

## Happiness

Happiness - The quality or condition of being happy.

Happy - *adj.* Having a feeling of great pleasure or content of mind, arising from satisfaction with one's circumstances or condition; also in weakened sense: Glad, pleased.

Joy - 1. a. A vivid emotion of pleasure arising from a sense of well-being or satisfaction; the feeling or state of being highly pleased or delighted; exultation of spirit; gladness, delight.

- I. Happiness is a good thing and as Christians it is something we ought to experience.
  1. Solomon said that there is nothing better than to enjoy the good of our labor (**Ecc 2:24**).
    - i. Enjoy - 1. a. *intr.* To be in joy, or in a joyous state; to manifest joy, exult, rejoice.
      2. a. *trans.* To put into a joyous condition; to make happy, give pleasure to.
      - b. *refl.* To experience pleasure, be happy; now chiefly, to find pleasure in an occasion of festivity or social intercourse, in a period of recreation, etc.
    - B. It is the gift of God (**Ecc 3:13**).
    - C. It is our portion (**Ecc 5:18**).
    - D. Portion - 1. a. The part (of anything) allotted or belonging to one person; a share.
    - E. To not do so is to live a life of vanity and sore travail (**Ecc 4:8**).
  2. As Christians we should rejoice.
    - A. The Bible tells us to "Rejoice *evermore*" (**1Th 5:16**).
      - i. Rejoice - v. 1. *trans.* To enjoy by possessing; to have full possession and use of (a thing).
        2. To gladden, make joyful, exhilarate (a person, his spirits, etc.).
        5. *intr.* To be full of joy; to be glad or greatly delighted; to exult.
      - ii. Evermore - 1. For all future time.
    - B. We are commanded to rejoice in the Lord *always* (**Php 4:4**).
    - C. Always - 1. All along, all the time, perpetually, throughout all time.
    - D. We ought to rejoice in God our Saviour (**Luk 1:47**).
      - i. No man can take that joy from us (**Joh 16:22**).
      - ii. If we are lacking it, it is because we gave it up, not because someone took it from us.
    - E. What could men do to take away a Christian's joy in his Saviour?
      - i. Take his stuff? No, he takes joyfully the spoiling of his goods (**Heb 10:34**).
      - ii. Persecute him? No, he will rejoice and be exceeding glad (**Mat 5:10-12**).
      - iii. Reproach him? No, he will be happy (**1Pe 4:14**) and take pleasure in it (**2Co 12:10**).
      - iv. Tempt him? No, he will count it all joy (**Jam 1:2-3**).
      - v. Beat him? No, he will rejoice because he was counted worthy (**Act 5:40-42**).
      - vi. Destroy his reputation, exclude him, hate him? No, he will rejoice and leap for joy (**Luk 6:22-23**).
      - vii. Kill him? No, he loves not his life unto death (**Rev 12:11**); his life is hid with God in Christ (**Col 3:3**); to him to die and be with Christ is far better (**Php 1:23**).

- F. Never forget though that God's number one concern is not that you are happy, but that you are HOLY (**1Pe 1:15-16**).
3. We should be happy and joyful in prosperity and also in adversity (**Ecc 7:14**).
- A. This is called being content, which is not a suggestion from God, but rather a commandment (**Heb 13:5**).
- i. Content - *n.* 1. Satisfaction, pleasure; a contented condition. (Now esp. as a habitual frame of mind.)
  - ii. Content - *a.* 1. Having one's desires bounded by what one has (though that may be less than one could have wished); not disturbed by the desire of anything more, or of anything different; 'satisfied so as not to repine; easy though not highly pleased'
- B. What does God say that we need to be content?
- i. To own a home? No.
  - ii. To have a nice car? No.
  - iii. To have a good paying job? No.
  - iv. To get to take a vacation every year? No.
  - v. To have a wife or husband? No.
  - vi. To have children? No.
  - vii. To have grandchildren? No.
  - viii. To have lots of friends and a good social life? No.
  - ix. To be intelligent? No.
  - x. To have a college degree? No.
  - xi. To be good-looking? No.
  - xii. To have good health? No.
  - xiii. To have the praise and approval of men? No.
  - xiv. To have God who will never leave us nor forsake us? Yes. (**Heb 13:5**)
  - xv. To have food and clothing? Yes. (**1Ti 6:6-8**).
- C. Contentment doesn't come naturally, it has to be learned (**Php 4:11-13**).
- D. A good man will be *satisfied from himself* (**Pro 14:14**).
- i. Satisfied ppl. - 1. Contented, pleased, gratified.
  - ii. "Happiness is inward and not outward and so it does not depend on what we have, but on what we are." -Henry Van Dyke
  - iii. You have a long way to go in your maturity and your walk with Jesus if you care what others think and you need the approval of friends.
  - iv. When you're 18, you care what everyone thinks about you. When you're 40, you don't care what anybody thinks about you. When you're 60, you realize that nobody thinks about you.
- E. Some practical tips on contentment:
- i. Set your goals and desires low when it comes to material possessions (**Pro 15:16; Pro 16:8**).
  - ii. Set your goals and desires low when it comes to things out of your control such as marriage and children.
  - iii. Don't maintain high expectations for others which you have no control over (spouse, kids, brethren, friends).

## II. The key to finding happiness in this world.

1. Complete happiness, joy, and contentment is found only in God's presence in heaven (**Psa 16:11**).
2. Therefore, the closer we can get to God in this world, the more joy we will have.
3. How do we get close to God?
  - A. We need to be where God is: in His house, the church where He dwells (**1Ti 3:15; 1Co 3:16**).
    - i. It's not just enough to be a member, we need to be in regular attendance as we are able (**Heb 10:23-25**).
    - ii. We should also take every opportunity to spend time with our brethren since they are part of the body of Christ (**Mal 3:16; Psa 119:63; Mat 18:20**).
    - iii. Some practical tips (not injunctions) would be to:
      - a) Attend Bible studies and potlucks.
      - b) Don't make plans immediately after church so that you and your children can have time to fellowship with brethren.
      - c) Go out for lunch together after church (if you can afford it).
      - d) Invite brethren over to your home to visit occasionally.
      - e) Have guys and girls nights out with your brethren once in a while.
  - B. We need to learn about God and listen to Him in His word (**Pro 6:20-23; Pro 2:6**).
    - i. The word of God *rejoices the heart* (**Psa 19:7-11**).
    - ii. The word of God gives *delight* unto the righteous man (**Psa 1:1-3**).
    - iii. Retaining knowledge and understanding from the word of God should make us happy (**Pro 3:13; Pro 3:18**).
    - iv. We need to spend ample time reading and meditating on God's word (**Jos 1:8**).
    - v. Some practical tips (not injunctions) would be to:
      - a) Schedule a block of time each day to read the Bible.
      - b) Early in the morning is a good time because it is quiet and your mind is not filled with the events of the day, nor worn out after a long day.
      - c) This requires getting adequate sleep, which is necessary for physical, emotional, and spiritual health (**Psa 127:2; Joh 11:12**).
      - d) Hiding God's word in your heart and having a close relationship with God will allow you to get good sleep (**Pro 3:21-24; Act 12:6**).
      - e) A lack of sleep will hinder our ability to *attend* to know understanding (**Pro 4:1**).
      - f) Attend - v. To direct the ears, mind, energies to anything.
  - C. We need to talk to God through prayer.
    - i. Prayer is something we ought to be doing continually (**Col 4:2**).
    - ii. Praying to God and casting our cares upon Him will give us peace (**Phi 4:6-7**) which is a concomitant of joy (**Rom 14:17; Rom 15:13**).
    - iii. Some practical tips (not injunctions) would be to:
      - a) Pray when you get up in the morning; thank God for another day.
      - b) Pray before you open the Bible.
      - c) Pray before each meal (**Joh 6:11**) and don't be afraid to do it publicly (**Act 27:35**).
      - d) Turn the radio off and pray while you are driving to work.
      - e) Pray in the shower.

- f) Pray before you go to sleep at night and thank God that another day is won.
- 4. Single people should consider remaining single to serve the Lord better, or at least focusing on God during the single years.
  - A. A life of celibacy is a gift from God (**1Co 7:7**).
  - B. It is *good* to remain unmarried (**1Co 7:8; 1Co 7:26**).
  - C. The reason for this is because those who are unmarried can focus on caring for, serving, and pleasing the Lord instead of their spouse (**1Co 7:32-34**).
  - D. Paul didn't write these things to make us lonely, but rather for our profit so that we can *attend upon the Lord without distraction* (**1Co 7:35**).
  - E. Many would think remaining unmarried would make one less happy, but Paul said the opposite was true (**1Co 7:40**).
  - F. If it is far better to depart this life to be with Christ (**Php 1:23**), then would it not likewise be better to devote your life to Christ while on earth and go without temporal things in order to do that?
  - G. A life a celibacy is not for everyone, but it is for some and it ought not to be dreaded or avoided if God has given you the gift.
- III. A life of happiness is in store for us for all eternity.
  - 1. This world has its share of sorrow, but it doesn't last forever (**Psa 30:5**).
  - 2. One day it will be gone for eternity (**Isa 35:10; Rev 21:4**).
  - 3. In God's presence, there is *fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore* (**Psa 16:11**)