

“Happiness Is...”

by Forrest D. Moyer

“...for the joy of the Lord is your strength” (Neh. 8:10b)

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice” (Phil. 4:4)



No. 1 What Is Happiness?

Introduction:

1. There is a universal quest for happiness.
2. “The struggle of mankind for happiness has been a constant and engrossing one for centuries, probably since the advent of man on this earthly planet. Yet as we look about in this year of advanced civilization, we see unhappiness all around. In fact, there are those who say that as civilization continues, the woes and unhappiness of man will increase.” (Clarence H. Bellinger, M.D., in foreword to *How to Live with Yourself* by Dr. Murray Banks).
3. Discuss various ways in which people seek happiness:
 - a. Recreation.
 - b. Drinking, drugs, etc.
 - c. Unrestrained living.
 - d. Why aren't these successful?

I. What Happiness Is:

- A. What people sometimes think happiness is:
 1. Some say, “Health.” “If I had good health, I'd be happy.”
 2. Some say, “Money.” “If only I had a lot of money, I'd be very happy.”
 3. Some say, “Love.” “If I fall in love, then I'll have happiness.”
- B. Some think happiness is dependent upon being some place:
 1. “If I were back where I grew up, I'd be happy.”
 2. “If I lived in the (pick one: mountains, desert, seaside), I'd be happy.”
 3. All of these things (in A, B) are external; but happiness is something inside a person.

C. How does a happy person act?

To be happy doesn't mean that you get up each morning, throw your hands to the sky and yell, “Oooh, hoo hoo, am I happy!!! I feel like skipping, jumping, and strewing daisies all over the place.” I don't think you're happy if you act like that. I think you're crazy!

A better word is “well-adjusted.” This does not suggest that to be considered a happy person you must have an eternal song in your heart, or a grin on your face. It means that you do have worries, fears, anxieties, problems, difficulties — but that you know how to face them with courage, bear them with patience, and deal with them intelligently. (*Just in Case You Think You're Normal*, by Dr. Murray Banks, p. 6)

- D. Happiness defined: “The quality or state of being happy ... characterized by or attended by good fortune, also, having a feeling of great pleasure or pleasurable content.”
- E. True happiness is found in the right relationship with God.
1. Psalm 144:15: Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.
 2. Psalm 146:5: Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.

II. Happiness Involves:

A. Wisdom:

1. Prov. 3:13: Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.
2. Prov. 3:18: She (wisdom) is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.
3. Note: Solomon defines true wisdom in Eccl. 12:13-14: Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

B. Joy — A very basic attitude of a Christian (Phil. 4:4).

1. Look at Nehemiah’s joy: “... for the joy of the Lord is your strength” (Neh. 8:10).
2. How joy is related to happiness:
 - a. Helps dissension disappear (Phil. 4:2-4).
 - b. One’s health and efficiency is increased.
 - c. Personal attraction is enhanced and the circle of friends grows larger.
 - d. Joy will cause us to radiate a cheerful influence.

C. Peace (Phil. 4:7).

1. Peace of mind never implies an absence of troubles, problems or worries ... it simply means that you know how to handle the troubles, problems and difficulties ... but the one thing that distinguishes him from the troubled soul ... is that he knows how to handle them! (*Stop the World, I Want to Get Off!* by Dr. Murray Banks, p. 11)
2. Peace of mind helps eliminate worry (Phil. 4:6-7). Read Matt. 6:25-34 and see what Jesus says about worry.

D. Contentment (Phil. 4:10-13).

1. There is so much anxiety, worry, frustration and discontentment in the world.
2. Contentment is not the same as satisfaction: “state of having one’s desires fully appeased.” Nor is it suppression of desire for better things.
3. It is a willingness to accept what may come so long as we have God with us and are living right.
4. Notice that Paul “learned” contentment. We, too, must learn it — it doesn’t just happen.

- E. Correction. Job 5:17: Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.
 - 1. Our wrong actions make for unhappiness.
 - 2. When God corrects us, this helps us live right and produces happiness.
- F. A Mental Image of Happiness. “There is a law in psychology that says ... if you will form a picture in your mind of what you would like to be ... and if you will keep that picture there long enough, you will soon become exactly as you have been thinking (*ibid.* p. 36).

III. Our Happiness Can Be Eternal.

Read Rev. 14:13; 19:9; 22:14

Conclusion: A good reputation; a clear conscience; appreciation of nature; a peaceful heart; the knowledge of having given happiness to others; a trained and well-filled mind; satisfaction from duty well done; faith in the outcome of right; contentment; well-adjusted social relationships; these make for true happiness. (Intro. to *How to Live With Yourself* by Dr. Murray Banks)

No. 2

Happiness is Being Saved

Introduction:

1. We learned in lesson 1 what happiness is and what is involved in it.
2. Let us now learn two great truths:
 - a. Sin cannot bring happiness!
 - b. There is great happiness in a right relationship with God.

I. Sin Brings Unhappiness — Misery, Sorrow and Torment.

A. All have sinned.

1. Sin defined: (Hamartia) “A failing to hit the mark ... a bad action, evil deed; a sinning, whether it occurs by commission or omission, in thought and feeling or in speech and action. 2. that which is done wrong ... an offense, a violation of the divine law in thought or in act...” (Thayer, pp. 30-31)
 - a. Transgression. 1 John 3:4: Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.
 - b. Unrighteousness. 1 John 5:17: All unrighteousness is sin...
 - c. Wasted Opportunities. James 4:17: Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.
 - d. Violating our convictions. Rom. 14:23: But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.
2. The scriptures teach: For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

B. Sin brings misery now.

1. The way of the transgressor is hard. Prov. 13:15
2. Sin brings forth wild grapes. Isa. 5:2, Hos. 10:13: Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity...
3. Sin brings everlasting punishment. Read 2 Thess. 1:7-9; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-12; 21:8. Therefore one cannot be truly happy while living in sin.

II. Happiness is Knowing our Sins are Forgiven.

A. Jesus came to bring salvation to man.

1. Luke 19:10: For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.
2. Matt. 26:28: For this is My blood of the covenant, which is to be shed on behalf of many for forgiveness of sins.
3. Now, turn to Romans and 5:6-8: Jesus came to save us!

B. Our sins are forgiven when we obey the gospel. Romans 1:16; 6:17-18

1. We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God. John 8:24: for unless you believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins.
2. We must repent of our sins. Acts 2:38: And Peter said to them, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the

forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

3. We must confess our faith in Jesus. Rom. 10:9-10: that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.
4. We must be baptized for the forgiveness of our sins. Acts 2:38 (above); Mark 16:16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.
 - a. Baptism puts us into Jesus Christ. Gal. 3:27
 - b. It is in Christ that we are saved. 2 Tim. 2:10; 2 Cor. 5:17
 - c. Therefore, we must be baptized in order to have forgiveness of sins.

C. Thus, we have forgiveness of sins. (aphesis) “Forgiveness, pardon, of sins (prop. the letting them go, as if they had not been committed ... remission of their penalty).” Thayer, p. 88

D. When Christians sin, see 1 John 1:7-2:2.

E. The happiness of forgiveness is seen in Romans 4:6-8.

F. Being saved brings happiness because:

1. We no longer have the guilt of sin — it is forgiven.
My sin — O the bliss of this glorious thought! —
My sin — not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to His cross and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!
— P. P. Bliss
2. We have fellowship with God.
 - a. John 14:23: Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him.”
 - b. 1 John 1:3-4: What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.
3. We have a good conscience. 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 John 3:19-22; Rom. 14:22
 - a. 1 Pet. 3:21: And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - b. 1 John 3:19-22: We shall know by this that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before Him, in whatever our heart condemns us, for God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from

Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

- c. Rom. 14:22: The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

Conclusion:

1. You can never have happiness in sin.
2. Be saved and know the joy of being a Christian.

No. 3

Happiness Is Doing Right

Introduction:

1. The word “happy” and “blessed” in the N.T. are usually from the same Greek word.
2. Being “blessed” means that we have a happy, peaceful, contented life in Christ.
3. Let us learn how that by doing right, happiness is ours.

I. Happiness is Learning From God.

Rev. 1:3: Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

II. Happiness is a Good Relationship with God by Walking with Him.

Psalm 128:1: Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways.

A. Look at the blessed man of Psalm 1.

B. Happiness is obeying God.

1. Prov. 29:18: Where there is no vision the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.
2. John 13:17: If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.
3. James 1:25: But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.
4. Luke 11:27-28: While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed.” But He said, “On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”
5. 1 Pet. 3:10-12: For “The one who desires life, to love and see good days, Must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. He must turn away from evil and do good; He must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, And His ears attend to their prayer, But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

III. Happiness is Living in Harmony with the Sermon on the Mount. Matt. 5

A. “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” vs. 3

1. One who realizes his own utter helplessness — who does not have the power, strength or ability to make it alone and therefore relies on God.
 - a. Prov. 16:18: Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.
 - b. 1 Pet. 5:5: ... and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.
2. The example of the publican. Luke 18:9-14
3. All the benefits of the kingdom of heaven belong to that person — he has happiness.

- B. "Blessed are those who mourn." vs. 4
1. Desperately sorry for his own sins and his own unworthiness. 2 Cor. 7:10: For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.
 2. This person is brought to comfort — happiness!
 3. Do you care about right and wrong?
- C. "Blessed are the meek." vs. 5
1. This describes the attitude toward God and toward man that we ought to have.
 2. Toward God it is the willingness to listen and learn. James 1:21
 3. Toward man there is the character that combines strength and gentleness.
 4. This person has the benefits of this earth — happiness!
- D. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness." vs. 6
1. This is the person with a spiritual appetite — literally, the person who is desperate, at the point of starvation. He feels extreme urgency!
 2. His urgent desire is for right-standing with God (Matt. 6:33).
 3. Happiness will be his: "he shall be filled."
- E. "Blessed are the merciful." vs. 7
1. Mercy is the ability to get inside the other person's skin until we can see things with his eyes and feel things with his feelings.
 2. The Samaritan was merciful. Luke 10:30
 3. This one shall obtain mercy — be happy.
- F. "Blessed are the pure in heart." vs. 8
1. This is the heart cleansed of sin that then produces in the person the kind of action that Jesus wants.
 2. This one shall have happiness — "he shall see God."
- G. "Blessed are the peacemakers." vs. 9
1. Peace with God and self. Phil. 4:7-9
 2. Peace with others. Rom. 12:18
- H. "Blessed are the persecuted." vs. 10-12
1. This shows that happiness is not dependent upon external circumstances but rather upon the attitude of heart and the relationship with God.
 2. "Rejoice..." Happiness is knowing that God is with us even in persecution.

IV. Happiness is Sharing.

Acts 20:35: "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

V. Happiness is Found in Overcoming Temptation.

James 1:12: Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

A. Yielding to temptation produces sin and sorrow.

B. There is peace and deep-seated contentment as a result of overcoming.

VI. Happiness is a Good Conscience.

A. The value of a good conscience.

1. 1 Tim. 1:5: But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.
2. Rom. 14:22: The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.
3. 1 Pet. 3:16: and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

B. The good conscience comes from knowing that we have obeyed God. 1 John 3:19-21

VII. Happiness is Praising God.

Psalm 92:1: It is good to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High.

A. Praise causes us to lift our eyes to God and get them off our problems. There is no faster way to route the enemy than to enter the courts of praise. Psalm 100:2, 4

B. Praise is the language of the redeemed. Rev. 5:12-13

C. Praise generates blessings, cheers our hearts, propels our souls toward God.

D. See 1 Thess. 5:18; Heb. 13:15; Psalm 107:8.

Conclusion:

1. Truly, you can be happy!
2. However, the only way to happiness is in doing what is right.
3. Resolve in your heart right now that you will do what is right and be happy.

No. 4

Happiness Is a Godly Home

Introduction:

1. “Home” can be the sweetest word in the language of man.
2. “Home” can be the nearest thing to heave on earth, or it can be the closest thing to hell — filled with hate, misery and sorrow.
3. The home is dependent upon how the members of it follow the principles that make for happiness.
4. How can you home be a happy home?

I. Why God Made the Home.

A. Mutual Companionship.

1. Gen. 2:18: Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”
2. Man and woman need each other. God provided for such companionship in the sanctity of marriage.

B. Physical Love.

1. Gen. 2:24: For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.
2. “one flesh” means the joining of the two bodies in marital union. 1 Cor. 7:1-5

C. Producing Children (when such is possible). Gen. 1:28; Psalm 127:3-4

D. Growth and development of children. Eph. 6:4:

E. The home is to be the haven of happiness for the husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, etc.

II. A Happy Home Must Have God at the Center.

A. He started the home (Gen. 2:18-25) and gives instructions to each of us as to how to make the home a haven of happiness.

B. To have God in our homes, we must each have Him in our lives. How?

1. God talks to us through His word. 1 John 2:3-5
2. We talk to God through prayer — both of these are vital in the home.
3. Happiness comes from a good conscience from obeying God. 1 John 3:19-24

III. A Happy Home Involves:

A. Love.

1. Love for God must be supreme. Matt. 22:37: And he said to them, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”
2. Love between husband/wife. Eph. 5:25, 28; Tit. 2:4
3. Love of parents for children. Tit. 2:4
4. Love of children for parents. Eph. 6:1-3
5. What love does. 1 Cor. 13:4-8

- a) is patient, b) is kind, c) is not jealous, d) does not brag, e) is not arrogant, f) does not act unbecomingly, g) does not seek its own, h) is not provoked, i) does not take into account a wrong suffered, j) does not rejoice in unrighteousness, k) does rejoice with the truth, l) bears all things, m) believes all things, n) hopes all things, o) endures all things. Love brings happiness!

B. Mutual responsibility. Col. 3:18-21

1. Husbands.

- a. The husband is the head of the wife and must take that responsibility. Eph. 5:23
- b. He is the “nourish and cherish” his wife even as his own body. vv. 28-29
- c. There is to be no bitterness. Col. 3:19; 1 Pet. 3:7
- d. If a husband loves his wife with all of his heart, he will not mistreat her.

2. Wives.

- a. Be in subjection to her husband. Eph. 5:22-24
- b. She must respect her husband. vs. 33; 1 Pet. 3:1-6

3. Parents are to bring up their children in the Lord. Eph. 6:4

4. Children also have responsibilities. Eph. 6:1-3

- a. Obey parents. Why?
- b. Honor parents. What does this involve?
- c. What is the promise connected with this command?

C. Godly living by each family member.

1. Jesus demands daily discipleship.

- a. Luke 9:23: And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.”
- b. Gal. 2:20: I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

2. The home sets the atmosphere of godly living.

- a. Pure speech. Eph. 4:29: Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.
- b. Diligence.
 - 1. Prov. 10:4: Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.
 - 2. Prov. 13:4: The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the soul of the diligent is made fat.
 - 3. The home is the ideal training place for diligence.
- c. The homes sets the pattern of a happy disposition. Phil. 4:4

D. Recreation.

- 1. There is a need for recreation. Eccl. 3:12-13

2. It adds zest to life.
 - a. Sin is not recreation; it is not really “fun.”
 - b. Sin brings sorrow and unhappiness.
3. Family recreation unites the family.
4. As a project for each family member: Write down four things you would like your family to do in recreation. Discuss these together as a family.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

Conclusion:

1. A happy home is not an accident.
2. It is the result of careful planning, diligent effort, and love that reaches very deeply into the lives of each family member.
3. Are you working to build a happy home?

No. 5

Happiness Is Reaching Out

Introduction:

1. Every requirement that the Lord gives is designed for the happiness of the person who performs it.
2. In reaching out to others with the gospel, there is a double amount of happiness — the joy that one has in being saved and the joy of the one who brings him to Christ.
3. The world's greatest need is reaching out to save souls.
 - a. Matt. 9:37-38: Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."
 - b. John 4:35: Do you not say, "There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest"? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.
4. Are you experiencing this happiness?

I. Personal Qualities Essential for Reaching Out.

A. Conviction.

1. The conviction that God's way is the only way to salvation and to happiness. John 14:6; Rom. 1:16
 - a. If a little child is lost, what will people do?
 - b. We need this same sense of urgency in soul-winning.
2. The conviction that God delights in soul-winning demands that we rescue the perishing. Luke 15:10: In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

B. Compassion.

1. Jesus' compassion. Matt. 23:37: Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.
2. Paul's compassion.
 - a. Rom. 9:1-3: I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.
 - b. Rom. 10:1: Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.
3. Jeremiah's compassion. Jer. 9:1: Oh that my head were waters And my eyes a fountain of tears, That I might weep day and night For the slain of the daughter of my people!
4. Are you really concerned about those who are going toward hell?

C. Courage.

1. Look at the courage of the apostles. Acts 4:18-19; 5:29

2. Think of Paul's courage in Athens (Acts 17:16) and in Corinth (18:9).
3. Do you have the courage to snatch one out of the fire? Jude 23: save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.

D. Consecration. Rom. 12:1-2

1. A lack of sincerity is readily detected by one whom we are seeking to win.
2. Let us be as Paul in Phil. 3:7-8, 14-15
3. Consecration makes doing God's will a pleasure.
 - a. Psalm 40:8: I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy law is within my heart.
 - b. 2 Cor. 8:5: and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

II. Early Christians Were Happy in Spreading the Word.

- A. They gladly shared their faith with others. Acts 2:42, 46; 20:20
 1. From house to house. Acts 5:42; 20:20
 2. They shared in the work. Acts 8:4; 11:19-20
- B. Look at the thousands that were converted: 3,000 - 5,000 multiplied! Throughout the Roman empire.

III. How Can We Reach Out with the Word?

- A. Each one who is saved can tell someone else about Jesus.
 1. "What I have learned, I will teach others. The more I learn, the more I will teach."
 2. What a thrill to see someone whom you have taught become a Christian.
 3. Andrew brought Peter to the Lord. John 1:40-42
 4. Philip brought Nathaniel to the Lord. John 1:43-51
- B. We can ask others to come to services or to a home class with us ... is there one of us who cannot do this?
- C. We can all pray for the conversion of others. Rom. 10:1; Col. 4:3-4

IV. The Happiness that Comes When One is Saved.

- A. Some parables illustrate this joy. Turn to Luke 15:
 1. The lost sheep. vv. 5-7
 2. The lost coin. vv. 8-10
 3. The lost son. vv. 20-24
- B. Philip and the eunuch. Acts 8:35-39
- C. Won't you share this joy by reaching out to others?

Conclusion:

1. The great scene in Heaven. Rev. 7:9-17
2. How many will be there in Heaven because of you?