

Are We Happy?

Introduction

Text: Philippians 4:1-7

1. **Are we really happy?**
 - A. **For some people the answer is “I would be happy, if...”**
 - 1) **If Something changed, then I could be happy.**
 - 2) **Sometimes the change is simple. “Once I lose another 20 pounds, then I’ll be happy.”**
 - 3) **But too often the demand is over something a person has no control. “If I was five inches taller, I would be happy.”**
 - B. **Abraham Lincoln noted, “Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.”**
 - 1) **Happiness isn’t something given to us.**
 - 2) **Happiness is how we choose to see our life.**

C. Kenneth Cooper told this story:

I heard a story recently about a king in Africa who had a close friend whom he knew since childhood. This friend had a habit of looking at every situation whether good or bad and remarking "This is good!"

One day the king and his friend were out on a hunting expedition. The friend was loading the guns and then handing them to the king. Apparently he did something wrong in preparing one gun, for after taking the gun, the king pulled the trigger and his thumb was blown off.

Examining the king's hand, the friend remarked, as usual, "This is good!" To which the king replied, "No, this is NOT good!" and proceeded to send his ex-friend to jail.

About a year later, the king was hunting in an area he should have stayed clear of. Cannibals captured him and took them to their village. They tied his hands, stacked some wood, set up a stake and bound him to the stake. But as they were about to light the fire, one of them noticed that the king was missing a thumb. In their superstitious beliefs, they never ate anyone who was less than whole. So they untied the king and let him go.

When he returned home, the king remembered his friend. In remorse, he went to the jail to speak to him. "You were right," he said, "it was good that my thumb was blown off." He then proceeded to tell him all that had happened. "I'm very sorry for sending you to jail for this. It was bad of me to do this."

"No," his friend replied, "this is good!"

"What do you mean, this is good!" How could it be good that I sent my friend to jail for a year?"

"If I had not been in jail, I would have been with you."

D. We choose to be happy or not.

Philippians 4:4-5

- 1) **Because of our trust in God Christians can be happy even while dealing with problems.**
- 2) **Happy is the person who trusts in God and His Word (Proverbs 16:20).**
- 3) **Trust in God with all of our heart (Proverbs 3:5-6).**

E. People tend to think that only when they are in control can they be happy.

- 1) **The employee thinks that life will be so much better if he was the boss.**
- 2) **When people find out that their choices are limited, then they are miserable.**
- 3) **If they can't have it their way, then they are unhappy.**
- 4) **The hard reality is that little in our life is fully in our control, but life is in God's hands. How much do we really trust in God?**

True Happiness is found in living for God!

1. **Happiness in righteous living.**

A. **God teaches us to live righteously.**

Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,

B. **Living righteously means filling our minds with wholesome things.**

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

C. **When we live righteously, there is no guilt over what we have done.**

Romans 13:3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

D. **Happiness is for those who are upright.**

Psalms 97:11-12 Light is sown for the righteous, And gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous, And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.

E. **Delight ourselves in God almighty!** **Psalms 37:3-6**

2. Happiness in worshiping God.

A. Worship is to give glory to God and gives happiness to man.

Psalms 95:1-3 Oh come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; **Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.** For the LORD is the great God, And the great King above all gods.

B. A delight in learning all we can about His word.

Psalms 119:24 Your testimonies also are my delight And my counselors.

C. Think of all the blessings God has given us – daily blessings too numerous to count.

D. We are God's creation. We are to work of His hands.

E. God is able to bring us faultless before Him.

Jude 24-25 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, Who alone is wise.....

3. **Happiness in Contentment.**

- A. **It might appear that the grass is greener on the other side of the fence, but it really isn't.**
- B. **The trick is to find satisfaction in life as it is.**
Philippians 4:11-13
- C. **Even in hard times we can find happiness by understanding the long term results.**

James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

- D. **Shared comfort in troubles**
2 Corinthians 1:3-7

4. **Happiness in Effort.**

- A. **There is happiness in accomplishment.**

Psalms 128:2 When you eat the labor of your hands, You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.

- B. **Enjoying our work is God's gift.**
Ecclesiastes 5:18-19
 - 1) **And – we enjoy the result of our work.**
 - 2) **Knowing that our work isn't useless**
1 Corinthians 15:58

Conclusion

- 1. The bottom line – happiness is not in THINGS.**
 - A. Happiness is not a new car, a big home, or a new toy.**
 - B. Happiness is spiritual. It is an outlook on life.**

Colossians 3:1-3 If then you were raised with Christ, **seek those things which are above**, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **Set your mind on things above**, not on things on the earth. **For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.**

