

Oaks-West Church of Christ

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Happiness

by Ken Weliever

“Where is happiness?” asked minister Clarence Macartney. He debunked the answers most people give with several illustrations from the history of prominent people.

The 18th century British poet Lord Byron who lived a hedonistic life, learned that happiness is not found in pleasure. He wrote “The worm, the canker, and the grief are mine alone.”

Happiness is not found in money learned the 19th century American Financier, Jay Gould. Although known for his ruthless and unscrupulous business practices, he became wealthy. When dying, Gould lamented, “I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth

Happiness is not found in position or popularity. Benjamin Disraeli, the 18th century Prime Minister of Britain enjoyed both. Yet, he bemoaned, “Youth is a mistake,

manhood a struggle, and old age a regret.”

Neither is happiness found in power and conquest. It is said that the powerful military genius, Alexander the Great, after having conquered the known world of his day, sat down in his tent and wept because, he said, “There are no more worlds to conquer.”

Multiple modern-day illustrations could be offered of people who’ve achieved success, attained riches, enjoyed popularity, lived in luxury, and reveled in every pleasure possible, yet were unhappy. You’ve probably known some folks like that.

I’ve been struck during this current crisis of COVID-19 of the many stories about people finding contentment in life’s simple pleasures. Playing games. Making music. Telling stories. Reading. Exercising. Putting together puzzles. Reconnecting with family. Enjoying nature. And creatively finding things to entertain children without

Happiness ...

going to parks, shows, movies or ball games. I suppose it underscores Abraham Lincoln's observation, "Most people are as happy as they make up their minds to be."

The Bible has a good bit of offer about being happy.

(1) Real happiness begins with God. "Happy are the people whose God is the Lord" (Ps 144:15). Since God made man, He knows what makes him tick. What he needs. How he can enjoy life to its fullest. A genuine relationship with the Lord in the right starting place.

(2) Wisdom produces happiness. In Proverbs 3:13-18, the wise man expressed it this way.

Happy is the man who finds wisdom,
And the man who gains understanding;
For her proceeds are better than the profits
of silver,
And her gain than fine gold.
She is more precious than rubies,
And all the things you may desire cannot
compare with her.
Length of days is in her right hand,
In her left hand riches and honor.
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
She is a tree of life to those who take hold
of her,
And happy are all who retain her.

Read those words again. Let them sink in.
Wisdom is better than silver or gold? Wisdom

is more precious than rubies and riches?
Wisdom produces pleasantness and peace?
Wisdom brings happiness? Yes!

(3) Happiness comes when we trust and obey. "He who heeds the word wisely will find good," observed Solomon, "And whoever trusts in the Lord, happy is he" (Prov. 16:20).

There's an old song by the 19th century hymnist, John Sammis whose refrain repeats this truth.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way

To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

I believe that the Biblical definition of happiness leads to something even better—real joy. The joy of the Lord. The joy of faith. Joy in the Holy Spirit. And the joy of salvation. Paul said "the fruit of the Spirit is joy" (Gal. 5:22).

The prolific author, anonymous, wrote, "Happiness held is the seed—happiness shared is the flower." To truly be happy give something away with no strings attached. Do a random act of kindness expecting nothing in return. Smile when you meet people. Offer an encouraging word to a struggling friend.

The 19th century poet, Sara Teasdale, furthermore reminds us to appreciate and focus on our current blessings when she wrote, "I make the most of all that comes, and the least of all that goes."

Finally, Doctors Minirth and Meier were right when they wrote, "Happiness is a choice."

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Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.



Upcoming Ladies' Bible Classes - cancelled until further notice.

Limited Services will begin on May 10. See your email for information or contact one of the elders or deacons.

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.



Please remember the following individuals in your daily prayers:

June Owens
Jack Wilson
Jerry Richardson
Karen Hallmark
Shirley Perkins' brother, Leon
Morgan O'Hair
Dinah Williams
Joy Ulrich

Anne Stanberry

And continue to pray for each other

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

We have many that face challenges on a daily basis and need your prayers as well.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

