1. **Intro:**
   1.2. Doke’s say goodbye.

2. **CONTENTMENT! (1-12)**
   2.1. **CONTENTMENT & WORK! (1,2)**
   2.2. Slavery – 60 million slaves! (1/2 the population of the empire)
   2.2.1. It was economic rather than racially motivated. [They became slaves by war or poverty]
   2.2.2. It was an effective system for Rome. [how else would Rome have achieved such economic, political, & military might?]
   2.2.3. It was also a corrupt system. [humans were mere property to be used or abused]
   2.2.4. Q: If a slave became a Christian how should they act?
      2.2.4.1. Should they stop serving their master? Not submit? Strike back? Take up arms against the empire?
      2.2.4.2. The answer was not in rebellion but in submission!

2.3. Paul didn’t emphasize individual rights but individual responsibilities.
   2.3.1. His chief concern?...the glory of God!
   2.3.2. Paul saw a different status for master & slave, but demanded a change from both!
   2.3.3. Though we no longer have slavery, we all have to deal w/authority!
      2.3.3.1. (a) Submitting to authority is difficult. Rebellion is so much more fun & adventurous. We are a country born out of revolution, independent thinking & living.
      2.3.3.2. (b) It is difficult working for someone you don’t respect.
      2.3.3.3. (c) There is a time to resist authority. If being asked to deny God’s moral standards.

2.4. Vs.1 deals with Non-Christians in authority over us; & vs. 2 deals with Christians in authority over us.
   2.4.1. (1) Treat them w/respect; work hard for them; do your assignment well; be honest.
      2.4.1.1. Paul says a slave’s attitude & quality of his or her work will preserve a good reputation for Christianity.
   2.4.2. Q: Do you work for an unbeliever? Some are people of integrity; others are bad-tempered or play favorites. Some give Christians a hard time.
      2.4.2.1. Paul says regardless of their attitude honor them by doing your best job!
2.4.3. **Christian employees:** Work is not a venue for *in your face evangelism* (though talk about your faith at appropriate times). Being the best employee will probably give the most opportunities to share the gospel than if you slough off.

2.4.3.1. Keep your spiritual fire stoked, so it will continue to burn even in the coldest work environment!¹

2.4.4. (2) **Q:** What if your boss is a Christian? Don’t disrespect them. Serve them all the more (because we are of the same family).

2.4.4.1. Don’t think that your boss should treat you differently because you are a Christian.

2.4.4.2. **Bosses** – Model the behavior you expect from them. And, don’t promote a lazy Christian in your company just because they are a Christian. (What will the other harder working employees think?)

2.5. **Teach & exhort these things** - This reminds us that we’re under God’s authority.

2.5.1. **Personal** integrity must accompany **doctrinal** integrity.

2.5.2. You can spend hours analyzing 1 Cor. 13 on love, & yet still not “love one another”!

2.5.2.1. If we truly submit to God’s Word, it will *show up* in the way we live & work!

2.5.3. **Q:** In what **sphere** of life do you have the most difficulty w/someone in authority over you? (work, church, home, school, civil authorities)

2.5.4. **Q:** What will be your remedy? Will you change your attitude, or work habits? Will you talk to your superior? Share your concerns? Speak the truth…in love?²

2.6. **CONTENTMENT & GODLINESS!** (3-6)

2.7. (3-5) These have an inflated opinion of themselves.

2.7.1. **Read** J.B. Phillips vs. 4, 5.

2.7.2. **Q:** Ever meet this person? (They don’t want to discuss truth or godly living, but instead just cause division)

2.8. **Gain** – note *gain* in both vs. 5 & 6.

2.8.1. So isn’t there any rewards in godliness?

2.8.2. Genuine Christian faith brings great gain when coupled w/contentment.

2.9. **Contentment** = Let’s start with what it is not.

2.9.1. *It is not* Laziness or selfishness. *It is not* complacency.

¹ Chuck Swindoll; pg. 128.
² Chuck Swindoll; pg. 129.
2.9.2. It is not “Winnie the Pooh in the 100 acre wood, after polishing off a whole jar of honey, & then plops himself down against a tree for a sticky, satisfying nap.” (Swindoll)

2.9.3. It is an attitude of mind, independent of externals, & dependent only on God.  
2.9.3.1. Godliness w/contentment is independent of one’s bankbook & possessions.  
2.9.3.2. It is recognizing the sufficiency of what we have.

2.9.4. Phil.4:11-13 “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

2.9.5. Our goal then?...Have a genuine relationship w/Jesus(Who is our only source of real contentment) & have a healthy detachment from material things.  
2.9.5.1. Ps.23:1 “The Lord is my shepherd I shall not be in want(lack)”

2.9.6. If a person is content you won’t hear them always saying, “Someday I will_____” (have a new house, or be a such & such, etc.)

2.9.7. If a person is content they won’t be eaten up w/envy over someone else’s achievements or ministry’s growth.

2.9.8. If a person is content they are truly grateful for what they have. {a thankless person makes a poor Christian!}

2.9.9. Contentment – On one occasion Diogenes the philosopher, while sunning himself, is said to have had an interview with Alexander the Great, who opened the conversation with “I am Alexander the Great.” The philosopher answered, “And I am Diogenes the Cynic.” Alexander then asked him in what way he could serve him. “You can step out of my sunlight,” the philosopher replied.

2.9.9.1. Alexander is said to have been so struck with the Cynic’s self-possession that he went away remarking, “If I were not Alexander, I should wish to be Diogenes.”

2.10. CONTENTMENT & POSSESSIONS! (7,8)

2.11. If our contentment lies in wealth or any other earthly possession, we’re in for a big disappointment.

2.11.1. Why? Because we came into this world carrying nothing, wearing nothing, & owning nothing. So Job said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, And naked shall I return.” Job 1:21

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3 Shepherd’s Notes; pg.36  
4 Barton, Veerman, & Wilson; pg.122.
2.11.2. The sons of Korah said, “For when he dies he shall carry nothing away”. Ps.49:17

2.11.3. Solomon added, “As he came from his mother’s womb, naked shall he return, To go as he came; And he shall take nothing from his labor Which he may carry away in his hand.” Eccl.5:15

2.11.4. You’ve heard them all: “Ever see a hearse w/a trailer hitch?” “Ever see a shroud with pockets?” “Souls can’t tote luggage” “Or the one about the guy who was able to smuggle in some gold & when the angels saw it they asked why he brought Asphalt with him?”

2.12. (8) Mt.6:19-34

2.13. CONTENTMENT & RICHES! (9,10)

2.14. Hear the warnings here, because there are no warning signs along the path to riches! (Philip Towner)

2.14.1. Prov.15:27 “He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house”.

2.14.1.1. Happiness is not based on money and the greatest proof of that is our family! -- Christina Onassis

2.14.2. See Eccl.5:10-12.

2.15. (10) Money itself is not the problem; our attitude toward it is.

2.15.1. Money is amoral, neither good nor bad.

2.15.2. It’s not what we have but what has us!

2.16. CONTENTMENT & CHARACTER! (17-19)

2.17. So what if you are already rich? How do you view your wealth?

2.18. A rich person might be tempted to be arrogant toward the poor, or to make wealth the hope of one’s life.5

2.18.1. See your possessions as belonging to God & given by Him for His Glory & our enjoyment.

2.19. Enjoy? – Tell me what you think of this Yacht? Show Octopus

2.19.1. “Octopus” the world’s Largest Yacht. It stretches 414’.

2.19.1. It cost over $200 million. Permanent crew of 60. It takes 10% or $20 million a year to operate.

2.19.2. It has 2 heliports; 7 tenders/smaller boats aboard(1 is 63’); 10 man submarine; a remote control vehicle for crawling the ocean floor.

2.19.3. Owned by Paul Allen the Internet Entrepreneur. He is worth $20 Billion. 3rd richest man in America(7th in the world).

2.19.3.1. What’s your reaction to that? I say, “enjoy it Paul!”

5 Shepherd’s Notes; pg.40
2.19.4. God wants you to enjoy His gifts!
2.19.5. And use these gifts for the good of others.
2.19.6. Display His character in how you handle money!

2.20. Ready to give, willing to share – Same thing?...nope.
2.20.1. The 1st demands a liberal sharing of their wealth.
2.20.2. The 2nd says this act must spring up from internal generosity.

2.20.3. Here’s a heart test on how you are doing with finances?
Q: What’s your 1st thought when a windfall blows your way?
“What can I get, or What can I give?”
2.20.3.1. There’s more contentment in helping than in hoarding;
In releasing, than in keeping!
2.20.4. “It is more blessed to give than to receive” said Jesus...& He ought to know!!! Acts 20:35

2.21. Their 2-fold outcome:

2.21.3. Contentment isn’t found in a place; its’ in a person! Be rich in Christ!

2.22. (17) – trust in the living God - Since all-night talker Larry King had heart surgery, he has received letters and gifts. No letter has affected him as much as one he received Monday. With a Bible was the following message, dated December 31: "Dear Larry, I'm so glad to hear that everything went well with your surgery. I want you to know that God was watching over you every minute, and even though I know you question that, I also know that one day it will be revealed to you. My prayer is that you remain open and God will touch your life as He has mine. Once I was a disbeliever. When I could not fill my life with basketball, I would simply substitute sex, liquid drugs, or material things to feed my internal shell-like appearance. I was never satisfied. I have finally realized after 40 years that Jesus Christ is in me. He will reveal His truth to you, Larry, because He lives." It was signed by Pete Maravich. Tuesday, Maravich, former college basketball and NBA luminary, died. -- The Toledo Blade