

1 Timothy 6:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

Analysis

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content (ἔχοντες δὲ διατροφᾶς καὶ σκεπάσματα, τούτοις ἀρκεσθησόμεθα, echontes de diatrophas kai skepasmata, toutois arkesthēsometha)—'if we have food and covering, with these we will be content.' Diatrophē means sustenance, nourishment. Skepasma means covering—both clothing and shelter. Arkeō means to be enough, to be satisfied.

Paul defines sufficient provision: food and covering. Not wealth, luxury, or abundance—just basic necessities. If we have enough to eat and adequate shelter/clothing, we should be content. Everything beyond is blessing, not necessity. This radically simple definition of 'enough' exposes our culture's inflated expectations.

Contentment isn't having everything we want, but recognizing we have everything we need. God promises to provide necessities (Matthew 6:31-33); beyond that is grace. The contented Christian says, 'I have food, clothing, and shelter—I'm rich!' Such simplicity frees us from the exhausting pursuit of more.

Historical Context

Most people in the ancient world lived at subsistence level—food and basic shelter/clothing were not guaranteed. Paul's definition of contentment was realistic for most believers, who lived modestly. The challenge today: in affluent societies, we've redefined 'necessity' to include luxuries ancient believers never imagined. Paul calls us back to simplicity.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does our culture define 'necessities' versus how Paul defines them?
2. What would change in your life if you truly found food and covering sufficient?
3. How can Christians practice contentment without becoming indifferent to others' poverty?

Interlinear Text

ἔχοντες	δὲ	διατροφὰς	καὶ	σκεπάσματα	τούτοις
having	And	food	and	raiment	therewith
G2192	G1161	G1305	G2532	G4629	G5125

ἀρκεσθυσόμεθα

content

G714

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 6:11 (Parallel theme): Give us this day our daily bread.

Genesis 28:20 (Parallel theme): And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

Deuteronomy 2:7 (Parallel theme): For the LORD thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the LORD thy God hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing.

