

Happiness

WHERE DO WE GET REAL, LASTING HAPPINESS?

HEBREWS 12:2

Keep your eyes on Jesus.

²We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish. ◦ He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterward. Now he is seated in the place of highest honor beside God's throne in heaven.

PSALM 112:1

Fear God and trust in him; delight in doing his commands.

¹ Praise the LORD!

Happy are those who fear the LORD.

Yes, happy are those who delight in doing what he commands.

PSALM 16:8-9

Happiness is based on God's presence within us, which brings true contentment.

⁸ I know the LORD is always with me.

I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me.

⁹ No wonder my heart is filled with joy,
and my mouth ◦ shouts his praises!
My body rests in safety.

GALATIANS 5:22

The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives produces joy.

²²But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law.

PSALM 119:2; PHILIPPIANS 1:25

Faith in God brings happiness, for God has promised that when we truly seek him, we will surely find him (Jer. 29:13-14).

² Happy are those who obey his decrees
and search for him with all their hearts.

²⁵I am convinced of this, so I will continue with you so that you will grow and experience the joy of your faith.

MATTHEW 25:21

A job well done brings a deep sense of satisfaction and is an occasion for joy.

²¹The master was full of praise. 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!'

HOW CAN I BE HAPPY IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES?

2 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10; 1 PETER 4:12-13

Difficult circumstances help us better understand what Christ went through for us and make us partners with him.

⁸Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹Each time he said, “My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may work through me. ¹⁰Since I know it is all for Christ’s good, I am quite content with my weaknesses and with insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

¹²Dear friends, don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. ¹³Instead, be very glad—because these trials will make you partners with Christ in his suffering, and afterward you will have the wonderful joy of sharing his glory when it is displayed to all the world.

ROMANS 5:2; HEBREWS 10:34

Hope in God’s promises of eternal life can make us happy, because we know that what we are presently going through will one day end.

²Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God’s glory.

³⁴You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail. When all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. You knew you had better things waiting for you in eternity.

ACTS 5:41; PHILIPPIANS 4:4,12; JAMES 1:2

God does not promise temporary happiness; in fact the Bible assumes problems will come our way. But God does promise lasting joy for all those who believe in him. This kind of joy stays with us despite our problems.

⁴¹The apostles left the high council rejoicing that God had counted them worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus.

⁴Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! ⁵Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon.

⁶Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷If you do this, you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

⁸And now, dear brothers and sisters, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. ⁹Keep putting into practice all you learned from me and heard from me and saw me doing, and the God of peace will be with you.

Paul’s Thanks for Their Gifts

¹⁰How grateful I am, and how I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but for a while you didn’t have the chance to help me. ¹¹Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to get along happily whether I have much or little. ¹²I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. ¹³For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need. ¹⁴But even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty.

²Dear brothers and sisters,^o whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. ³For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE HAPPY WHEN WE HAVE NOTHING MATERIALLY?

HABAKKUK 3:18

Habakkuk described in the previous verses an utter stripping of material prosperity. Then this beautiful verse concludes that still he will find joy in the Lord.

¹⁷Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vine; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, ¹⁸yet I will rejoice in the LORD! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation.

PROVERBS 13:7

Material riches can bring spiritual poverty. Material poverty can bring spiritual riches. It is possible to have both types of riches, but watch out if you are materially “blessed,” lest your blessing become a curse.

⁷Some who are poor pretend to be rich; others who are rich pretend to be poor.

MATTHEW 6:19-21

¹⁹“Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where they can be eaten by moths and get rusty, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰Store your treasures in heaven, where they will never become moth-eaten or rusty and where they will be safe from thieves. ²¹Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will also be.

Promise from God: Proverbs 11:23

²³The godly can look forward to happiness, while the wicked can expect only wrath.