, [credit card](#) debt averages more than \$16,000 per household, and we are still discontented. Solomon, the wisest and richest man who ever lived, said, “Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless” ([Ecclesiastes 5:10](#)).

“Be content with such things as you have” means as believers such should be our trust and confidence in God that we should be satisfied with our condition regardless of our circumstances. For we know assuredly that if we are faithful God will cause all things to work together for our good ([Romans 8:28](#)).

To worry means we do not trust God. The key to overcoming our discontentment and lack of faith is to find out who God really is and how He has been faithful to supply the needs of His people in the past. Such study will grow one’s confidence and trust for the future. The apostle Peter said it succinctly: “Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you” ([1 Peter 5:6-7](#)).

1 Timothy 6:8

Job - Naked I came into this world and naked I will leave

LUKE 12:15 PARABLE FOR LIFEGROUPS

Matthew 6:19-20

You cannot take it with you but you can send it on ahead

The problem comes when the neighbourhood we live in becomes more important than the neighbours

I cannot tell you what greed looks like in your life but I can tell what it looks like in mine

A US World and New report asked people how much they would need to be content. People making less than \$25k said \$52 K and people making \$100k said \$190k. In other words the average person thinks of contentment as being when you make twice as much as they presently make.

Also see Ecclesiastes 5:10 and Proverbs 30:8-9

If you have a proper view of who God is then you will have a proper understanding of who you are and what you have.

It is hard to be greedy when you are content.

Your purpose and value is not found in what you have

We tend to compare ourselves with people who have more than we do because we think we deserve to have more

True contentment lasts beyond the stuff we have.

Philippians 4:12:13 Paul's secret

When he is all you have he becomes all you need

Philippians 3:10 is another secret to Paul's contentment

Psalm 23:1 this is where we need to find contentment

Discontentment isn't a problem with our circumstances—it's a heart issue. It's time to lay greed aside, focusing on what we can give others instead of what we have for ourselves.

Greed for more undermines our contentment

ACTION STEP - move away from our natural bent toward greed and embrace contentment

1 Timothy 6:6-8

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we bought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing we will be content with that.

Contentment is not just a philosophical outlook but **real dependence on the sufficiency of Christ**. See 1 Timothy 4:8, 2 Cor. 9:8, 12:7-10, Phil. 4:10-13, Heb. 13:5.

Contentment – money can't buy it and poverty can't provide it

Contentment is not laziness or lack of ambition and it does not eliminate hard work

Contentment is the state of being mentally or emotionally satisfied with things as they are

THREE WAYS THAT WE CAN MOVE TOWARD CONTENTMENT

1 Trust God Completely

- I can trust God but completely?
- If you believe God can take care of you
- Hebrews 13:5-6

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Ecclesiastes 5:10

Proverbs 30:8-9

2. Remember this Life is Temporary

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Jim Carey. I wish everyone could become rich and famous and do everything they ever dreamed of so that they could see that it is not the answer.

3. BE THANKFUL FOR WHATEVER YOU HAVE

Gratitude is a key to living above it all – Gratitude affects your attitude

Vs 8

Spend time walking around your home and thanking God for everything you have

Be generous with what you have – give it away

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