

Godliness with Contentment: 1 Timothy 6: 6-10

A reflection

“Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world and we can carry nothing out. But if we have food and clothing we will be content.”

I have often visited Douai Abbey in Berkshire over the course of my ministry for times of quiet and reflection, and have always joined the monastic community for their meals. Each evening that verse from 1 Timothy 6 was read before grace was said, and I found it very appropriate and reassuring. It has been said that “contentment is not the fulfilment of what you want, but the realisation of how many blessings you already have.” Paul knew what he was talking about, because he was a tentmaker and lived a simple life. In these testing times, which seem to be bringing out both the best and the worst in people, it is salutary to remember that “if we have food and clothing we will be content”. We need to be looking out for each other, not just thinking of ourselves, and remembering that contentment comes from a heart that is rightly ordered towards God and neighbour. When we chose to be content with what we need for today, and are able to count our blessings, then we will find true peace of heart and mind.

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