

God Wants Us To Be Happy

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from a sermon by Jeff Asher)

Introduction:

- A. Many believe that God wants humankind to be miserable. This is because they erroneously believe that one must be allowed to sin without restraint in order to be happy.
 - 1. Psalms 40:16, 105:3, 97:12, 98:4; Phil. 2:18, 4:4; 1Thes. 5:16-18
- B. Why are so many unhappy?
 - 1. How is it that the majority of citizens in the most blessed nation on earth are unhappy and miserable?
 - 2. How can it be that among them are the spiritually blessed children of God professing their own unhappiness?
 - 3. There are hundreds of texts that speak of God's desire that we be happy and of His instructions on how to become happy and maintain that state. How can it be that Christians seem to overlook all of them?
 - 4. Abraham Lincoln - "People are about as happy as they make up their minds to be."
 - 5. Marcus Antonius - "No man is happy who does not think himself so."
 - 6. Roger L'Estrange - "It is not the place, nor the condition, but the mind alone that can make anyone happy or miserable."
- C. The unhappiness of Americans in general and Christians in particular is a result of not having a proper disposition toward the people, things, and circumstances encountered in any given day.
 - 1. True and lasting happiness is found only in ordering our minds and lives according to the will and word of God.
 - 2. The spiritual mind is a happy mind - Matt. 5:3-12
 - 3. Jesus teaches that happiness is the result of having our minds ordered with a right understanding of reality and our hearts set on a desire for spiritual things.

I. HAPPINESS IS NOT FOUND IN GETTING EVERYTHING WE WANT

- A. "It is better to desire the things we have, than to have the things we desire" (Henry Van Dyke). - Ecc. 2:1-11
 - 1. "Unhappy is the man who is not so much dissatisfied with what he has as with what the other fellow possesses" (Chauncey Depew, former Chairman of the Board of the New York Central Railroad and a two term US Senator).
 - 2. "Happiness is being satisfied with what we have got and with what we haven't got" (Charles Spurgeon). - 1Tim. 6:6-10
- B. We will never find complete and lasting happiness with the things of this world
 - 1. Ecc. 6:7

II. HAPPINESS IS NOT FOUND IN BEING SOMEONE OTHER THAN OURSELVES

- A. Charles A. Stoddard - "We love in others what we lack in ourselves, and would be everything but what we are."

1. "If only I had what they have. If only I could be just like them. If only I could do the things they do."
 2. The Lord expects each one to do according to his own ability, not according to the abilities of others - Matt. 25:15
- B. The church functions best when each person fulfills the part for which the Lord suited them - Eph. 4:11-16
1. There are three kinds of people in the world: the "wills," the "won'ts," and the "can'ts." The first does everything, the second opposes everything, and the third fails at everything. Too many fail because they will not do what they can do and be satisfied with it.

III. HAPPINESS IS NOT FOUND IN BEING SOMEWHERE ELSE

- A. "The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance; the wise man grows it under his feet" (James Oppenheim, 19th Century American author).
- B. The story is told of a man who was responsible for the gate to a small town. One day a man came to the gate and asked, "What kind of town is this?" The gatekeeper replied, "From what kind of town did you come?" The newcomer's report was one of dissatisfaction, disharmony, and disgust. The gatekeeper replied: "You will find this town to be the same." The man went on somewhere else. The next day, another man came and inquired of the little town. The gatekeeper again asked, "From what kind of town did you come? The man gave a glowing report of his former home speaking of the love, the sharing, and the goodwill which characterized the inhabitants. To this the gatekeeper replied, "Come in! This place will be to you just as that from whence you've come!"
1. Israel's experience in the wilderness: they were dissatisfied with God's protection, food, worship, and Promised Land.
 - a. Num. 11:4-6, 13:30-33
 2. The parable of the prodigal son - Luke 15:11-18
 3. There is no place on the planet where there are no rules that must be followed, no place free from labor, no place free from hardship and sadness, and no place free from bad people. This is a fallen world
- C. Our home is in heaven. Measured against eternity, it matters not where we live here, nor how long we have to put up with it.
1. Rom. 8:18; 2Cor. 4:17-18; 1Peter 1:6, 5:10

Conclusion:

- A. Happiness is in the Lord and His word, not in the things of this world.
1. Deut. 33:29 - "Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD?"
 2. Psalm 144:15 - "Happy are the people who are in such a state; Happy are the people whose God is the LORD!"
 3. Prov. 16:20 - "He who heeds the word wisely will find good, And whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he."