

HOW TO ENJOY LIFE AND SEE GOOD DAYS

TEXT: I PETER 3:8-12

Introduction:

1. There are many unhappy people in this world.
2. The other day a man tried to commit suicide by jumping out his window, but he landed on a pile of trash. Everyone has been complaining about the New York City Sanitation Department, but in this case their slothfulness saved a man's life.
3. The newspaper headline read: "TRASH LANDING!"
4. A lot of people are living trashy lives. We can expect that from people who are lost sinners, but it should not be that way for Christians.
5. Christians ought to be the happiest people in this world, but unfortunately that is not always the case.
6. Here in our text this evening we see God's way to enjoy life and see good days (3:10).
7. Worldly people equate happiness with wealth and material prosperity. The Bible teaches the exact opposite (cf. I Tim. 6:6-10).
8. The Bible teaches genuine happiness comes from walking with God.

I. CHRISTIANS OUGHT TO BE LIKE-MINDED (3:8).

1. Someone has rightly said this "is more of a call for unity of disposition than uniformity of opinion" (D. Edmond Hiebert, *I Peter*).
2. Some Christians hold the right position, but have the wrong disposition.
3. F.B. Meyer said, "This oneness of mind does not demand the monotony of similarity, but unity in variety" (*Tried by Fire*).
4. David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore" (Psalm 133:1-3).
5. Ephesians 4:3 says, "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
6. In fact, this is taught all throughout the Bible. Romans 12:16 says, "Be of the same mind one toward another."

7. Second Corinthians 13:11 says, "Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."
8. Philippians 2:2 says, "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."
9. Philippians 1:27 says, "that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."
10. And Philippians 3:15 says, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."
11. Some one said: "To live in love with the saints above; O that will be glory. But to live below with the saints we know; well, that's a different story!"
12. When the apostle Paul heard that there were contentions and divisions among the members of the church in Corinth, he wrote to them and said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10).
13. For a church to function properly, the members must "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."
14. And when the members are of one mind, they are happy.
15. Second Corinthians 13:11 says, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

II. PRINCIPLES FOR HAPPINESS (3:8-11).

1. "Having compassion" (3:8). Psalm 86:15 says, "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth."
2. God is gracious and "full of compassion." Therefore to be godly we are to be compassionate.
3. The Bible says that when Jesus saw the multitudes, "he was moved with compassion on them" (Matt. 9:36).
4. Jude 22 says, "And of some have compassion, making a difference."
5. "Love as brethren" (3:8; cf. 1:22). According to I John 3:14 and 4:20, this is one of the ways we know we are genuinely saved.
6. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (I John 3:14).

7. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (I John 4:20).
8. D.L. Moody said, "Faith gets the most, humility keeps the most, but love works the most."
9. We are to "be pitiful" (3:8) -- tenderhearted. Romans 12:15 says, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."
10. We are to "be courteous" (3:8) -- humble, putting others ahead of ourselves, polite, and gracious. Unfortunately, Christian courtesy is becoming a thing of the past in some circles.
11. "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing" (3:9).
12. An old preacher named John Mason said:
 - To render good for evil, is God-like.
 - To render good for good, is man-like.
 - To render evil for evil, is beast-like.
 - To render evil for good, is devil-like.
13. "But contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing" (3:9b). When we bless others, God blesses us.
14. "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (3:10; cf. James 3:1-12).

III. THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE OVER THE RIGHTEOUS (3:12).

1. The expression "eyes of the Lord" is found often in Scripture.
2. Second Chronicles 16:9 says, "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."
3. Proverbs 15:3 says, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
4. Here in II Peter 3:12, Peter is quoting Psalm 34:12-16 to confirm that God's blessing rests upon those who refrain from evil deeds and evil speech.
5. "His ears are open unto their prayers" (I Peter 3:12). God answers the prayers of those who are obedient, but not those who are disobedient (cf. Psalm 66:18-20; I Peter 3:7).
6. "But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (I Peter 3:12b).

CONCLUSION:

1. Many people are deceived by the devil into thinking happiness comes from money, or the things money can buy, or from drinking and drugs.
2. Some people think a boyfriend or girlfriend, or husband or wife will bring happiness. To those thinking that way, let me say, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).
3. Happiness is to know the Saviour,
Living a life within His favour,
Having a change in my behaviour,
Happiness is the Lord.

Happiness is a new creation,
Jesus and me in close relation,
Having a part in His salvation,
Happiness is the Lord.

Real joy is mine,
No matter if the teardrops start,
I've found a secret,
It's Jesus in my heart.

Happiness is to be forgiven,
Living a life that's worth the livin',
Taking a trip that leads to Heaven,
Happiness is the Lord. -- Ira F. Stanphill