

Bible and the Headlines: Contentment

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The first week of any year is a time of introspection. The imaginary delineation of one year from its successor causes many folks to reflect on the achievements of the previous year and to make resolutions for the year to come. In this inaugural week of 2026, a resolution that is counterintuitive to this spirit of self-improvement is making headlines: To strive for contentment.

Aspen real estate agent Peter Grenney on December 31st offered an opinion piece in The Aspen Daily News entitled, “Grenney: 2026: The Year of Contentment.” Grenney examined Finland’s rating by the United Nations as the country with the happiest people on the planet. He notes that Finns are happy because they are content. Grenney explains, “Finland’s version of contentment is rooted in . . . steady internal state of enoughness. Finnish happiness says, “I have enough.” The real estate agent looks at all the resources in Aspen and suggests that its citizens should also use the Finnish standard for contentment.

On January 2, The Economic Times explored the theme of personal satisfaction in a piece with the wordy title, “A Man Can Buy 50 iPhones, Does Not Like to Show Off but Still Annoyed a Bit. Ankur Warikoo Explains What Contentment Really Means.” Ankur Warikoo is an Indian entrepreneur and financial advisor. The subject of Warikoo’s missive is a man who has chosen austerity, yet he envies people who are feted for their opulence. For this man’s sake, the entrepreneur defines the two components of ‘contentment,’ “The first is knowing that you have enough. . . The second, and harder, layer is not caring about what others have—be it love, fame, respect, purpose, or money.” Envy is the enemy of contentment.

The January 3rd edition of the Indian regional newspaper The Morung Express featured, “NBCC Urges Naga Society to Embrace ‘Faithfulness And Contentment’.” The NBCC is the Nagaland Baptist Church Council which operates in northeast India. To their flock the NBCC states, “As we begin another year . . . draw life, joy, and purpose from what God has rightly entrusted to us, rather than seeking fulfillment from borrowed, broken, or polluted sources.” The council is alarmed at the trend among their people to chase after fame and fortune.

In the New Testament, the first letter to Timothy has advise the young pastor needed as he tended to the spiritual needs of his flock. Similar to the Christians in Naga, India, Timothy’s people struggled to resist the attractions of this world. Timothy had a few members of his church who became Christians for financial success (1Ti 6:5). The word to these folk was, “Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it” (1Ti 6:6-7). This message is still worth remembering at the start of 2026. And on any other occasion when we lose our contentment to envy.