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THE DOCTRINE OF HAPPINESS

Description of Happiness

Let's begin our subject with some principles.

A) Happiness is not having what you want; it is wanting what you have, or as we have seen before, it is being at a place of contentment.

Paul will say this to us in Phil 4:11 *"Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am."*

Phil 4:12 *"I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need."*

Phil 4:13 *"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."*

The word for content is the noun *autarkes* which means contentment, to be content, to be self-sufficient. It actually describes the happiness of the believer in spiritual adulthood.

B) The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts; therefore, you should guard the type of thoughts that you allow into your soul. You should be careful that you do not entertain any thoughts unsuitable to virtue and impersonal love.

This is why Paul said to the Philippians in Phil 4:8 *"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any virtue and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things."*

In fact, happiness and virtue rest upon each other; the best are not only the happiest, but the happiest are usually the best.

C) The truth is that all of us attain the greatest success and happiness possible in this life whenever we use our capacities to their greatest extent. It's our capacity that allows us to experience happiness.

That's why Hebrews 13:5 says *"Let your lifestyle be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, 'I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.'"*

D) There is only one way to happiness and that is to cease worrying about things which are beyond the power of our will. An unhappy person is involved with egotism, selfishness, evil, or absolute ignorance.

Happiness is a way of life. In fact, happiness requires problems.

As Paul will say to us in Phil 4:4 *"Be happy in the Lord always; again I will say, be happy!"*

Phil 4:5 *"Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near."*

Phil 4:6 *"Be anxious for nothing [stop worrying about anything], but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."*

Phil 4:7 *"And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

E) You'll never realize how happy you are until you go through certain problems and find out that your happiness has not been taken away.

1 Peter 1:3 *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."*

1 Peter 1:4 *"to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,"*

1 Peter 1:5 *"who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."*

1 Peter 1:6 *"In this you greatly rejoice [you have inner happiness], even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,"*

1 Peter 1:7 *"that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"*

1 Peter 1:8 *"and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with an inexpressible happiness and full of glory [a reference to a soul structure which thinks with God],"*

F) Happiness is not a reward for doing something; it is a consequence. In the Biblical realm, it is the consequence of taking in doctrine.

Proverbs 3:13 *"Happiness belongs to the person who finds wisdom, even to the person who gains understanding."*

G) We tend to forget that true happiness doesn't come as a result of getting something we don't have, but rather of recognizing and appreciating what we do have. This is where capacity comes in once again.

H) It is not the place, nor the condition, but the mind alone that can make anyone happy or miserable.

Proverbs 23:7 *"For as he thinks within himself, so he is."*

Proverbs 17:22 *"A happy heart is good medicine, But a broken spirit dries up the bones."*

I) Happiness is learning to understand rather than to immediately judge.

A person can save himself from many hard falls by refraining from jumping to conclusions. If you could only take some time to understand all the facts rather than immediately judge someone, you will experience a tranquil life, a life of peace and happiness.

J) Happiness means not following the majority and accepting their approach toward life.

A happy person is one who makes up his own mind, has his own convictions, and doesn't allow himself to be manipulated.

K) Happiness is not allowing yourself to indulge in the usual manipulation that goes on in life.

L) Happiness is coming to understand that life is best to be lived and not to be conceptualized or just considered.

A happy person is not afraid to live and is not afraid to fail.

M) A person is happy because they are growing daily and not thinking of where the limit lies.

Every day there can be a new revelation or a new discovery about life and about God. The happy person lives one day at a time and enjoys himself.

N) Happiness is also being able to treasure the memory of past misfortunes.

In fact, happiness isn't something you just experience; it's something you remember.

O) The happiest people are those who think the most interesting thoughts. Those who decide to use leisure as a means of mental development, who love good music, good books, good pictures, good company, good conversation, are the happiest people in the world. They are not only happy in themselves, but they share their happiness with others.

P) It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy, that makes happiness.

The key to true happiness is a change in our mental attitude.

Definition and Vocabulary

First of all let's begin with the English words used in the Bible for happiness.

The English noun "joy" refers to a state of happiness or bliss or something which causes happiness, great pleasure, or satisfaction. It is interesting that it is used by the apostle in the book of Philippians seven times, the number of completion or perfection.

The verb "rejoice" is also another word which describes happiness, and it is defined as an expression of a state of happiness or delight. Paul used this word eight times in the book of Philippians.

The English noun "happiness" is defined as a state of well being characterized by a relative, permanent contentment, marked by pleasure, satisfaction, or joy. In fact, it also means to be enthusiastic about life.

These English words do not necessarily reflect the original languages of Scripture.

Let's note the Hebrew words used for happiness.

Eshor is translated blessed, blessedness, happiness. It is usually found in the construct form ashere, generally translated happiness, blessing, blessed.

For example, in Psalm 1:1 *"How blessed [happy] is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!"*

Or look at Psalm 32:1 *"How blessed [happy] is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!"*

Psalm 32:2 *"How blessed [happy] is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!"*

Eshor and ashere on the basic words used for happiness in the Old Testament.

Then there are the Greek words used for happiness.

The noun *chara* is translated "joy." However, the Romans and Greeks were very cynical about happiness, and they didn't seek it in things and people as we do. So these Koine Greek words have different connotations from their English translations.

The noun *makarios* (usually in the plural *makaroi*) is translated "blessed" or "happiness." For example, it is the word used in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:3 *"Blessed [happy] are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

Matthew 5:4 *"Blessed [happy] are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."*

Matthew 5:5 *"Blessed [happy] are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth."*

Matthew 5:6 *"Blessed [happy] are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."*

Matthew 5:7 *"Blessed [happy] are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."*

Matthew 5:8 *"Blessed [happy] are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."*

Matthew 5:9 *"Blessed [happy] are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."*

Matthew 5:10 *"Blessed [happy] are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

Matthew 5:11 *"Blessed [happy] are you when [men] cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me."*

Matthew 5:12 *"Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*

However, these words used for translation do not explain the Biblical doctrine of happiness. The noun *autarkeia* comes a little closer, because it means contentment, to be content, or to be self-sufficient. It means a perfect condition of life in which no aid or support is needed.

It actually describes the happiness of spiritual adulthood.

It is used in 1 Timothy 6:6 *"But living the spiritual life keeps on being a great means of prosperity when accompanied by contentment or capacity for life."*

Notice how it is translated in 2 Corinthians 9:8 *"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency [there's *autarkeia* or another definition for happiness] in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;"*

Its verb *arkeo*, in the active voice, means to be sufficient; therefore to be self-sufficient. This comes closer to describing what Biblical happiness really is, and what happens to us when we execute the predesigned plan of God for the Church-age.

It is used in 2 Corinthians 12:9 *"And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."*

In the passive voice, this verb means to be satisfied and content. This refers to an expression of happiness related to spiritual autonomy.

The passive voice use of this is found 1Timothy 6:8 *"Now having nourishing food and a change of clothes, with these we shall be content."*

Now, we really cannot discover from these words alone what happiness is. We commonly use them in relationship to our emotions, stimulation, excitement, and anticipation. But we do not know what happiness is from these words in isolation. Therefore, to understand what happiness is becomes a grammatical, exegetical, contextual examination of certain passages of the Word of God.

In other words, one word doesn't really describe happiness. But to refer to it, we will use the commonly used word "happiness."

Most people carry the entrenched notion that some set of circumstances, things, or people can "make" us happy.

However, happiness is not something that is made or manufactured by you. We must never confuse happiness, as taught in the Word of God, with the various stimuli of life which are enjoyable for the moment, but have no ability to sustain us in day-by-day living.

Whatever happiness is, it is something we have with us all the time. It's only in the body to the extent that the soul is in the body, for happiness is related to the soul and spirit, to the immaterial parts of man, and is not related to the body at all.

Remember that rapport with God must precede rapport with people. And if you have no rapport with God, you will never have rapport with people, and you also will never experience true happiness.

Our corrected translation of Phil 1:15-18 reads, Phil 1:15, *"Certain ones, on the one hand, are proclaiming the Christ even from jealousy and strife or discord, but certain ones on the other hand because of good motivation"*

Phil 1:16 *"the latter category [the last ones mentioned in verse 15] out of the motivation of love, are fully convinced that I am appointed for the defense of the good news;"*

Phil 1:17 *"the former category [the first ones mentioned in verse 15] from the motivation of divisive self-promotion proclaim Christ, not from pure motives, since they presume to arouse mental distress with regard to my imprisonment."*

Phil 1:18 *"What is my conclusion? Only that in every way, whether in false motivation or in true, Christ is being proclaimed; and in this I am happy, not only at this time, but I will continue being happy."*

We have noted in relationship to this passage the subject of happiness, which is a very misunderstood concept in our day and age.

True happiness is having contentment no matter what type of situation you are faced with.

Happiness depends upon the quality of your thoughts.

There is only one way to happiness, and that is to cease worrying about things which are beyond the power of our control.

In fact, happiness requires problems. You'll never realize how happy you are until you go through certain problems and find out that your happiness has not been taken away.

We tend to forget that true happiness doesn't come as a result of getting something we don't have, but rather of recognizing and appreciating what we do have. It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy, that reveals our happiness.

So the key to true happiness is a change in our mental attitude.

The phrase "the pursuit of happiness" is actually a ridiculous phrase because if you pursue happiness you'll never find it.

The Biblical Categories of Happiness

- 1) Pseudo happiness or false happiness.
- 2) Establishment happiness from following the laws of divine establishment.
- 3) Perfect happiness which is the possession of divine happiness (also called +H).

Pseudo happiness is Satan's attempt to counterfeit the happiness, the contentment, and the blessing which God has provided for every Church-age believer as members of the royal family of God.

The provision of perfect happiness is found in our portfolio of invisible assets and the game plan for the Church-age, the protocol plan of God. However, as the ruler of this world, Satan loves to keep his citizens deceived through this counterfeit happiness. He does so by providing stimulation, ambition, and self-indulgence which will either counterfeit or cancel out the happiness God provides for us.

This is why the apostle John said in 1 John 2:15 *"Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."*

1 John 2:16 *"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world."*

1 John 2:17 *"And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever."*

Satan himself does not personally administer pseudo happiness to any person, but he does provide the system called in this passage the world, or the *kosmos*, which we call the cosmic system.

And the cosmic system provided by Satan is filled with illusions, delusions, fallacies, and misconceptions of happiness.

Satan's myth of arrogance is that both people and pleasant circumstances in life can make you happy. This of course is not true.

Satan's propaganda is that money, success, pleasure, social life, sexual life, public approbation, fame, material things, travel, health, and pleasant circumstances in life can make you happy.

This is only true under certain circumstances and with certain limitations; however, it doesn't last. Often these things are pleasurable, stimulating, fun, and enjoyable, but they cannot support you...especially in time of suffering.

By way of contrast, what God has provided for us in perfect happiness is a permanent factor and a problem-solving device.

Remember this principle, anything that is worthwhile is worthwhile in adversity as well as in prosperity.

If you are dependent on any person or set of circumstances for happiness, you are weak and you do not have happiness.

To the extent that you are dependent on people, circumstances, prosperity, success, or any accoutrements of life for happiness, you are weak.

But if, as a believer in Jesus Christ, you have been faithful in the reception, retention, and recall of Bible doctrine and have advanced to spiritual self-esteem, spiritual autonomy, or spiritual maturity; you are not only a strong person, but you have great inner happiness. You take this inner happiness with you wherever you go, just like the apostle Paul took it with him while in prison.

God's happiness isn't dependent on environment, associations, or circumstances of prosperity or adversity; it depends on none of these things.

God's happiness is simply a part of God's grace policy to believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Remember that Satan is the ruler of this world, Luke 3 4:5-7; John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11 [ruler]; 2 Corinthians 4:4 [god]; Ephesians 2:2 [prince]. In Ephesians 2:2, he is called the prince of the power of the air, or the one who controls the atmosphere in this world. Here the "atmosphere" refers to the educational system, the media, television, radio, literature, or any other means that the kingdom of darkness can use to invade your system of thinking.

Satan rules and controls through a policy called arrogance, in contrast to God's policy of grace. However, Satan's administration of pseudo happiness to any believer or unbeliever can only exist when that person is involved in the cosmic system. This happens primarily in cosmic one, where through arrogance, any capacity for true happiness is destroyed.

Arrogance destroys any capacity for happiness. The presence of arrogance in your soul is a guarantee of unhappiness perpetuated for the rest of your life.

Arrogance includes jealousy, and you cannot be jealous and be happy.

It includes self-pity, and you cannot have self-pity and be happy.

It includes a guilt complex, which you cannot have and be happy.

It also includes implacability, vindictiveness, hatred, revenge motivation, revenge function; any of these can keep you from being happy. All mental attitude sins, which add up to motivational arrogance, guarantee the exclusion of any happiness. Then from there you will move to functional arrogance, which only intensifies your unhappiness, causing you to begin a frantic search for happiness, and to try all sorts of things that will only make you unhappy.

Your life might be like the fool mentioned in Luke 12:16 *"And He told them a parable, saying, 'The land of a certain rich man was very productive.'"*

Luke 12:17 *"And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?'"*

Luke 12:18 *"And he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.'"*

Luke 12:19 *"And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years [to come]; take your ease, eat, drink [and] be merry.'"*

Luke 12:20 *"But God said to him, 'You fool! This [very] night your soul is required of you; and [now] who will own what you have prepared?'"*

Luke 12:21 *"So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."*

Unhappiness destroys the potential for contentment and appreciation and causes people to go on the frantic search for happiness. This complete and total search for pleasure eventually results in the total destruction of the individual.

No amount of material possession produces wealth; but enjoying what we have, no matter how much or how little it may be, is what makes us wealthy.

And, for those in the world, it is very hard to tell what does bring happiness because poverty and wealth have both failed. The problem is these people have been deceived by the god of this world.

That's why in Revelation 12:9 we are told *"And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world;"*

So, the arrogance complex is very deceptive because it deludes, distracts, and deceives mankind into false notions about what constitutes happiness. A short good time can certainly be construed as happiness during the time it occurs.

Pseudo happiness can be stimulation, fun, entertainment, or something that is enjoyable, but it isn't permanent; it is momentary. It depends upon a set of circumstances and an environment pleasant to you. And the great deceiver of this world has trapped many individuals by causing them to be suckers for pseudo happiness.

As 2 Timothy 2:26 says they are being *"held captive by Satan to do his will."*

So this is called pseudo happiness because, beyond that moment of good time, there are bad times, routine times, or dull times. And when you are bored or facing problems, that past temporary happiness does not sustain you. People cannot be carried by good times.

However, by way of contrast, perfect happiness is a magnificent problem-solving device because you have it all the time, and you merely tune into it during problem solving.

Perfect happiness is not only a problem-solving device, but it is a basis for capacity for life.

Arrogant preoccupation with self through involvement in the cosmic system guarantees unhappiness, and it guarantees that every moment of stimulation, success, or enjoyment will neither be perpetuated nor sustain you in day-by-day life.

Therefore, it is called pseudo happiness. You are stimulated and you call it happiness, but it's gone tomorrow.

Pseudo-happiness is associated with any form of stimulation, enjoyment, or excitement which provides temporary pleasure, but it does not sustain, motivate, or encourage the believer in time of adversity, pressure, suffering, or testing, during which time he needs to use the resources of doctrine to solve the problems that beset him.

And instead of true happiness, if you are involved with the cosmic system this guarantees you self-induced misery and divine discipline. You can be free to indulge yourself in every whim of life, and yet become frustrated and miserable. You must have capacity for

happiness to really be happy, and then you can be happy in whatever life has to offer you in a given moment. Capacity for happiness must precede the experience or function of happiness.

Morality, self-control, and self-determination based on divine standards of the Word of God will produce two kinds of happiness in your life.

1) The unbeliever who functions under morality without arrogance will have establishment happiness from the laws of divine establishment.

2) The believer who functions under consistent perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine will receive perfect happiness, which is a day-by-day, moment-by-moment happiness that carries you in the darkest of nights and the most difficult of times.

Life is divided into two parts: living and dying. And if you have perfect happiness in living, you will have perfect happiness in dying, whether it is prolonged and painful or short and sweet.

The only difference between living and dying is that, in living, we have the full use of our volition toward doctrine. However, in dying, our volition is no longer an issue because God's sovereignty selects the time, place, and manner of our death.

If you live in the cosmic system, you will have a pseudo happiness in living and therefore a pseudo happiness in dying; and you will die miserably with a lifestyle of fear. Your mental attitude of panic will actually intensify all your problems in dying.

But if you have perfect happiness, you will have a magnificent life and a magnificent time while dying.

Another area in which you can have either pseudo happiness or God's perfect happiness is in your single or marital status.

If you have pseudo happiness, when you are single, you wish you were married; and when you are married, you wish you were single. But if you have perfect happiness, it doesn't make any difference whether you are single or married.

If you have perfect happiness and impersonal love in marriage, you can resolve all marital problems. That doesn't mean that the marriage is always going to work out; in many cases it does not. However, it does mean you don't have to have any bitterness, jealousy, anger, vindictiveness, or revenge motivation, like so many do when their marriage doesn't work out.

Remember that the four divine institutions are for believers and unbelievers alike. They are the basis of structure in society, the basis for the perpetuation of human life and freedom, and the basis for order in society by which each person can fulfill his own destiny while others fulfill theirs.

However, neither divine institution number one, volition, nor divine institution number two, marriage, sustained and carried Adam and the woman in perfect environment. Before the fall of man, two divine institutions existed. There was freedom of volition, divine institution number one, and then there was marriage, divine institution number two. There was no family and no nation, which are divine institutions numbers 3 and 4. However, the marriage of Adam to the woman was a flop, a failure, as noted by Adam's original sin and the woman's sin.

And as they left the garden, God gave each one a mandate, and whether you and I like it or not is not the issue; God said "Husband, work! Wife, bear children!" God didn't tell them, "Go forth and be happy." In fact, throughout the Scripture, there are no mandates to be happy in marriage, because marriage is not a state of happiness. And if you did a study in the word of God, you would find out that certain marriages were flops, but the individuals still had perfect happiness.

For example, remember Abraham's deceitful and cowardly attitude toward his wife Sarah, Gen 12:12-13, 20:1-18. They didn't have a good marriage, but they both ended up winner believers and had the happiness of God.

Moses divorced his first wife Zipporah in Exodus 18:2, but he still had the happiness of God during that terrible marriage where she threw some foreskin at him. I'll let the Living Bible give you an idea of what happened. Exodus 4:25 *"Then Zipporah his wife took a flint knife and cut off the foreskin of her young son's penis, and threw it against Moses' feet, remarking disgustedly, 'What a blood-smearred husband you've turned out to be!'"*

He didn't have a good or happy marriage, but he had the happiness of God.

Do you think that David had a happy marriage when in 2 Samuel 5:13 *"Meanwhile David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem,"?*

He didn't have a good or happy marriage, or in his case, marriages, but he had the happiness of God. In fact, in 2 Samuel 6:16, it says that his wife Michal hated him. However, David still had God's happiness.

Hosea is another example of a winner believer who did not have a happy marriage.

Hosea 1:2 *"When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea, 'Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry [or go marry a whore], and [have] children of harlotry; for the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking the Lord.'"*

Hosea 1:3 *"So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son."*

He didn't have a good or happy marriage but he had the happiness of God.

Now, the point is, marriage was never designed for happiness. A happy marriage occurs when two happy people enter into a state of matrimony and in that state retain their happiness.

The only happy people who can do this are those who have perfect happiness or establishment happiness.

An unhappy marriage occurs when two unhappy people get married and retain their unhappiness. Or when a happy person and an unhappy person get married, and the unhappy person dominates and controls the marriage, the happy person loses his happiness.

A marriage is successful when two unhappy people get married, and through the predesigned plan of God or the laws of divine establishment, attain happiness and live together in a state of contentment.

But with regard to believers, it is impossible for believers to have a happy marriage apart from spiritual growth, execution of the protocol plan of God, and possession of perfect happiness.

The best potential for a great marriage belongs to believers who are positive toward doctrine.

If the carnal believer tries to have a good marriage through establishment, his carnality and arrogance cancel out the establishment principles. Therefore, the believer's only hope is to grow in grace through the perception of Bible doctrine.

A successful marriage is possible for any two believers who are both positive toward Bible doctrine.

An unsuccessful marriage also happens when a happy person and an unhappy person get married, and the unhappy person causes the happy person to revert to the cosmic system.

A failing marriage occurs when the happy person married to an unhappy person changes his priorities in life so that he loses his premarital happiness.

So marriage will not make you happy. In fact, if you are involved in the arrogance of the cosmic system, marriage will intensify and increase your misery.

People, marriage, sex, prosperity, success cannot make you happy. Only the execution or fulfillment of the protocol plan of God and the use of the ten problem-solving devices can make you happy.

In fact, success is getting what you want; happiness is wanting what you get.

And once you have perfect happiness, you have the same happiness and the same capacity for happiness in adversity as well as in prosperity.

In Phil 4:13 *"You can do all things through Him who strengthens you."*

There are also those who are single who are waiting for their right man or right woman, 1 Corinthians 7:17. This includes those who haven't been married and those who have been married, but are not now married. Remember that those divorced with the legal right to remarry are in single status, and have the bona fide right under certain conditions to remarry, Deut 24:1-4. These conditions include unfaithfulness on the part of the opposite partner or desertion by the opposite partner.

However, if you are single and looking for happiness, do not look for it in someone of the opposite sex...you won't find it!

People are no better in marriage than they are as people.

People are never the same after marriage; they change either for the better or the worse. Marriage is a problem manufacturing device which demands the best from every believer.

So in 1 Cor 7:32 *"But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord;"*

1 Cor 7:33 *"but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife,"*

1 Cor 7:34 *"and his interests are divided. And the woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband."*

1 Cor 7:35 *"And this I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is seemly, and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord."*

So you see, being married or single is not an issue in having the happiness of God.

What happens to a lot of single people is that they don't know how to deal with loneliness. When human loneliness comes in we need to deal with it according to doctrine or else depression will set in.

There are four types of depression:

- 1) Mental attitude depression in which the individual is in a state of sorrow and self-pity.
- 2) Passive depression in which the person becomes very passive toward the necessary functions of life with no initiation.
- 3) Aggressive depression in which the person becomes very violent in his reactions.
- 4) Moody depression which produces a negative, complaining and critical person.

A believer who allows this depression to go unchecked is making a provision for serious problems down the road.

The lonely person then becomes a miserable person and looks to others for happiness. In fact, for some believers even Christianity appears to be only another temporary source of relief similar to the world's provision of escapism. That's why the arrogant visitor to the local church demands attention under the false assumption that a so-called "friendly church" will bring happiness. A friendly church cannot make anyone happy.

Man's loneliness and anxiety is the result of an empty, aimless, meaningless life because of rejection of the protocol plan of God. So an area in which you can have either temporal happiness or God's perfect happiness is in your single or marital status.

There are many illusions related to pseudo happiness. An illusion is defined as an erroneous perception of reality, or an erroneous concept or belief. It is actually the condition of being deceived by a false perception or belief. If you have illusions relating to happiness, you must deal with them because if you don't, you will end up with a meaningless life because of rejection of the truth.

Obadiah 1:3 *"The arrogance of your heart has deceived you."*

So let's note some of the illusions and misconceptions that people have concerning happiness.

A) The most common illusion relates to the fact that you cannot build your happiness on the details of life: money, success, pleasure, social life, friends, relatives, health, sex, or status symbols. Now, don't misunderstand this statement. If you have capacity from perfect happiness, you can enjoy these things to the maximum.

However, they are not a source of happiness, but simply a means of expressing the happiness you already possess.

B) You cannot build your happiness on pleasant environment. This is one of the reasons why people travel; they think a change of environment makes them happy.

C) You cannot build your happiness on people, romance, marriage, friendship, children, or social activity. This is another myth, that people can make you happy.

Popularity relates to other people liking you, happiness relates to you liking yourself.

D) You cannot build your happiness by changing the devil's world through reform crusades, social engineering, violence, civil disobedience, or revolution. **Your objective should not be to change the devil's world; instead, you should be a witness for Christ to people. You should be telling them the good news and the importance of doctrine. You can do that on your jobs, in your neighborhood, at your schools, by bringing them to our website, or even sharing doctrine in chat rooms on the Internet.**

E) You cannot build your happiness on someone else's unhappiness. If that is the case, you are full of all the sins of the arrogance complex. You're jealous, bitter, vindictive, implacable, angry, full of hatred, self-pity, filled with guilt reactions that motivate you. You malign, gossip, run down, and get involved in revenge modus operandi.

Principles related to pseudo happiness:

1) Pseudo happiness depends on involvement with the evil of the cosmic system of Satan, and therefore can only be related to a moment of time, a moment of pleasure, a moment of history, a moment of power, a moment of approbation, or a moment of success.

The key word here of course here is a "moment." Anything you have in a moment, which cannot be perpetuated, is not happiness, and too often it is related to emotion. Many individuals, including believers under the influence of evil, only have fleeting happiness based upon emotion.

For example, in Job 21:7, Job is talking to a reversionistic believer whose name is Zophar and he says *"Why do the wicked still live, why do they continue on and become very powerful?"*

In other words, Job is asking, "Why are you still standing in front of me Zophar! Why does God allow you to live, Zophar?"

Of course the answer to that is all believers, winners or losers, receive logistical grace support from the grace of God. Remember Matthew 5:45 *"for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."*

Winners and losers both have times of happiness in life. In context, Job's friend Zophar is a very wealthy and prosperous man, even though he is very self-righteous, arrogant and filled with inordinate ambition and inordinate competition. This is why Zophar is gloating over the fall of Job...which isn't a fall at all, because Job is being honored by God in evidence testing!

So in verse 7, Job says *"Why do the wicked still live, [as he looks right in the eyes of Zophar] Continue on, also become very powerful?"*

Job 21:8 *"Their descendants are established with them in their sight, And their offspring before their eyes,"*

They had nice family lives and did not lose all of their children like Job did.

Job 21:9 *"Their houses are safe from fear, Neither is the rod of God on them."*

Not on Zophar yet, but it will be!

Job 21:10 *"His ox mates without fail; His cow calves and does not abort or miscarry."*

Job is talking about prosperity in an agricultural economy!

Job 21:11 *"They send forth their little ones like the flock, And their children skip about."*

Job 21:12 *"They sing to the tambourine and the harp and rejoice at the sound of the flute [that's their pseudo happiness]."*

Job 21:13 *"They spend their days in prosperity and suddenly they go down to Sheol [or the grave; whether they are believers or unbelievers, when life is over, they will answer to God accordingly]."*

2) With pseudo happiness, when you get into serious trouble, you never recall the "good times;" because you've already entered into a state of arrogance and fear. These two mental attitudes guarantee you will never find any happiness apart from the laws of divine establishment for the unbeliever, and the attainment of spiritual adulthood for the believer.

3) Pseudo happiness depends on the environment, superficial pleasures of life, material things, status symbols, approbation from society, pleasure, success, social life, sexual activity, stimulation from drug abuse; this false happiness is self-gratification related to the lust pattern of the old sin nature.

And that's why Solomon said it was vain in Eccl 2:1 *"I said to myself, 'Come now, I will test you with pleasure. So enjoy yourself.' And behold, it too was vanity."*

4) Pseudo happiness is superficial, changeable, unstable, frustrating, and temporary; it's the source of self-induced misery under the law of volitional responsibility.

It's limited to this life, Psalm 17:14, Luke 16:25.

It is short, Job 20:5 *"The triumphing of the wicked is short, And the happiness of the godless momentary?"*

Pseudo happiness is uncertain, Luke 12:20.

It is vain, Eccl 2:1, 7:6.

It is derived from wealth, Psalm 52:7; power, Psalm 37:35; worldly prosperity, Psalm 17:14; gluttony, Isaiah 22:13; drunkenness, Isaiah 56:12; vain pleasure, Isaiah 5:12; successful oppression, Habakkuk 1:15.

5) The belief that marriage, sex, success, prosperity, wealth, and social life can make someone happy is a myth. No one can make someone else happy. Some people think of marriage as a state of happiness, while others think of being single as a state of happiness. In fact, foolish people get married because someone promises to make them happy forever, or because they want to leave the environment of an unhappy home and transfer their unhappiness into their own new unhappy nest. This is the "both sides of the fence" syndrome. Both the poor and the rich, the single and married, are unhappy, looking to the other side of the fence for happiness.

6) Unhappy people take their unhappiness with them wherever they go, even if they cross over to the other side of the fence, whether it's poor or rich, single or married. Those believers who reject Bible doctrine cultivate unhappiness, and always take it with them. Unhappy people complain constantly because their desires are not being met. In reality, if you really want to experience happiness, you don't need to add riches to your life but you need to have certain desires removed.

7) The arrogance of unhappiness assumes that people, success, prosperity, promotion, romance, marriage, friendship, attention, approbation can make you happy. However, in reality, as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, only Bible doctrine in your soul can make you happy; i.e., reception, retention, recall of Bible doctrine.

Only the provision of God's grace policy can really make you happy, and that demands the three "R"s:

A) Reception is consistent perception of Bible doctrine.

B) Retention is the metabolization of doctrine, converting gnosis to epignosis doctrine.

C) Recall is the application of doctrine to whatever your circumstances may be, to whichever side of the fence you are on. The day you can look over on the other side, and be glad you're on your side of the fence, is the day you begin to apply this point.

8) For example, look at Satan himself. He was the most beautiful, successful, attractive creature genius of all time. He had a maximum amount of power over millions or even perhaps billions of angels. Yet Satan, right now as the ruler of this world, is bored, miserable, frustrated, and very, very unhappy!

All the things that you think will make you happy have not made Satan happy, and he has them all!

Satan as the ruler of this world has certain ways to provide pseudo happiness. One is to provide temporary happiness to certain believers and unbelievers who carry out his will of evil and perform human good. This is why the wicked prosper.

Satan's system of evil provides certain stimulus for human emotions. He has stimuli designed to make you think you are happy. His system rewards people who follow his precepts. This pseudo happiness is related to reversionism, the interlocking systems of arrogance (his cosmic systems one and two), and the function of evil in the soul.

However, since this pseudo happiness depends on involvement with evil, it can only be related to this life. This type of pseudo happiness involves pushing for a better environment, superficial pleasures in time, the details of life, promotion, and the saturation of the lust pattern of the old sin nature. This pseudo happiness is the temporary triumph of evil in the human soul, 2 Samuel 1:19-20.

So, Satan is the greatest genius of all created beings. However, while he has the ability to provide pseudo happiness, he doesn't have the ability to maintain it for you. He can't give logistical support to human prosperity. Therefore, pseudo happiness quickly evaporates in time of historical disaster or divine discipline. The children of Israel were happy when they rejected the manna from heaven and asked God for quail, and in their happiness notice what happened, Num 11:33 *"While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very severe plague."*

Job 15:21 *"Sounds of terror are in his ears, while at peace the destroyer comes upon him."*

The Jews had pseudo happiness as they rejected Bible doctrine and notice what happened to them in Jeremiah 25:10 *"Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp."*

Jeremiah 25:11 *"And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."*

So, pseudo happiness quickly evaporates in time of historical disaster. Pseudo happiness is also quickly wiped out by boredom, frustration, and the frantic search for happiness. The believer who has anything related to pseudo happiness is miserable with what he has. Pseudo happiness doesn't sustain mankind, but destroys both his perspective and his eternal future.

So, happiness is an individual state of the soul and actually has nothing to do with associations in life.

Unhappy people seek happiness through the control of their environment, including persons in their environment like family, friends, and loved ones. They do this in one of two ways:

- 1) By causing those around them to have a guilt complex or a guilt reaction for alleged or real neglect.
- 2) By arousing pity from others in their state of self-pity.

Self-pity is a monstrous thing! If you're dating someone who is obsessed with self-pity, move away from them like the plague! The attention that comes through pity is the worst attention you can receive. Pity is the flattery that the failure craves so that he or she may preserve their excuses and their self-esteem. In fact, self-pity occurs in the life of the believer who loses intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ.

So the arrogance of unhappiness, or pseudo happiness, not only seeks to dominate and enslave, but also has wide emotional swings. It is one of the many reasons for neurosis and psychosis in believers.

Establishment happiness is the temporal happiness of the unbeliever who lives by establishment principles. This happiness is derived from submitting to the laws of divine establishment, which are designed to remove arrogance and fear from the life, and to replace them with a genuine humility. This results in a capacity for life and the attainment of human honor and integrity. This explains why so many unbelievers are happier than many believers; living in the laws of divine establishment can provide happiness for them.

Establishment is for believer and unbeliever alike; however if a believer just lives under establishment happiness and rejects the plan of God, he will be under divine discipline and therefore will not experience establishment happiness.

Under establishment happiness, the unbeliever moves beyond morality to a place of limited virtue, becoming a person of honor. The unbeliever can achieve this happiness through enforced and genuine humility from the laws of divine establishment.

The key to happiness in the unbeliever is having a fantastic humility. For example, the unbeliever can marry a woman with whom he has total compatibility (i.e., compatibility of both soul and body), and at the same time he can work in some job or profession which he enjoys. Eccl 9:9 mentions these two areas of life, marriage and work, as the basis for which unbelievers can have a genuine short-term happiness compatible with their capacity.

Eccl 9:9 *"Enjoy life [establishment happiness] with your right woman whom you have loved all the days of your life of vanity which God has given you under the sun, for this is your*

reward in life [establishment happiness], and [enjoy] your occupation in which you are working under the sun."

This successful marriage and happiness in your occupation is a blessing from God even to the unbelievers. In this passage, note that both the woman and the job are said to be a gift from God. When it says Eccl 9:9 *"Enjoy life with your right woman whom you have loved all the days of your life of vanity which God has given you under the sun,"* it is not saying that God has given you the life of vanity, but the right woman and the occupation. The doctrine of right man / right woman is illustrated throughout the Bible. It is taught very clearly in Gen 2:18-25, Eccl 9:9, 1Cor 7:17, Prov 18:22, 19:14, Prov 5, 31, just to name a few passages.

So again, Eccl 9:9 *"Enjoy life [establishment happiness] with your right woman whom you have loved all the days of your life of vanity which God has given you under the sun, for this is your reward in life [establishment happiness], and [enjoy] your occupation in which you are working under the sun."*

A *"life of vanity"* refers to the life of the unbeliever. Whatever kind of life it is, it's very short-term. As flawed as the unbeliever is, God has provided for him a system in which he can have happiness in marriage. Note that God gives life even to the unbeliever. There are rewards in this life for certain unbelievers who have virtue and honor based upon establishment principles. The type of work is not specified here; it can be any job he enjoys. This explains why some unbelievers are very happy, but remember it is very short-term. Beyond the grave they will first face Torments in Hades, and then spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

So two things can make an unbeliever happy: a successful relationship in marriage, and his occupation in life. Happiness in these two areas comes to the unbeliever who has developed honor and integrity from the laws of divine establishment. Note what is not mentioned: social life, pleasure, emotion, stimulation, etc. This happiness is the unbeliever's reward for compliance with the laws of divine establishment; however, it is not a reward for the unbeliever's morality, which carries with it the sting of arrogance. Once a person becomes arrogant about his morality, he enters into self-righteousness and crusader arrogance, and becomes the unhappiest of all people because he is judgmental.

The tragedy of establishment happiness is that there is no perpetuation of this happiness beyond the grave, which brings it to a screeching halt (if not terminated before then). But even when perpetuated to the grave, establishment happiness cannot be perpetuated beyond time and eternity is a long, long time.

However, all too often, establishment happiness becomes a victim of circumstances. Certain adverse circumstances are stronger than establishment happiness and can wipe it out. So establishment happiness cannot even survive tragedy or any real adversity; it is a restricted and temporary happiness. It is vulnerable to environment and circumstances. For example, a man may be very happy with his wife. But if she becomes unhappy and leaves him, his reward in life is gone. If a man loves and enjoys his job or profession, this can also be lost. Therefore, establishment happiness is dependent upon cognition and compliance with establishment principles, according to Rom 13.

Where establishment does not exist, establishment happiness does not exist. This is not a reference to morality or self-righteousness. Morality is merely the bottom step in

establishment; honor and integrity are higher. The result of obedience to the laws of divine establishment is not a happiness associated with pleasant things, but a happiness associated with important things.

Under the laws of divine establishment, establishment happiness is possible when one's children turn out well. Look at Prov 23:24-25 *"The father of the virtuous children will be happy [establishment happiness]. Therefore, he who brings forth a wise son will be happy. Let your father and your mother be happy. Let her who gave birth to you be happy."* When one's children have virtue and integrity, this gives the parent or parents a measure of prosperity.

Again however, establishment happiness is a temporary happiness which does not sustain anyone under pressure or carry over into eternity. For example, you could be very proud that your children turned out well, and then something may go wrong and your establishment happiness would disappear in a moment. This leaves nothing but scars and emotional hangovers. Establishment happiness doesn't last!

The most important happiness found in the word of God is perfect happiness which is the possession of God's Happiness, or +H.

1) For example, establishment happiness is dependent happiness; perfect happiness is independent happiness. Establishment happiness is dependent on circumstances; perfect happiness is independent in the soul of any believer who has attained any stage of spiritual adulthood. It begins at spiritual self-esteem, continues at spiritual autonomy, and becomes the most fantastic thing in life at spiritual maturity.

2) Perfect happiness or divine happiness is the monopoly of the believer in spiritual adulthood. It only belongs to those few believers who reach the three stages of spiritual adulthood.

3) However, relatively few believers have this perfect happiness because it requires consistent perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine and the advance to spiritual adulthood, especially maturity.

This requires something that no lazy-minded person can do, and that is to concentrate on anything for very long. Now, this is why our Lord said in John 8:31 *"Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, [then] you are truly disciples of Mine;'"*

John 8:32 *"and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

In John 8:31 *"If you abide in My word,"* the word *"abide"* is the aorist-active-subjunctive of the verb [meno](#), which looks like [meinete](#) in the Greek, meaning "to stay in a given place, to continue, to dwell, to endure, to be present, to remain, to stand, not to depart, or to last." This is an excellent definition of persevering as a disciple of Bible doctrine.

John 8:31 *"If you abide [stay, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, and not depart, or last] in My word, [then] you are truly disciples of Mine;"*

You see, relatively few believers have this perfect happiness because it requires consistent perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine and the advance to spiritual adulthood, especially maturity. It takes work and discipline to keep coming to Bible class and study God's word on a daily basis. And that's why our Lord said in John 8:31 *"If you*

abide in My word, [then] you are truly disciples of Mine." The word "disciple" is interesting because it's where we get our word discipline. It's the noun **mathetai** which is the plural of **mathetes**, and it means "a learner, a pupil, a disciple, a person who directs their mind toward something taught by someone."

That's why there were the disciples of Moses, John 9:28; the disciples of the Pharisees, Mark 2:18; the disciples of John the Baptist, John 3:25; the disciples of Paul, Act 9:25; and of course the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 16:21.

Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament in volume four on page 416 says this word denotes a "**direct dependence of the one under instruction upon an authority superior in knowledge.**" This is why God gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers, to equip the saints for the work of the ministry and to build up the body of Christ, Eph 4:11-12.

This means that if you know more doctrine than your pastor, it's time to find a new pastor. When Isaiah used this word, he used it for those who were students of the word of God.

Isaiah 8:16 *"Bind up the testimony, seal the law [the doctrine] among my disciples."*

Isaiah 50:4 *"The Lord God has given me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens me morning by morning, He awakens my ear to listen as a disciple."*

The word actually means the existence of a personal attachment which shapes the whole life of the disciple, or an intense dedication and devotion to something [in this case the word of God].

So in John 8:31 *"Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, [then] you are truly disciples of Mine;"*

John 8:32 *"and you shall know the truth [the doctrine], and the doctrine shall make you free."*

Relatively few believers have this perfect happiness because it requires consistent perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine and the advance to spiritual adulthood, especially maturity. It requires something that no lazy-minded person can do, and that is to concentrate on anything for very long. Most believers can't concentrate on doctrine long enough to learn the plan of God, and they are easily distracted and discouraged.

4) Perfect happiness or God's happiness carries over into the eternal state. Especially if you pass evidence testing, perfect happiness remains in perpetual status quo under three circumstances.

A) Living as a mature believer.

B) Dying as a mature believer.

C) The eternal state, where you will have a far, far greater happiness than believers who are losers but also in resurrection bodies.

Remember that there are degrees of life after death. The capacity of the mature believer for the most fantastic eternal rewards is built into the perfect happiness the mature believer has.

Perfect happiness, or sharing the happiness of God, can be defined as the happiness of the humanity of Christ during the great power experiment of the hypostatic union. It is the only happiness that does not change with disastrous or difficult circumstances in life.

With the perpetuation of the great power experiment of the hypostatic union into the Church-age, perfect happiness is further defined as divine happiness resident in the soul of the Church-age believer who utilizes his portfolio of invisible assets and divine omnipotence to attain spiritual maturity.

In spiritual maturity, perfect happiness reaches its peak; there is nothing like it in this life! When the positive believer fulfills the protocol plan of God beginning in spiritual adulthood, he attains the ultimate in perfect happiness by utilizing two categories of divine power:

- 1) The omnipotence of God the Father related to portfolio of invisible assets.
- 2) The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit related to the filling of the Spirit, the perception of Bible doctrine and the execution of the protocol plan of God.

Perfect happiness results from the constant perception of Bible doctrine inside the protocol plan of God. This is a perpetual happiness for every category of existence after salvation. That's why Paul will say to us in Phil 1:21 *"For me living is Christ and dying is profit."*

He had this perfect happiness in living, in dying, and in the eternal state waiting for the resurrection.

It's important to note that opposition from Satan and persecution by other believers in the cosmic system only intensifies the believer's perfect happiness.

You will never realize how happy you are until you go through certain problems and find out that your happiness has not been taken away.

The perfect happiness of God is not manifested by laughing and joking around about your problems and taking them lightly; but manifested by contentment, peace, composure, tranquility, and being unmoved by the evil around you.

Happiness is not an absence of problems but the ability to deal with them.

Biblical descriptions of the three happiness categories:

A) A perfect description of pseudo-happiness is given in Luke 11:27-28. The woman in this context spoke of happiness, but she was not happy, nor did she understand happiness. She was an unhappy person trying to control her environment.

She attempted to put our Lord down using the false propaganda of women's liberation.

In Luke 11:27 *"And it came about while He said these things [in context, He was speaking about the angelic conflict and the absurdity of self-reformation], one of the women in the crowd raised her voice but shouted, and said to Him, 'Happy is the womb that carried You, and the breasts at which You nursed.'"*

Luke 11:28 *"But He said, 'On the contrary [Wrong!], happy are those who keep hearing and retaining the Word of God.'"*

This woman had no class or manners; she was rude and interrupted our Lord. She interrupted to draw attention to herself, because she was jealous, vindictive, and ambitious. She expressed the false doctrine of motherhood; she said that Mary was only happy

because she was carrying a baby in her womb. Since she was a student of the Old Testament, she knew that there is no human life in the womb, so she added the phrase "the breasts you have sucked."

Here she tried to prove that woman is superior to the man. In other words, she is saying, "You may be a great public speaker, Jesus, but you too were once a little baby and a happy mother is the reason why you are here, and the only people who are really happy are mothers who nurse so that their baby can live.

"And the only reason why any man is great like you Jesus is because a woman brought you into the world!"

You see, you've got to get a picture of this woman. In the midst of hundreds and perhaps even thousands of people, she yelled out her personal opinion, and tried to put our Lord down and elevate Mary.

In other words, she was saying, "You're a mere man!"

So, to put Him down, she was pointing out to everyone that this was merely a man from a womb.

Our Lord was perfect and an aristocratic gentleman, so His answer to this arrogant woman, who was not a lady, came from the perfect gentleman!

His first word in verse 28 was "Wrong!" He shouted this right back, and then He went on to explain what real perfect happiness really is. Our Lord taught that perfect happiness is associated with doctrine, not with all the things we associate with happiness. Our Lord gave the perfect definition of perfect happiness.

Luke 11:28 But He said, "*Wrong, blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it.*"

Hearing refers to consistent reception of doctrine. Observing refers to retention of doctrine, converting gnosis to epignosis doctrine by positive volition.

Our Lord could have made an issue out of any of the things she brought out, but He only made an issue of doctrine. He did not make an issue of her arrogance or her cosmic viewpoint on women, but of the Word of God. There is no happiness in life for the believer apart from Bible doctrine, which must come first in his life.

B) Establishment happiness is found in Prov 29:18 "*Where there is no revelation [establishment], the people are unrestrained. But happy [establishment happiness] is that person who keeps the Law [laws of divine establishment].*"

C) Perfect happiness is found in 1 John 1:4 "*In fact, we write these things that our happiness may be brought to completion.*"

John got this message from the upper room discourse. Whatever perfect happiness is, it comes through the communication of doctrine, and it is a process which has to be completed.

He has this happiness because he has utilized his portfolio of invisible assets and divine omnipotence to learn doctrine and attain spiritual maturity.

In spiritual maturity, perfect happiness reaches its peak; there is nothing like it in this life! Perfect happiness is a perpetual happiness for every category of existence after salvation.

Last evening we noted that relatively few believers have perfect happiness or the happiness of God because it requires consistent dedication and devotion to studying the Word of God.

It requires concentration on the will of God and the plan of God. That's why we are told that the same happiness that TLJC had in His humanity while on this earth is the same happiness that is available to us.

The relationship between our Lord's perfect happiness and the Church-age believer's perfect happiness is given in John 15:11 *"I have taught you these things, in order that My happiness [perfect happiness] might be in you, and that your happiness may be full or completed."*

The phrase *"may be full"* is aorist-passive-subjunctive of the verb *pleroo*, which has four basic meanings:

- 1) To fill up a deficiency. We are all deficient of the happiness of God and need doctrine in the soul to give it to us.
- 2) To fully possess. The believer must be fully possessed by the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine before he can be fully possessed by the happiness of God
- 3) To fully influence. The believer is fully influenced by Bible doctrine so that he can have capacity for happiness.
- 4) To fill with a certain quality. The filling of the Spirit and doctrine resident in the soul is the highest quality with which the believer can be filled.

In His thirty-three years on earth until His resurrection, ascension, and session, our Lord had perfect happiness. He acquired perfect happiness through His residence in the predesigned plan of God, and if you remain in God's plan for your life on a consistent basis, you will eventually experience the perfect happiness of God.

In this dispensation of the Church, we have the potential for the same perfect happiness that our Lord Jesus Christ had. This happiness sustained Him during the most intensified form of human suffering ever, when He was judged for our sins upon the cross.

For we read in Heb 12:2 *"Be concentrating on Jesus [occupation with Christ], the author and perfecter of our doctrine, who because of His exhibited happiness He endured the cross, having disregarded the shame, and He sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

Our Lord attained perfect happiness while living inside the protocol plan of God for His life which allowed Him to have happiness in His humanity, and that same perfect happiness can be attained by us. There is nothing that even comes close to it on planet earth. It is one of the greatest of all objectives in the Christian life.

When Jesus Christ was being judged for our sins on the cross, He demonstrated the fact that the mature believer with perfect happiness can endure anything in life. This is one of the reasons for the extension of the great power experiment of the hypostatic union into the Church-age. Therefore, the power that sustained our Lord on the cross, the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit inside the protocol plan of God, is now available to us as members of the royal family of God.

With this availability of divine power, every Church-age believer can attain the same perfect happiness which carried our Lord through a type of suffering beyond human

imagination. Notice in John 15:11, the words "*in you*" teaches that happiness resides in the individual. This happiness "*becomes completed or fulfilled*," meaning it develops in stages. Spiritual self-esteem is only the beginning of perfect happiness. By advancing through providential preventative suffering to spiritual autonomy, perfect happiness becomes stronger. By advancing through momentum testing to spiritual maturity, perfect happiness reaches its peak. When you pass evidence testing, then you have the perfect happiness that will exist forever and ever; in living, in dying, and in the eternal state forever.

This is one of the most phenomenal of all the things the believer can ever experience. This is the one "thing" you can take with you when you die, for perfect happiness resides in your soul, which you do take with you.

The execution of the protocol plan of God through the utilization of available divine power is the only means of attaining perfect happiness. Prov 3:13 "*Happiness belongs to the person who finds wisdom, even to the person who gains understanding.*"

Wisdom is metabolized doctrine being applied to your experience. You gain perfect happiness through gaining understanding about what life is truly all about. The only thing you can take with you wherever you go is what resides in your soul. This tells us that happiness depends upon the way that you think. Therefore, perfect happiness is more of a mental attitude toward life than it is the result of acquisitions or accomplishments.

Happiness is in the heart, not in the circumstances. Abraham Lincoln said, "People are just about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Unless we make up our minds to be happy no matter what the circumstances of our lives may be, we will never find happiness.

It is the way we think and act as we travel the road of life that determines whether or not we will be happy. The journey through life has its ups and downs, and none of us can be happy all the time. However, if we don't find at least some happiness along every mile of that road, then we will not find the fullness of happiness at the end of the journey. If we do not find happiness daily with our walk with TLJC and our relationship with God, we need to change our attitude, instead of pinning our hope on finding happiness later on. Happiness is found along the way, not at the end of the road.

True happiness is to enjoy the present, without depending upon the future change of circumstances.

We may think that if we just had more possessions and a different status, or fewer problems, we would be happy, but we wouldn't. It is foolish to look forward to the day when we will have no major problems to make us unhappy, because that day will never arrive in our lives. Some people even think that they need to identify and eliminate the causes of their unhappiness. But, no matter how many perceived causes of our unhappiness are eliminated, we will still be unhappy unless we change our attitude, and begin to develop the happiness of God through doctrine resident in the soul.

Perfect Happiness Must Be Related to the Essence of God

Happiness is actually a form of energy, energy beyond human imagination or understanding. God's perfect happiness is an energy that is available to us!

However, if you're going to enjoy happiness, you need to understand the omniscience of God.

God's omniscience knows all the sin and evil, all the cruel and vicious things in angelic and human history. This means that He has always known all the thoughts, decisions, motivations, and actions of every person in history. Yet none of this has ever caused God to lose His happiness for a moment. Therefore, nothing can destroy or change the happiness of God. It's impossible for God to be unhappy. Neither the failure of angels nor members of the human race has ever given God even a second of unhappiness.

If you are ever going to have the happiness of God, you must deal with the issue of guilt and condemnation from your own failures. Until you make peace with who you are, you'll never be happy and content with what you have. You can't go through life having the happiness of God thinking that at the end of the tunnel, there's a God waiting to condemn you. No one could have any happiness if they think that every thought and action is being monitored by a judgmental God.

The road to happiness involves finding the courage to take responsibility for our own mental attitude and to use the divine solutions available to us.

We are commanded to be joyful and happy because our Lord has borne our sorrows. With this in mind, don't be familiar with this passage but notice it in relationship to having the happiness of God.

Isaiah 53:3 *"He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him."*

Isaiah 53:4 *"Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted."*

Isaiah 53:5 *"But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being [fell] upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed."*

Isaiah 53:6 *"All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him not on us."*

Isaiah 53:7 *"He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth."*

He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief so that we need not be. You see, our own personal sins and limitations are the things that make us sorrowful. However, He had no sins and limitations; He was not sad for His sake, but for ours. He was a man of sorrows so that we could be men and women filled with happiness. He was acquainted with grief so that we could be filled with joy. He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows so that we could bear His happiness and rejoice within ourselves. He was pierced through for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities so that we would not be condemned for any personal sins. As verse 6 says, the Lord has caused the iniquities of us all to fall on Him so that they would not fall upon us.

So, if we remain guilty and condemned after understanding what He did for us, it is because we do not accept what He did for us. And if we suffer because of this, we deserve to suffer because all we need to do is believe what He did on our behalf. That's why happiness is a commandment.

God's happiness is also related to His personal, perfect, and complete sense of destiny. If you have a sense of destiny and know where your life is going, you will be relaxed and able to stay on the road to happiness. Happiness and a sense of destiny always go together. Happiness is essentially a state of going in the proper direction with all of your heart, without regret or reservation. Therefore, it is impossible for the spiritually mature believer who is executing the predesigned plan of God to be unhappy. No power in this world can make him unhappy.

Psalm 16:11 teaches three ways in which God shares His perfect happiness with us.

Psalm 16:11 *"Thou wilt make known to me the path of life; In Thy presence is fulness of joy; In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever."*

The happiness described here as belonging to God is now the potential for any Church-age believer who reaches spiritual adulthood.

"You will make known to me the path of life" means that the first principle in gaining perfect happiness is cognition of Bible doctrine [reception, retention, and recall]. You will never have God's perfect happiness in this life unless you learn. God's perfect happiness is related to thought; thought energy is the key and basis for all of God's perfect happiness.

However, although God's perfect happiness is available to all believers, if you reject Bible doctrine you'll never have a personal sense of destiny, let alone have perfect happiness.

"In Your presence is the fullness of happiness" is the thrust of this point. In the presence of God is perfect happiness or the fullness of happiness. God is perfect, eternal, infinite, immutable, just, righteous, omnipotent, love, omniscient, and sovereign, and God's perfect happiness is characterized by all these divine attributes.

God has made this same perfect happiness available to us. For the Church-age believer, there is the potential while alive on earth to experience this fullness of happiness.

"At Your right hand there are pleasures forever" means that pleasure is the monopoly of God, and it follows the possession of God's perfect happiness; it does not precede it.

Pleasures in life are fleeting and do not sustain anyone's happiness. They are wonderful and stimulating for a few moments only. They are not a source of blessing and cannot carry you through adversity. However, true pleasure is the monopoly of God. At the right hand of God the Father is the Lord Jesus Christ, and He has given a fantastic heritage of pleasures forevermore.

This means not only eternal pleasure, but also perfect happiness in life! This happiness will sustain you in dying as it did in living. This same happiness and virtue-love will give you fantastic capacity for life, and no set of circumstances can ever get you down.

So, perfect happiness is attained by any believer who executes the predesigned plan of God, Nehemiah 8:10b, *"Do not be grieved; do not be unhappy. For the happiness of the Lord is your strength."*

In the dynamics of spiritual adulthood the happiness of the Lord is the strength of spiritual self-esteem, spiritual autonomy, and spiritual maturity. You'll need this strength because if you stick with the plan of God, you're going to have opposition.

That's why you cannot depend upon people for your happiness. In fact, it's true that some people cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go.

Happiness is not the absence of discomfort. Our first mistake is trying to erase all in our lives that is uncomfortable, unpleasant, or painful; that's impossible. Adversity is inevitable in life.

In fact, since we're in the book of Psalms, look at Psalm 38:19 *"But my enemies are vigorous [and] strong; And many are those who hate me wrongfully."*

Psalm 38:20 *"And those who repay evil for good, They oppose me, because I follow what is good."*

Opposition is the highest decoration for the supergrace believer. It is made up of all the people who oppose you, and the more opposition you have, the greater happiness you have.

Wearing this decoration of maximum pressure is the greatest of all blessings, and as Nehemiah 8:10 says, *"The happiness of the Lord is your strength."*

And let me show what type of individuals will oppose you:

2 Tim 3:1 *"But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come."*

2 Tim 3:2 *"For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,"*

2 Tim 3:3 *"unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,"*

2 Tim 3:4 *"treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God"*

2 Tim 3:5 *"holding to a form of godliness,[these are the types who will oppose you] although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these."*

2Tim 3:6 *"For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak or silly women [which according to the Greek means males and females who are emotional and silly] weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses,"*

2 Tim 3:7 *"always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."*

2 Tim 3:8 *"And just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose doctrine, men of depraved mind, rejected as regards the faith."*

So you're going to have opposition if you stick with the plan of God. In fact, the most exciting happiness is the happiness generated by forces beyond your control.

Divine Mandates to Happiness

Since God possesses perfect happiness, He desires to share His perfect happiness with us, and so He mandates that we have His perfect happiness. We as members of the royal family of God therefore have the potential for realizing His perfect happiness. God will keep you alive long enough to attain that perfect happiness, provided you are faithful in the

perception of doctrine. The ultimate objective of the predesigned plan of God is to provide for you perfect happiness.

Consequently, perfect happiness is attained in the three stages of spiritual adulthood, and is a part of glorifying God in the Church-age. You cannot glorify God unless you possess perfect happiness. Since the acquisition of perfect happiness is related to spiritual adulthood and the glorification of God in the pre-designed plan of God for the Church-age, such happiness is a command!

You are ordered and commanded by the Word of God to have happiness. If you do not have God's perfect happiness this is an act of disobedience on your part.

Psalm 97:12 *"Be happy in the Lord, O righteous ones, and give thanks for the memory of His holiness."*

A believer who has the happiness of God developing within will be able to give thanks in all circumstances of life. As you begin to have perfect happiness, thanksgiving becomes a moment-by-moment attitude of your soul.

1Thess 5:16 *"Rejoice or be happy always;"*

1Thess 5:17 *"pray without ceasing or continually;"*

1Thess 5:18 *"in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."*

1Thess 5:19 *"Do not quench the Spirit [rely on your own human power];"*

Until you can give thanks for everything, both the blessings and adversities of your life, you have not yet come close to having perfect happiness.

Phil 3:1 *"Finally, my brethren, keep on having happiness in the Lord. To be writing this same mandate to you, on the one hand, is not tedious, while on the other hand, it is a safeguard to you."*

Some of the recipients of this letter may have been annoyed because Paul had commanded them to be happy before. Paul had the audacity, even in writing Scripture, to repeat. However, inculcation and repetition is the only way to learn doctrine. Repetition is the only way to learn to do something automatically. The more things you can do automatically, the greater your life will be.

The greatest experience of security in this life is to attain perfect happiness. Once you have God's happiness in your soul, it is the ultimate of security, the basis for spiritual self-esteem, spiritual autonomy, and spiritual maturity. This is security for you because, when you get under pressure, you will think the right thing, do the right thing, and apply the right doctrine because you have repeatedly learned to do the right thing under normal circumstances.

Phil 4:4 *"Keep on having happiness in the Lord at all times; once more I repeat the command, keep on having happiness."*

This is a command in the present tense because perfect happiness is the only happiness in the world you can have at all times, wherever you are, no matter what your circumstances.

Perfect happiness which you attain in time you carry with you into the eternal state. Perfect happiness is not something you attain in the eternal state, although there is happiness and blessing for all believers there. Perfect happiness must be developed here in time.

It is designed for living and dying now! But in order to fulfill the command for happiness, you can't be hypocritical and fake it. To obey the command to "keep on having happiness in the Lord at all times" is something we cannot do on our own any more than we can do anything on our own for salvation. All we can attain on our own, independently of the plan of God and the power of Bible doctrine, is the momentary happiness or establishment happiness. This divine command can only be executed through residence, function, and momentum inside the protocol plan of God in the attainment of the three stages of spiritual adulthood.

Nehemiah 8:10 anticipated this, *"Do not be grieved, for the happiness of the Lord is your strength."*

So in Phil 4:4, hearing this twice-repeated command and knowing how to execute it are two different things. There are a number of things you first must learn to execute God's plan. Yet Christians want instant solutions and miracles, implying that God is disorganized. We must first learn His plan and His solutions to have His perfect happiness. If we refuse, we will be miserable in spite of what we possess or what environment we have.

For example, the woman in the Garden had everything in perfect environment including a perfect, wonderful husband. Yet she wanted more than a perfect husband, more than a genius, more than perfect sex, more than perfect environment. You can never get enough of the things you don't need, because the things you don't need can never satisfy. She was bored with perfect everything...but what more could she want? She had everything in life that would make a normal woman happy; she had a beauty that never changed and perfect health as she came from the hand of God. Yet her conversations indicated that she was not satisfied with what she had. This immediately indicates that she didn't have perfect happiness, because contentment is a synonym for perfect happiness.

Happiness will never come to those who fail to appreciate what they already have. In fact, unhappiness is in not knowing what we want, and then killing ourselves to get it. The key phrase of the woman's unhappiness in the Garden is "I want more!" She was bored with perfect everything including a perfect intellect. What more could she want?

She had everything in life that would make a normal woman happy, yet her conversations with the serpent indicated that she was not content with what she had. Whoever does not regard what he has as most sufficient wealth, is unhappy, though he be master of the world. This principle was taught in the Garden of Eden to us and it was taught in the gospels by our Lord.

Mark 8:36 *"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?"*

In fact, to be without some of the things you want is an indispensable part of happiness. We know the woman wanted more because her conversations with the serpent indicated this. That's why in Gen 3:1 the serpent *"said to the woman, 'Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"*

You see, he's trying to make her focus in on something she doesn't have and she is not to possess, because the serpent knew that she was discontent and frustrated.

Gen 3:2 *"And the woman said to the serpent, 'From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;"*

Gen 3:3 *"but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'"*

The serpent said in effect, "You don't seem to be happy; is there anything you can't have?" She said, "Yes, God has said we cannot eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." Then she added something God had not said, "You cannot eat from it or touch it lest you die." In other words, the woman lacked something in her capacity to hear clearly and objectively what the divine prohibition involved. She developed a fear; she was afraid that even if she touched the tree she would die. You cannot have fear without having arrogance, and she was developing arrogance. Her combination of arrogance and fear caused her to want something more.

Adam didn't understand this; he was his magnificent self: attractive, wonderful, kind, intelligent, successful, and a great lover.

And we know this because of what Paul says to us in 1 Tim 2:14 *"And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression."*

So, no matter what the woman had, it wasn't enough; she wanted more.

One of the secrets of happiness is to admire without desiring. You can admire something or someone without having to have it! You can discover happiness by limiting your desires, rather than in attempting to satisfy them. She lived in perfect environment, yet she didn't have perfect happiness as a problem-solving device, so she began looking around.

So Satan began to use this prohibition. "Do you know why God has forbidden that tree?"

He said to the woman in Gen 3:4 *"You surely shall not die!"*

Gen 3:5 *"For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

What Satan said merely reflected his own fall. He was Lucifer, Son of the Morning, the most beautiful creature that ever came from the hand of God. He was beautiful and magnificent, and had a perfect personality and genius. He was the ruler of all the angels; he sat at the right hand of the throne of God as Lucifer; he was the anointed cherub, the highest class of angels. But he also wanted something more! There was nothing more he could have that he didn't already have, but he was not happy. Therefore, one day he decided that he wouldn't be happy until he replaced God! He considered God to be a challenge!

When people are not happy and have no spiritual self-esteem or self-esteem, they feel threatened. Within them is a combination of two things, arrogance and fear, which always go together. In fear, you feel challenged by this or that, and in your arrogance, you want to overcome that fear by seizing the thing that threatens you. So Satan made it clear that the woman was threatened by the tree, called the Tree of Knowledge. This woman had perfect intellect; she had knowledge of all things around her because her husband was the ruler of the world. But this was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, a knowledge she did not possess. For this reason, theologians have made the mistake of calling this state of perfection "The Age of Innocence."

Adam and the woman were not innocent, but there were some things they did not have to know because they were in perfection.

So Satan made his point, "There is something you're lacking. There is more to be had; of course you're not satisfied. That's because God has been unfair to you. God has withheld something from you; He has withheld the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Do you know why? God is afraid."

It was Satan who was afraid. Satan also possessed the knowledge of good and evil and he was miserable. Another interesting principle here is that before we set our hearts too much on anything, we should examine how happy are those who already possess it. Arrogance plus fear leads to great instability no matter what you have. In fear and arrogance you will always feel threatened by something in life, even if you're in perfect environment. So Satan ascribed to God his very own fear, although God is perfect and has never been afraid. And we see this in the human race; people ascribe to others their own weaknesses and flaws; even though in reality, the accused ones don't share their flaws. Some people cannot identify with others unless the others are as weak as they are. Therefore, they accuse others of being arrogant when those people are actually humble, or they accuse others of fear, when they themselves are afraid. So, the story of Adam and the woman shows why love and happiness have eluded the human race in general down to this very moment.

You only have two chances at love and happiness:

A) As an unbeliever, you can have establishment happiness including human self-esteem and humility.

B) As a believer, the only hope for love and happiness in your life that is real and meaningful is to attain virtue-love and perfect happiness as problem-solving devices.

With perfect happiness, no matter what your circumstances, your happiness continues to exist, and you equate living with dying (Phi 1:21), and adversity with prosperity. Happiness and love are meaningless as a state of happiness. We all say at certain times that we are happy or in love, but we are really talking about being in pleasant or enjoyable circumstances. But without perfect happiness, there is always the same problem: no matter what you have, you will want more! As long as there's something more that you must have, you aren't happy. You have to find happiness in yourself before you can find it with someone or something. Accumulating more and more of anything can't make you happy; these things are just temporary stimulation. This explains drug addiction; a person who experiences some high the first time he tries a drug will spend years trying to reproduce that same first high. Happiness is derived from tranquility, not by taking drugs and tranquilizers but by developing a proper, disciplined, efficient life with regular habits.

Marriage is a divine institution ordained by God. However, He didn't ordain it as a system of happiness, but as a system of relationship. Whether you are happy in any relationship or not, whether it is marriage, business, social life, or friendship, you will never have happiness or love by simply being in some state that you now associate with happiness.

Yet most people think, "If I could just....I would be happy." We associate so many things with happiness that is really not happiness at all. We mix up stimulation, sex, and animated conversation with happiness. Happiness is actually a problem-solving device. It is a status quo, but one that never looks over the horizon and wants more. And due to the Fall of Adam and the woman, God in His matchless grace designed something that can overcome the best or worst of environments, that can handle prosperity and adversity, which can cause you to live or die with great capacity and that can give you the capacity to handle

being alone or in a crowd. There is no problem in life too great for what God has given to you as a part of your portfolio of invisible assets, the problem-solving device of perfect happiness!

The Mechanics for Attainment of Perfect Happiness

The Holy Spirit is the source of our sharing God's perfect happiness because He is the teacher of Bible doctrine. Therefore, perfect happiness is said to be by means of the Spirit in Rom 14:17 *"For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and prosperity and happiness by means of the Holy Spirit."*

In other words, the spiritual part of our life, the predesigned plan of God, goes way beyond our normal functions of eating and drinking. In that sense, we have a dual life, a natural life and a spiritual life. The spiritual life has nothing to do with the foods we eat or the beverages we drink. That's why Paul said in Col 2:16 *"Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink."*

The Bible never teaches against the engagement of alcoholic beverages in moderation. In fact, the Lord Jesus Christ participated in eating certain foods and drinking alcoholic beverages in moderation and that is why He was called a drunk in Luke 7:34 *"The Son of Man has come eating and drinking; and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man, and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and prostitutes!'"*

The problem is that today we have a phenomenal amount of alcoholism and so pastors have to be very careful and encourage those who have the predisposition toward alcohol to live a life of abstinence for practical reasons and for health reasons. However, that does not mean that the pastor should become academically dishonest and take passages out of context and not teach the whole realm of doctrine.

For example, we are told that the Lord made wine to make glad the heart of man, Psalm 104:15 *"The Lord made wine which makes man's heart glad."* Now, that is not grape juice! No matter how much grape juice you drink, it will not make your heart glad.

Solomon said in Eccl 9:7 *"Go then, eat your bread in happiness, and drink your wine with a cheerful heart; for God has already approved your works."*

Moses said in Deut 14:26 *"And you may spend the money for whatever your heart desires, for oxen, or sheep, or wine, or strong drink, or whatever your heart desires; and there you shall eat in the presence of the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household."*

As far as foods are concerned 1 Tim 4:4-5 says *"For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer."*

Now, there are a lot of believers today who think that they're spiritual if they don't ever touch alcohol or eat certain foods, and if you do, they think that you have completely gone over the edge.

So Paul says Rom 14:17 *"For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and prosperity and happiness by means of the Holy Spirit."* In our spiritual life, we can have the righteousness of virtue, prosperity, and perfect happiness all by means of the Holy Spirit. First comes righteousness, which is virtue from perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine; then comes prosperity when you reach spiritual adulthood. Finally, throughout spiritual adulthood, you enjoy perfect happiness. All this is accomplished by the Holy Spirit who is the teacher of Bible doctrine. That's why all three of these principles including happiness are said to be the fruit or the production of the Holy Spirit, Gal 5:22 *"The fruit of the Spirit is virtue-love, happiness, prosperity."*

Happiness here refers to three categories of perfect happiness. In spiritual self-esteem, perfect happiness begins; in spiritual autonomy, perfect happiness continues; and in spiritual maturity perfect happiness peaks out. Part of the great power experiment of the Church-age is perfect happiness produced by God the Holy Spirit as in 1 Thess 1:6 *"You also become imitators of us and of the Lord [by fulfillment of the predesigned plan of God through utilization of divine power], having received the Word in much pressure [affliction, oppression] with happiness from the Holy Spirit."*

We are to imitate two people; one is the only invisible hero of the great power experiment of the hypostatic union, Jesus Christ, and the other is Paul or any other great invisible hero of the great power experiment of the Church-age. We are to imitate them by imitating the copybook in Phil 3:17, which comes by receiving the Word consistently.

Phil 3:17 *"Brethren join with others in following me, and select those who walk according to the pattern you have in us."*

As we have noted, when you begin to be consistent in learning Bible doctrine, there is much pressure...that's why it says, *"having received the Word in much pressure [affliction, oppression] with happiness from the Holy Spirit."*

Having perfect happiness in the midst of pressure is due to being sustained by the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit inside the protocol plan of God. The same power that sustained Jesus Christ during those last three hours on the cross when He was being judged for our sins is now available to us in the Church-age.

This power is used in three categories to attain perfect happiness:

- 1) The omnipotence of God the Father is used to attain perfect happiness through the perception of our portfolio of invisible assets and using those assets.
- 2) The omnipotence of Jesus Christ is used by knowing He gives us a day at a time and is faithful in sustaining our life so we can attain perfect happiness.
- 3) The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit is used to attain perfect happiness because God the Holy Spirit is the teacher of Bible doctrine; John 14; 1Cor 2:9-16, 2:24.

If you want this perfect happiness, it only requires daily decisions from the right scale of values. Your number one priority must be Bible doctrine. You must be motivated to come and hear it under the ministry of the Holy Spirit. If you listen, learn, advance, and grow, you will be happy for all time and for all eternity.

God's happiness belongs "naturally" to the new spiritual species; it is a happiness that only the new spiritual species can have. It is a happiness designed for both prosperity and

adversity. It is a happiness that gives the most fantastic capacity for life, whether you have little or much, whether you are great or insignificant. Remember that all human distinctions mean nothing now as a result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and being in union with Christ. A new spiritual species refers to believers in the Church-age belonging to the royal family of God. The baptism of the Spirit made you royal family of God since the day you believed in Jesus Christ.

2 Cor 5:17 *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ [and he is as a believer], he is a new [spiritual] species. The old things have lost their power; behold, new things have come."*

You are *"in Christ"* by the baptism of the Spirit; at the moment of your salvation you were entered into union with Christ. The adjective *kaine* means new; the noun *ktisis* means species.

The old things that have lost their power over us are genetic, environmental, and volitional handicaps; human dynamics, personality, talent, and works and flaws.

The *"new things"* that have come refer to your portfolio of invisible assets, the ten unique characteristics of the Church-age, and the ten problem-solving devices of the (protocol plan of God) PPOG.

Prov 3:13 *"Happiness belongs to that person [believer] who finds wisdom even the person who gains understanding [of doctrine]."* The word blessed is *esher* and it means happiness.

That's why it is translated like that in Prov 3:13 *"Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding;"*(NKJ)

Prov 3:13 *"Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gets understanding,"*(RSV)

Pro 3:13 *"The man who knows right from wrong and has good judgment and common sense is happier than the man who is immensely rich!"*(TLB)

Prov 3:13 *"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, And the man that getteth understanding."*(ASV)

Even the King James has it like that, Pro 3:13 *"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding."*(KJV)

So Prov 3:13 *"Happiness belongs to that person [believer] who finds wisdom."*

The word *wisdom* or *chakmah* refers to the three "R"s: reception, retention, and recall of Bible doctrine; i.e., perception, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine. The Hebrew word *chakmah* means wisdom that comes from doctrine, i.e., the application of metabolized doctrine.

Prov 3:13 *"Happiness belongs to that person who gains understanding."*

The Hebrew word for understanding is *bin*, which refers to the perception and metabolization of Bible doctrine. So this verse actually includes perception, metabolization, and application of doctrine.

1 John 1:4 says the same thing, *"And these things we write that our joy may be brought to completion."*

John 15:11 *"I have taught you these things in order that My happiness [perfect happiness of the humanity of Jesus Christ] may be in you and that your happiness may be fulfilled."*

Note that happiness is to be "taught;" perfect happiness comes through the perception of Bible doctrine; it does not come through something you enjoy. You can endure anything with perfect happiness, as Jesus Christ has proved, Heb 12:2, *"who for the happiness that was set before Him endured the cross."*

He didn't endure the cross because He liked it, but because He had perfect happiness. Just think of it, the greatest suffering in all of history occurred on the cross, when Jesus Christ, perfect humanity, received the imputation and judgment for every sin in human history. Yet, He stayed on the cross because of His perfect happiness.

If God's happiness is in you, such passages as this will be a reality to you, Phil 4:13 *"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."*

Perfect happiness is the ultimate problem solver. You can endure anything with perfect happiness, as well as having the most wonderful capacity for life and for death. When you have perfect happiness in you, it doesn't come from doing what you like to do but from liking what you have to do.

Therefore, your happiness can only be fulfilled, as a Church-age believer, through the execution of the pre-designed plan of God, through advancing to spiritual self-esteem, spiritual autonomy, and spiritual maturity. At spiritual maturity you have at your disposal the two greatest problem-solving devices in history: virtue-love for the interaction with people, and perfect happiness for your own life. Because of that there is no pain, adversity, tragedy, or difficulty greater than perfect happiness in your soul!

Now, in John 15:11, when the Lord said *"I have taught you these things in order that My happiness may be in you,"* our Lord's *"happiness in you"* is spiritual self-esteem and spiritual autonomy. *"His happiness fulfilled"* is spiritual maturity.

Perfect happiness is not only a problem-solving device, but it is the great principle of contentment in this life. With perfect happiness, it makes no difference whether you are living or dying, in adversity or prosperity. If you have perfect happiness, you have the stabilizer for any situation in life.

Now, in 2 John 1:12 *"Although having many doctrines to write you, I do not wish to do so with paper and ink. I will pay you a visit, and I anticipate coming to you and teaching face to face that our happiness might be fulfilled."*

"Our" happiness means the happiness John will have as the communicator, and the happiness the believers will have as they receive his teaching of Bible doctrine.

Reception, retention, and recall of Bible doctrine add up to the growth of your perfect happiness, the greatest problem-solving device related to yourself. We will see this in Rom 14:22 *"The doctrine which you have [metabolized doctrine], have it according to your own norms and standards before God. Happiness belongs to that person who does not condemn himself in what he approves."*

John says 2 John 1:12 *"Although having many doctrines to write you, I do not wish to do so with paper and ink. I will pay you a visit, and I anticipate coming to you and teaching face to face that our happiness might be fulfilled or complete."*

The happiness of a pastor is made complete by the communication of doctrine to his congregation, and by their reception, retention, and recall of doctrine which results in their

own happiness. Note that in the 2Jo passage, John will bring certain believers to spiritual maturity and perfect happiness by teaching them face to face. However, in 1Jo 1:4 *"And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete,"* he will bring other believers to spiritual maturity and perfect happiness through non-face-to-face teaching. Both means are legitimate for the communication of doctrine resulting in the reception, retention, and recall of doctrine in the souls of believers, eventuating in their perfect happiness.

Perfect happiness depends on Bible doctrine in the soul. It is something you think, not something you do. However, God has to share His thoughts with you before you can share His happiness; when the thinking of God becomes your thinking, then you will begin to share God's happiness. So your perfect happiness is determined by the amount of Bible doctrine in your soul. However, even though you have doctrine in the soul, you must be determined to be happy in whatever situation you may be in. For we all have learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends upon our disposition and frame of mind, not our circumstances.

We must apply the doctrine we have learned and make the right decisions; action may not always bring happiness; but there is no happiness without action. Happiness, like character, must be cultivated. It is not a thing to be attained and then to be let alone or it will die down and eventually disappear. There can be no happiness if the things we believe in are different from the things we do.

So happiness is the ability to take all the bumps and bruises of day to day life with an open mind and heart. Our perspective and attitude have everything to do with our own happiness. If we want to be happy, we will be happy.

Perfect Happiness and Three Stages of Spiritual Adulthood

There are three stages of spiritual adulthood.

- 1) Spiritual self-esteem
- 2) Spiritual autonomy
- 3) Spiritual maturity

There is a certain progression of perfect happiness at each stage of spiritual adulthood. God's happiness begins at spiritual self-esteem. As it gains momentum, perfect happiness continues in spiritual autonomy, and it is completed in spiritual maturity, where it reaches its peak in the top floor of the edification complex of the soul.

Occupation with the Lord and confidence in the Lord is the basic definition of perfect happiness in spiritual self-esteem.

Psalm 128:1 *"How happy is every believer who is occupied with the Lord."*

Psalm 146:5 *"Happiness belongs to the one whose confidence is in the Lord."*

However, a more detailed explanation is given in 2Cor 12:10 *"For this reason I find contentment [beginning of perfect happiness] in weaknesses [providential preventative suffering], in insults [slanders or people testing], with distresses [pressures or thought testing], in persecutions [system testing], in difficulties or stresses [disaster testing] on behalf of Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong."*

Providential preventative suffering at spiritual self-esteem puts you in a state of weakness because there is no human solution to the problems. The solutions must be divine solutions which comes from your own soul's resources of Bible doctrine. The four types of testing mentioned here are warm-ups in spiritual self-esteem in order to advance to spiritual autonomy and face momentum testing. In principle, the four parts of providential preventative suffering cover the whole scope of problem-solving in life.

You pass these tests by having the beginning of perfect happiness. There will be enough happiness in your soul at spiritual self-esteem for you to be happy in all categories of providential preventative suffering! Therefore suffering can be just as great a blessing as any prosperous circumstances.

The phrase *"on behalf of Christ"* means that the glorification of our Lord demands that the believer pass providential preventative suffering and advance to spiritual autonomy, thus increasing his perfect happiness. Being *"strong when weak"* refers to the utilization of divine power for momentum in the protocol plan of God. To be *"weak"* means you must make maximum use of divine power, the basis for blessing in the midst of testing. You don't try to intrude on God's solutions with your own ability, human power, human ingenuity, attitudes, or concepts. Providential preventative suffering brings you to the point where you realize life and the devil are stronger than you, and that you won't be able to solve your problems independently of the protocol plan of God. Your strength comes from the use of any of the problem-solving devices. In this case, perfect happiness in its beginning form, i.e., contentment, is used. The word translated *"content"* in verse 10 is the present-active-indicative of *eudokeo* which is *eudoko* meaning "to think well of, to approve, to be content or happy."

Now, it often takes a lot to make many of you weak, especially if you're high-spirited and strong-willed. However, until you know you're weak, you will never be strong. To the extent that you have illusions about your so-called strong points, you are depriving yourself of the blessings of grace. True strength comes from using divine power to match your weakness, rather than using human power to hold at bay God's grace provision for you.

Perfect happiness in spiritual autonomy is documented in Heb 13:5.

Heb 13:5 *"Let your lifestyle be free from the love for money, being content [+H] with what you have. For He Himself has said [Deut 31:6], 'I will never leave you nor will I ever forsake you.'"*

There is nothing wrong with money; it is necessary to live. However, if money becomes your master, you become a pitiful slave to money. Money was not designed to bring happiness. If you already have capacity for perfect happiness, you can handle the accumulation of money without becoming a slave to it. So your lifestyle is to be free from the love for money.

However, if your life is free from money you won't live long. The objective is to have money as your slave and perfect happiness as your master. If you are content with what you have, you have a measure of perfect happiness. In spiritual autonomy, you no longer think you want more, more, more! You realize in Heb 13:5, *"He Himself has said [Deut 31:6], 'I will never leave you nor will I ever forsake you.'"*

This promise is God's guarantee to you from the day of your salvation, based on God's perfect integrity. He will never leave or forsake you. This promise assures you of both

temporal and eternal security. God will never leave you in life, nor forsake you in dying. However, this doesn't prevent God from disciplining you or allowing the law of volitional responsibility to function.

Rom 14:22 *"The doctrine which you have [metabolized doctrine], have it according to your own norms and standards before God. Happiness belongs to that person who does not condemn himself in what he approves."* This verse refers to the status quo of the believer in spiritual autonomy, who has doctrinal norms and standards in his soul, resulting in right priorities. Therefore, he has God's perfect happiness.

The believer in spiritual autonomy does not feel threatened by the criticism of legalism. He knows he's doing the right thing even while being maligned and judged as the victim of jealousy, bitterness, arrogance, implacability, and all the revenge motivation related to envy. The believer in spiritual autonomy doesn't copy those he admires, nor is he bullied into any legalism. The result of having one's own norms and standards before God is the increase of perfect happiness in life. We go through life in self-condemnation if we violate our norms and standards or if we are victimized by legalism and society's standards. A lot of people approve of their lifestyle and do not condemn themselves because of arrogance. However, this phrase doesn't refer to those who don't condemn themselves simply because their arrogance and ignorance have replaced any norms and standards they might have had. The believer in spiritual autonomy has doctrinal norms and standards and yet, because of perfect happiness, no longer condemns himself.

1 Peter 3:14 *"But if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are happy [+H in spiritual autonomy]."*

Isaiah 8:12b *"Therefore, do not fear what they fear, and do not let yourself be intimidated."*

To suffer for righteousness' sake is a reference to momentum testing, suffering for blessing to those in spiritual autonomy. People aren't happy in suffering unless they are in spiritual adulthood, the place of perfect happiness.

1 Peter 4:14 *"If you are reproached because of the person of Christ [and you are in spiritual autonomy], you are happy because the Spirit of glory and of God refreshes you."*

In momentum testing, others will reproach you. This phrase specifically refers to people testing. *"The Spirit of glory"* is a specific reference to the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit functioning inside the PPOG. Refreshment in disaster is perfect happiness in your life.

James 1:2 *"Consider it all happiness [perfect happiness in spiritual autonomy], my brethren, when you encounter various testings."*

You can't consider adversity happiness until you have the happiness of God. And until you have perfect happiness, you can't use it to handle suffering. The *"various testings"* refer to the four parts of momentum testing.

Perfect happiness is documented in spiritual maturity, Phil 4:11-13.

Our corrected translation of Phil 4:11-13 reads, Phil 4:11 *"Not that I speak with reference to need, for I have learned to be content [+H] in whatever circumstances I am."*

Phil 4:12 *"In fact, I have come to know how to be humbled and I have come to know how to live in prosperity. In any and every circumstance, I have been initiated, both how to be filled, how to be hungry, how to be prosperous, and how to suffer need."*

Phil 4:13 *"I have the power to attain all things through Him [God the Father] who makes me strong."*

Contentment is Synonymous with Happiness

It's interesting that our Lord was never married, never had any children, and never became wealthy or successful from the human standpoint, yet He was perfectly happy and totally content. He was ridiculed and endured greater pressures than we will ever know; yet all those years He always had perfect happiness. He did not have the things that people associate with happiness in our day and age, like a good marriage, a healthy family, a good job, a lot of money, a nice home, etc. Yet He served as an example to us of what it means to have perfect happiness and perfect contentment.

In John 3:29 *"He who has the bride is the bridegroom [a reference to TLJC]; but the friend of the bridegroom [a reference to John the Baptist], who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly [has great inner happiness] because of the bridegroom's voice. And so this happiness of mine has been made full."*

According to human viewpoint of life, John the Baptist had a tragic life. He had the type of ministry not associated with fun and happiness but with tremendous opposition, even though he was always right. It is very frustrating to be right but never be recognized as being right even once. That was the "tragedy" of his life. But John says at the end of verse 29, *"and so this joy [inner happiness] of mine has been made full or brought to completion."*

John was one of those rare individuals in his generation who had reached spiritual maturity. John was a man who lived the spiritual life from salvation to his death. When he said in verse 29, *"this joy of mine has been made full or complete,"* he recognized Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the God-man, the only source of salvation. Then he added in John 3:30 *"He must increase, but I must decrease."*

This is the antithesis of human viewpoint living. Think of how many people you know, friends, loved ones, peers, other believers, who do not live with that statement in view.

John 3:30 *"He must increase [in my life], but I [my human viewpoint and fleshly thinking] must decrease."*

Inner happiness is inside of you that you can take with you through any set of circumstances in life. Even if you are alone, like John the Baptist was, you are perfectly happy. In fact, the problem of loneliness is the easiest problem to solve for the mature believer. If you are in a crowd, you are happy. Whether in pleasant or adverse circumstances, you are happy. If you are alive and healthy or dying, you have perfect happiness.

Perfect happiness for the believer is described in Phil 4:11-13.

Phi 4:11 *"Not that I speak with reference to need, for I have learned to be content [+H] in whatever circumstances I am."*

Phil 4:12 *"In fact, I have come to know how to be humbled and I have come to know how to live in prosperity. In any and every circumstance, I have been initiated, both how to be filled, how to be hungry, how to be prosperous, and how to suffer need."*

Phil 4:13 *"I have the power to attain all things through Him [God the Father] who makes me strong."*

Once you reach spiritual maturity, you have an entirely new and refreshing system of thinking, and you never think in terms of needs. We all continue to have needs, but they will become less and less important to you as you advance through the different stages of spiritual adulthood. This is because you finally come to realize that God has known your needs all along. And in effect, once you reach spiritual adulthood, needs become inconsequential so you don't have to spend your time thinking about them. Of course, as an organized believer, you still plan for them. But your needs aren't nearly as important to you once you reach spiritual adulthood, resulting in an improved prayer life that doesn't focus on all your needs. As long as your needs have number one priority in your life, it's impossible for you to reach spiritual adulthood.

Notice what Paul said in Phil 4:11 *"Not that I speak with reference to need, for I have learned to be content [+H] in whatever circumstances I am."*

Happiness is something you learn, not something you have, want, or anticipate. You must learn how to live in adversity and prosperity. As in verse 11, to learn to this contentment take a lot of repetition of Bible doctrine, especially mystery doctrine concerning the uniqueness of the Church-age.

Contentment is actually a synonym for perfect happiness, as in other passages, such as 1 Tim 6:8 *"If we have food and shelter, with these we shall be content."*

The point is, when you have perfect happiness, what more do you need? Perfect happiness is all you need to sustain you, even when you're in adversity and have needs. If you have the happiness of God, you don't really need anything beyond food and shelter.

One of the greatest signs of prosperity is maximum use of perfect happiness. Think of the people you know who have a lot more money and possessions than you do, but they are miserable in most cases! Or if they are not miserable, they're just putting on a facade of happiness; it's just a front for a frustrated life.

Prosperity from maximum use of perfect happiness comes from going through the valley of momentum testing, passing the different tests, and advancing to spiritual maturity.

Psalm 84:5 *"How happy is the person whose strength is in the Lord; In whose heart is on pilgrimage!"*

Psalm 84:6 *"Passing through the valley of Baca, they make it a spring, The early rain also covers it with blessings."*

Baca means weeping and it speaks of going through adversities and difficulties and trials and heartaches; yet here it says perfect happiness can make those situations a spring or a place of blessing!

And that's the same thing Paul is saying in Phil 4:11 as you pass the different tests in your advance to spiritual maturity.

In Heb 13:5 *"I will never leave you nor forsake you,"* the faithfulness of our Lord is the reason for us to be content with such things as we have. This refers to temporal security which is freedom from worry, fear, anxiety, etc.

So Paul goes on to say in Phil 4:12 *"In fact, I have come to know how to be humbled."*

This is something we all must learn, because by nature none of us are humble. Humility means objectivity. Humiliation is associated with arrogance; but being humbled is associated with spiritual growth and understanding God's grace. Humility comes with the organized life of the believer in spiritual adulthood. And what we don't learn from Bible doctrine, we will learn from adversity and undeserved suffering.

Suffering is a great teacher to the wise, but is bitter for those who resist Bible doctrine.

Suffering provides maximum opportunity to apply metabolized doctrine to life.

So, one of the hardest things to learn in life is to be humble. However, God will provide this lesson for us through doctrine and suffering. You cannot be great without humility. Humility is the fantastic spiritual dignity that carries with it perfect happiness.

Phil 4:12 *"In fact, I have come to know how to be humbled and I have come to know how to live in prosperity."*

You must also learn how to be happy in prosperity; yet very few prosperous people understand this. It is difficult for prosperity to successfully work in anyone simply because of arrogance. Arrogance destroys capacity for life and especially capacity for prosperity.

Then Paul goes on to say, Phil 4:12 *"In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret or I have been initiated,"*

The Greek word here *memuetai* means to be initiated into a fraternity, to learn the secrets of that fraternity, and to endure the testings of that fraternity. The Church is the fraternity, and we are initiated through learning Bible doctrine and enduring in suffering for blessing.

Phil 4:12 *"In any and every circumstance, I have been initiated, both how to be filled, how to be hungry, how to be prosperous, and how to suffer need."*

Both categories, *"How to be prosperous and how to suffer need,"* are necessary for the advance to spiritual maturity and the fulfillment of the protocol plan of God.

Paul attained the fantastic point of having God's perfect happiness in every possible circumstance through maximum use of divine power.

Phil 4:13 *"I have the power to attain all things through Him [God the Father] who makes me strong."*

"I have the power" is a reference to the availability of divine omnipotence for the execution of the PPOG. It is a reference to the same power available to us in the great power experiment of the Church-age as Christ used on the cross. He was able to remain perfect, though judged for all the sins of the world, because He was sustained by the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit and because He had perfect happiness, the greatest of all problem-solving devices.

Your strength depends on you learning that God's power, in three categories (omnipotence of the Father, omnipotence of the Son, and omnipotence of the Spirit), is available to you. It's important for you to attain perfect happiness through the perception of doctrine.

Utilizing the perfect happiness of God is the only way to die and the only way to live. Perfect happiness actually equates living with dying for the believer. In any and every circumstance, the believer who has advanced to spiritual adulthood has perfect happiness.

That's why Paul said in Phil 1:21, *"For me, living is Christ and dying is profit."*

In Phil 4:13 *"I have the power to attain all things,"* "all things" refer to the three stages of spiritual adulthood, the great problem-solving devices, and the mature believer's tremendous invisible impact on history.

Perfect happiness is increased at each stage, but the believer must continue to learn and apply doctrine. Every believer has the same opportunity to attain the same spiritual adulthood and perfect happiness and invisible impact.

The source of this power is the Father in Phil 4:13, *"I can do all things through Him."* "Through Him" in the original Greek is *en* plus the instrumental of agency which expresses the personal agency of God the Father.

The same power available to our Lord in the dispensation of the hypostatic union is now available to us.

Phil 4:13 *"I have the power to attain all things through Him [God the Father] who makes me strong."*

The word for strength is the present active participle of *endunamoo* which is *endunamounti* which can be translated either "through Him who makes me strong," or "through Him who pours the power into me." God the Father makes this power available to us.

Principles concerning happiness and contentment:

- 1) True happiness is to enjoy the present, without anxious dependence upon the future, and to rest satisfied with what we have. The person with true happiness needs nothing more to make him happy.
- 2) The greatest blessing a person can experience, the perfect happiness of God in the soul, is within our reach. The wise person is content with who he is and what he has, without wishing for anything else.
- 3) Happiness is actually the absence of the striving for happiness. For many individuals, contentment consists not in adding more fuel, but in taking away some fire. There is no end of craving and desiring things when you are a carnal believer.
- 4) While dreams and goals that we eagerly pursue bring little happiness when we achieve them, most of our pleasures in life come from unexpected sources.

And that's because God knows what will really make us happy, not us!

The book of Proverbs was basically written by Solomon, but the 30th chapter of Proverbs was written by a man named Agur.

As Agur watched Solomon he realized that Solomon was rich beyond belief. Solomon got trapped into accumulating more and more riches, so he kept marrying foreign wives to bring in more treasure and more treasure, until he brought Israel into idolatry and ruined his own life.

So Agur commented, as a result of watching Solomon, Pro 30:7-9 *"Two things I asked of Thee, Keep deception and lies far from me, Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me*

with the food that is my portion, Lest I be full [rich] and deny Thee and say, 'Who is the Lord?'"

He said "Don't give me too much, I'll tend to deny you! I'll become totally self-sufficient!"

Having things to look forward to is a major source of happiness, and most of us receive more gratification from the anticipation of things than we do from actually acquiring them. Once we achieve a long sought goal, instead of feeling satisfied, most of us turn our attention to the next item along our road of desire.

5) Some people are obsessed with the desire to possess enough wealth and status to guarantee them happiness. This is a foolish notion. There is not enough wealth and status in the entire world to make even one person happy if that person cannot be happy without it. If we want to be happy we must accept the fact that happiness is a journey, not a destination. It is a journey with no regrets, guilt, shame and embarrassment because there is in clarity of mind. Happiness is a method of life; it is more of a way of travel than a destination.

Rom 14:22 *"Happiness belongs to that person who does not condemn himself in what he approves."*

Freedom from guilt and condemnation is thrilling and fulfilling and absolutely essential to mental health and happiness. For any man to be happy it is necessary for him to be mentally faithful to himself.

6) True courage means to bear difficulties, heartaches and pain without letting it spoil your happiness. Remember that no one can make you feel inferior without your consent. It is wise for us to forget past troubles because there are always new ones to replace them.

7) Contentment is natural wealth; luxury is artificial poverty.

William Shakespeare said "My crown is in my heart, not on my head, Nor decked with diamonds and Indian stones, Nor to be seen: My crown is called content: A crown it is, that seldom kings enjoy." (King Henry VI Part 3 by William Shakespeare: Act 3. Scene I)

To expect anything from this world is to expect to be fed by an illusion. Every path we follow in this world leads to exactly the same place: frustration and disappointment. Nothing here is permanent, and the only way a believer can find a contented and fulfilling life is through Bible doctrine.

The Concept of Self-Contained Happiness

Most people have become slaves to a system of dependency which says in effect happiness or unhappiness depends on the circumstances of life. People believe that pleasant circumstances bring happiness and adverse circumstances bring unhappiness. Therefore, happiness has become very fragile because people are depending on something or someone else to make them happy.

For most people, an instant change of circumstances means a rapid transition from happiness to unhappiness. People are dependent on overt circumstances for entertainment and subsequent happiness. That's why stability in society is disappearing because there is a lack of self-contained happiness.

Self-contained happiness is that contentment or delight, that active or passive state of pleasure and satisfaction, that rest without stress, which is resident in a person at all times regardless of the circumstances of life.

Self-contained happiness depends on the believer providing his own happiness through his own right priorities and consistent perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine. Self-contained happiness is similar to sharing the happiness of God. You are responsible for your own happiness, and nothing outside of you is responsible for that happiness. If you are unhappy, look to yourself rather than to entertainment, social life, romance, etc. Self-contained happiness is inner happiness and it goes with you as a constant companion. Therefore, you can rise above your circumstances. You are not dependent upon circumstances, pleasure, or pleasant things for your happiness, because you are sharing the happiness of God.

Self-contained happiness does not depend on someone else making you happy by their presence, approbation, attractiveness, attention, or love for you. Your basic happiness and contentment must depend on divine viewpoint, so that if their approbation, attention, or love turns to disapproval, you remain in a state of contentment.

Self-contained happiness is a fantastic dimension of the Christian way of life. It has capacity for appreciation of the love, kindness, thoughtfulness of others. It has the ability to cope with all the categories of adversity, such as rejection, disappointment, antagonism, maligning, judging, slander, hatred, conspiracy, and all other interaction problems with others.

Self-contained happiness is a Biblical subject as part of the predesigned plan of God for the Church-age. Self-contained happiness is related to the filling of the Spirit and cognition of Bible doctrine through the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Self-contained happiness is mandated as one of the believer's problem-solving devices.

Phil 3:1 *"Finally, my brethren, keep on having happiness in the Lord."*

Self-contained happiness begins at the point of spiritual self-esteem, continues with growing force when you attain spiritual autonomy, and is stabilized and perpetuated as a means of coping with everything in life once you reach spiritual maturity.

Phil 4:4 *"Keep on having happiness in the Lord at all times. Once more I repeat this mandate: keep on having happiness."*

Self-contained happiness is the greatest problem-solving device related to self; for it does not depend on health, success, pleasure, approbation, sex, social life, money, or anything else for its function.

1 Tim 6:6 *"But godliness [life in the PPOG] is a means of great profit when accompanied by contentment."*

Contentment is self-contained happiness.

1 Tim 6:7-8 *"For we have brought nothing into this world, and it is obvious that we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and shelter, we shall be content with these."*

Self-contained happiness enhances all other problem-solving devices.

It enhances the faith-rest drill in Psalm 146:5 *"Happiness belongs to the one whose confidence is in the Lord."*

It enhances occupation with Christ in Psalm 128:1 *"How happy is everyone who is occupied with the Lord, who walks in His ways."*

A believer living in self-contained happiness is on the road to glory, the glorification of God through the execution of the PPOG for the Church.

Occupation with the Lord emphasizes Bible doctrine as the number one priority in life. Sharing the thinking of Christ as well as the happiness of Christ is the key to happiness which will give you the ability to cope with any adversity in life.

Self-contained happiness not only motivates personal love for God but the function of impersonal love for all mankind.

Self-contained happiness is a part of the great virtue of the Christian way of life. Self-contained happiness emphasizes grace-orientation. So when you're happy within yourself, you're able to treat others correctly. Remember Matthew 19:19 *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

Self-contained happiness is not only a problem-solving device in itself, but it contributes to the poise that goes with a personal sense of destiny.

Heb 13:5 *"Let your lifestyle be free from the love of money and be content with what you have; for He himself has said, 'I will never leave you, nor will I ever forsake you.'"*

Self-contained happiness is a problem-solving device in adversity.

Jam 1:2 *"Consider it all happiness, my brethren, when you encounter various testings."*

Self-contained happiness means refreshment from God from the inner resources of Bible doctrine.

1 Peter 4:14 *"If you are reproached because of the person of Christ, you are happy, because the Spirit of glory and of God refreshes you."*

1 Peter 3:14 *"But if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are happy. Therefore, do not fear what they fear, and do not let yourself be intimidated."*

When you let yourself be intimidated by anything or anyone in life, you lack self-contained happiness. Self-contained happiness overcomes fear and intimidation.

1 John 1:4 *"In fact we write these things that our joy may be brought to completion."* Joy is brought to completion by entering the door of hope on God's agenda.

Self-contained happiness is the endowment of Bible doctrine.

Col 1:10-11 *"That you might in a manner worthy of the Lord, bearing fruit in every good of intrinsic value achievement; in fact, growing by means of metabolized doctrine from God. Because you have been endowed with all divine power from that superior power of His glory, resulting in all endurance and patience associated with self-contained happiness."*

The Characteristics of Happiness

A) Perfect happiness is tranquility of soul.

B) Perfect happiness is a problem-solving device preventing stress in the soul.

C) Perfect happiness is contentment of soul.

D) Perfect happiness is capacity for life, love, appreciation, gratitude, and thanksgiving.

E) Perfect happiness is never feeling threatened by adverse circumstances, by people, or by evil scenarios.

F) Perfect happiness is the invigoration of happiness.

This is the stimulation and enthusiasm in life from right priorities, metabolized doctrine circulating in the soul and freedom from garbage in the subconscious.

G) Perfect happiness is having a true sense of security, like assurance regarding eternal security, eternal life, freedom from fear, worry, doubt, and apprehension.

So, as a part of God's grace policy, God has found a way to share His happiness with the believer, a happiness which never depends on people or circumstances, a happiness which works for the believer in both prosperity and adversity.

Relationships in Happiness:

1) Perfect happiness is related to the function of perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine, Prov 3:13.

2) Perfect happiness is related to grace function in the life, or the function of the royal family honor code, Prov 14:21. You are happy when you live and let live. When you despise the sins of others you make yourself miserable.

3) Perfect happiness is related to spiritual maturity, Psalm 146:5, Prov 16:20, 28:14.

4) Perfect happiness is related to supergrace prosperity, Psalm 128:1-4.

5) Perfect happiness is related to ultra supergrace, 1 Peter 3:14, 4:14.

6) Perfect happiness is related to the conscience of the mature believer, Rom 14:22.

If you persevere with your spiritual advance in spite of the criticism of others, you will enjoy perfect happiness. However, you will lose that happiness if you allow their criticism to distract you from your dedication to Bible doctrine.

7) Entrance into the plan of God at salvation is the beginning of grace function and happiness from God, Psalm 9:14. Eternal salvation and eternal security are often associated with happiness.

8) Perfect happiness is related to the believer's recovery from carnality and reversionism, Psalm 51:12.

9) Perfect happiness is related to Bible doctrine in the soul of believers, Nehemiah 12:43.