

CATALYST

4 Elements That Activate Positive Life Change

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Give

1 Timothy 6:6-10

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. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

1 Timothy 6:17-19

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think of the well-known phrase, "Money is the root of all evil"?
Read 1 Timothy 6:10. What is the difference between the verse written in the Bible and the popular expression that "Money is the Root of all Evil"?
2. People sometimes assume that only wealthy people "love money." Do you agree or disagree?
3. In what ways can money actually be used as a positive catalyst for spiritual growth?
4. Why is it vital to cultivate the spiritual virtue of contentment? What sort of practices and attitudes are required to cultivate contentment in our lives?
5. Why do you think that it is often difficult to be content with what we have?
6. Can you be content with what you have and still have goals and ambitions? What is the difference between "love of money" and "ambitious" or "pursuing important goals"?

7. Rabbi Hyman Schactel once said, "Contentment is not about getting everything you want, it's about being happy with what you have." Why is this an important principle to teach our children/grandchildren and model in our own lives?
8. Pastor Mark suggests that money is a catalyst for spiritual growth because it gives us an opportunity to practice the spiritual virtue of generosity towards the things of God. In what way does generosity draw us to a deeper love of God?
9. Tithing (the biblical principle of giving 10% of your income to the work of the Lord) is a helpful standard for generosity because it is a large enough percentage to require personal sacrifice, but a small enough percentage because you still have 90% to manage and spend. Do you agree or disagree?
10. Modern American Christians typically do not practice tithing. The average church member gives less than 3% of annual income to their church. Why is tithing so difficult for the typical American Christian?
11. How do you think a church can remind and encourage people to practice financial generosity without always harping on money and church finances?
12. Why do you think that Jesus taught so much about material possessions and money? Over half of all his parables dealt with this topic. Why?