

# Wanting What You Have

Hebrews 13:5-6

Humans are insatiable—work to get what we want only to routinely lose interest in the object of our desire. (Pastors who jump churches.) Here's the cycle:

Desire----Attain----Lose Satisfaction/bored----Form new, grander desire.

Example: iPhone 10

Psychologists Shand Frederick & George Loewenstein call this “Hedonic Adaptation.”

Prov. 27:20—Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

Examples of Hedonic Adaptation:

1. Study done of lottery winners—after initial exhilaration they return to being unhappy.
2. Consumer purchases—briefly like the new object but later come to despise it
3. Career (life goal)—achieve our dream job but soon come to hate it

Hedonic Adaptation = Covetousness

The easiest way to contentment is to want the things you already have.

Components of Contentment:

- I. Recognize the things you have (Heb. 13:5)
  - A. Job (ministry), family, home, car, clothes, etc.
  - B. You have more than most people in the world! Likely you have too much. (HOARDING)
  - C. You have more than previous generations of Americans ever dreamed of having.
  - D. You are not deprived!
- II. Enjoy the things you have (I Tim. 6:17)
  - A. Joy—enjoyment is significant in life
    1. It is not unspiritual to derive enjoyment from things.
    2. Uninterrupted enjoyment is certain if we curb desires (covetousness) by enjoying what we already possess.
      - a. You can long for Disney World or enjoy your backyard
      - b. Yearn for a steak dinner or enjoy leftovers
  - B. Enjoy what you have so much that you extinguish desires for more.
    1. Airport advertisement: “Your T.V. could sound better”

- III. Appreciate the things you already have (James 4:13-14)
  - A. Appreciate—consider their value, worth, good aspects.
    - 1. Cup half full or half empty? Don't worry about it! Appreciate the cup!
    - 2. Almost everything we have is MORE than adequate if we look at it with an appreciative heart. (The Doctrine of Good Enough)
  - B. Future goals are fine as long as they don't consume the present moment—take away from life right now.
  - C. Time is your most valuable asset. Don't count on it in the future. Appreciate the NOW.
  - D. Don't take anything for granted. How?
    - 1. Negative visualization: imagine life without those things.
    - 2. You appreciate things and people more after they're gone. Why not appreciate them NOW?
    - 3. People who have gone through great loss know this lesson. (Prior to the hurricane, people in Puerto Rico didn't appreciate fresh water.)
    - 4. Examples:
      - a. Death of a friend—briefly considering it makes you appreciate him more and heightens the experiences you enjoy together.
      - b. Loss of a job—makes you appreciate your opportunity to work and causes you to work more enthusiastically
      - c. Loss of possessions—what would you do without that old, rusty car?
      - d. Saying Grace at a meal—makes us pause to consider the blessing of having food because some people don't.
- IV. Recognize the temporary nature of all things (James 4:13)
  - A. Live every day as if it were your last. It could be! Value today, don't pin your enjoyment and hope on a vague future prosperity.
  - B. "All good things must come to an end."
    - 1. Value people NOW
    - 2. Kids grow up too fast!
- V. Place Long-term, Permanent Confidence in God alone (Heb. 13:5-6)
  - A. Everything/Every One else "leaves and forsakes"
  - B. Love Jesus supremely.