

## Economical Contentment

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"[...] I have learned how to be content with whatever I have." (Philippians 4:11, NLT-SE)

That's the well-founded statement of someone who experienced it all (fulness and lack) while serving the Lord Jesus Christ wholeheartedly. Paul knew that the Lord was in charge of his material provision and learned to be satisfied with whatever He provided under the circumstances he was in, and for the situation and task at hand. Paul was grateful.

Check the news wherever you live and you'll find that we are more absorbed by discontentment than being thankful for what we have. Unsurprisingly, at least one major influencing factor is self-inflicted as it stems from the world's interest driven monetary system. Here is in brief why that is so:

- To guarantee vital money circulation in our economies, we offer those, who have too much money but don't want to spend it, even more money (interest) as a reward for letting others borrow and use what they don't want to spend until they need it back.
- There are two ways to accommodate the resultant debt repayment plus interest in our economical setup: (a) reduction in other spendings or (b) increasing the income.
- Option (a) might be a solution in a private or smaller context but on a larger scale it's inappropriate, simply because the artificial money increase due to interest would lead to a devaluation of money if the economic activity remains unchanged.
- So its option (b) that's favored in almost all economical contexts. And since we are dealing almost exclusively with compound interest, creating an exponential money growth out of money, our economic activity to increase income needs to grow correspondingly.
- However, for a number of reasons (e.g. limited resources, markets, customer saturation) an exponential growth can't be sustained forever. So to push an inevitable collapse of this system back as far as possible, we become creative in developing new markets, products, services, and what have you, to enable the much needed income growth.
- As much as this can inspire and lead to glorious inventions that can make life easier, their necessity for the individual and the society at large should be scrutinized in terms of Kingdom benefits (i.e. who are the real beneficiaries, whom does it glorify, who will be misled, who will be suffering, what are the dangers, long-term implications etc?). Needless to say that that rarely happens anywhere as the end justifies the means.
- Obviously, depending on the society and circumstances we live in, the question what is essential and important might vary. But spread across the globe we have a multi trillion dollar industry whose whole purpose is to subtly entice people everywhere to buy with money they don't have stuff they don't need to impress people they don't like.

Back to Paul's statement. He learned to be content with whatever the Lord provided for him and his Kingdom operation. How about us? Can we in all honesty declare the same he did? Are we economically content, in our private life and professional context? Or are we sucked in by this man-made system that forces us to continually grow and earn more? Are we engulfed in this system that entices us to obtain what we don't need and/or can't afford? Are we driven by our financial system? The world clearly is. Believers shouldn't be!

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." (Romans 12:2, NLT-SE)