

# How to Be Content with What You Have

Intro: **ILL: Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard** (Matt 20:1-16).

*James 1:9-11; 5:1-6*

## I. v10 - Realize the Poverty of Riches

A. The rich are to take pride in their low position.

1. Who are the rich?
2. **Rich** (πλούσιος) = to be full, satisfied - so to have plenty.
3. What does **take pride** (καυχάομαι) mean? To boast!
4. **Low position** (ταπεινώσις) = lit. to push down, be of low esteem, humble.
5. God is not as much concerned about how much money you have as He is about your attitude towards it & what you do with it.
  - a. It all belongs to God & He holds you accountable as a steward (manager).  
**ILL: Parable of the Talents** (Matt 25:14-30).
  - b. Wealth is a gift from God! Eccl 5:19 - Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work — this is a gift of God.
6. You are to use your money to:
  - a. Give to the poor (Rom 15:26).
  - b. Give to fellow Christians (I Cor 16:1; Gal 6:10).
  - c. Give to preachers (I Cor 9:14).
  - d. Give to elders who preach & teach (I Tim 5:17).
7. 5:3 - When you use your money selfishly, it will testify against you at the judgment.
8. 5:5 - When you use your money selfishly, it fattens you up for the slaughter.

B. Why is earthly wealth really poverty? Because it's only temporary!

1. v10-11 - Your physical life is only temporary.
2. 4:14 - Your life is like a vapor.
3. 5:2 - You can't take your wealth with you.
4. **ILL: Parable of the Rich Farmer** (Lk 12:16-26).

C. The perils of wealth.

1. Matt 19:23 - Wealth makes it harder to get into the kingdom of heaven.
2. In the Parable of the Sower, wealth chokes the word & makes it unfruitful (Matt 13:3-8, 22).
3. I Tim 6:9-10 - The rich may fall into more temptations.
4. The Rich Young Ruler's wealth turned him away from following Jesus (Lk 18:18-23).

## II. v9 - Realize the Riches of Poverty

A. The humble are to take pride in their high position.

1. Remember, take pride means to boast.
2. Being humble before the Lord brings certain promises:
  - a. Matt 18:4 - You will be greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
  - b. Jam 4:10 - The Lord will lift you up.
  - c. **ILL: The Parable of the Rich Man & Lazarus** (Lk 16:19-31).

B. How to act in a humble way.

1. Rom 12:3 - Don't think of yourself more highly than you ought to think.
2. Lk 14:10 - Take the lower status seat at banquets.
3. I Pet 5:5 - Submit to your elders.

### **C. Examples of humbleness.**

1. The Canaanite Woman said, “but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” (Matt 15:27).
2. The Apostle Paul said, “Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst” - (I Tim 1:15).
3. The Prodigal Son said, “I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.” - (Lk 15:18-19).
4. Lk 18:13 - But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, “God, have mercy on me, a sinner”.

## **III. What’s It Like to Be Content?**

**A. 5:4 - Knowing that you obtained your money honestly.**

**B. God commands you to be content.**

1. Prov 15:16 - Better a little with the fear of the LORD than great wealth with turmoil.
2. John the Baptist told soldiers to be content with their pay (Lk 3:14).
3. Paul was content in whatever circumstances he found himself (Phil 4:11).
4. Heb 13:5 - 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.”

**C. What is money for, anyway?**

1. Rom 13:6 - It’s for paying taxes.
2. I Tim 5:8 - It’s important to earn enough to provide for your family needs.
3. II Thess 3:10-12 - There’s an obligation to earn money if you can so you won’t need to rely on support from others.
4. I Tim 6:18-19 - We store up treasure in heaven by being generous & ready to share with others.

**God owns everything & gives to you according to His good pleasure. He has promised to provide your needs, but nothing more. That’s an occasion for thanksgiving! Often God does provide more than He promised - that’s an occasion for rejoicing! Whatever you receive, you will please the Lord by being content with it!**

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