

God of Happiness

Happiness, the dictionary definition of the word, or more precisely the definition of the word `happy`, is as follows: `Happy, (of person or circumstance) lucky, fortunate, contented with one`s lot in life, glad or pleased (about something or with something), slightly drunk`.

Before commencing with this article I consulted the Strong`s Biblical Concordance to find out just how many times the words `happy` or `happiness` appeared within the pages of the scriptures and in what kind of circumstance they were being applied, this is what I found. The word `happy` occurs 22 times in the old testament and 6 times in the new testament. Of its` use in the old testament, 20 times it is defined as meaning fortune or blessedness, and its` use of the word as meaning `care-free`, is just the once. The one remaining definition for the use of the word in the old testament can be found regarding **Jeremiah 12: 1**. `Righteous are You, O Lord, when I plead with You: yet let me talk with You concerning Your judgments: Why does the way of the wicked prosper? why are they who deal very treacherously, all happy?` The definition for this `happy` according to Strong`s Concordance, is: `To be at ease, to have peace, to give oneself to rest, to prosper in safety`. Should we imagine that this state of `happiness` as blessed as it *may* appear to some, was inspired and given by the Lord God? No it was not, just the opposite in fact because as the scripture tells us it was the wicked people of this world that were enjoying this `happiness`, it was/is their fleshly lifetime reward as opposed to the eternal reward that the God-fearing peoples of this world will receive in their resurrection from the dead. For an example of the Lord God`s `reward system`, all of Matthew 6 should be read but for now we`ll just read **Matthew 6: 1-2**. `Take care that you do not do your good deeds before men so that you are seen (and honoured) of them, otherwise you shall have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore when you perform your charitable deeds, do not make it known to everybody as the hypocrites in the synagogues do, or in the streets so that they may have the honour and praise of men, for truly I say to you, they have their reward`. The praise and the backslapping of one`s fellow men can indeed promote happiness within a person, but the true Christian must ask of themselves, `is it worth it`?

So let`s have a look at *some* of the other 20 usages of the word `happy` within the pages of the old testament starting with the first one mentioned in **Genesis 30. 12-13**. `And Zilpah, Leah`s maid, bare Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, because the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name, Asher`. Now I think that we can appreciate that the sort of `happy` mentioned in this scripture is not the same sort as the average man in the street would like or imagine `happy` to be. This state of happiness has not been brought about by money, world status or fame, this is a happiness of humble origins, it is not selfish or smug, it is a Godly happiness. Let`s have another example, **1 Kings 10. 8**. `Happy are your men, happy are these your servants who stand continually before you and who hear your wisdom`. In this scripture we have the queen of Sheba speaking to king Solomon. She is not saying that the king`s men are happy because Solomon has made them all rich with money or because he has given them lands or grand-sounding titles or high office. No, it is simply because she recognises the fact that these

men, and indeed all of king Solomon's subjects, can and do partake daily of their king's wisdom because of which, the Lord God has blessed them with justice, truth, equity, love, peace of mind, good harvests and not least of all, Godly faith and understanding. We can further understand this to be the case if we back up that last scripture by reading from

2 Chronicles 9: 7-8. `Happy are your men and happy are your servants who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom. Blessed be the Lord your God who delighted in you and set you on His throne to be king for the Lord your God, because the Lord loves Israel, to establish them forever, therefore He made you (Solomon) king over them, to execute judgment and justice`.

For a different sort of Godly happiness we'll read from the book of **Job 5: 17.** `Behold, happy is the man whom the Lord corrects, therefore do not despise the chastising of the Almighty` . I think that we can accept that in order to experience/appreciate this sort of `happiness` an individual has to have already achieved a high level of loving spirituality which in its` turn produces understanding, faith and Godly patience. There are not, as I'm sure many reading this article will appreciate, a whole lot of people living upon this earth who have this high level of spirituality living within themselves, unfortunately however there is just the opposite. It would seem that we are living in a world full of unhappy malcontents, a world of moaners and grumblers, a world of people who are not willing to suffer silently the consequences of *their own* stupid and selfish actions. Let`s read from **Galations 6: 7.** `Do not deceive yourselves, the Lord is not fooled, for whatsoever a man sows, that also shall he reap` . No, these days it always has to be somebody else`s fault, nobody it seems is man enough to stand up and take the blame, and if something occurs that really is beyond human control such as an earthquake or a tsunami, then the world is all too ready to blame the Lord God for the tragedy, the God that most of the world *professes* not to believe in anyway! Let`s have a read from **Hosea 8: 7.** `For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. . .` and **Job 4: 8.** `Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same` . We live in a world full of covetous types who will *never* be satisfied with what they have, it always has to be something bigger and better, and many are jealous of possessions that others have worked hard for to acquire whilst they themselves expect the same but all for nothing, and when they can't have it they are `unhappy`.

Then we have the unhappy `victims` of this world, the ones with a `martyr complex`. These are the sort of people who, for example, when they get toothache, do not suffer it for a second longer than they have to and get themselves off to a dentist as quickly as possible and have it remedied. But instead of being grateful to be free of the pain, they continue to moan that they didn't deserve to have had the toothache in the first place and that the remedy employed by the dentist for its` removal was just too harrowing and so they seek free legal advice to find out whether they have any grounds by which they can sue their dentist because of `undue suffering`.

There are many people who because of their actions and their off-hand attitude, bring unhappiness upon themselves. If they truly want `happiness` then they should be prepared to `earn` it, **Psalms 144: 11-15.** `Rid me and deliver me from the hands of Godless children, whose mouths speak wickedly and their way of life is a way of lies, so that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished like those of a palace. So that our barns may be full, providing all manner of goods; so that our sheep may bring forth thousands more, and ten thousands in our streets; so that our oxen may be strong enough to do the work required; so that there be no breaking in or going out; so that there is nobody

complaining in our streets. Happy are those people who live in such conditions, yes happy are those people whose God is the Lord!'. Some, on having read those lines of that psalm written by king David, may jump to the conclusion that David is really praising the Lord for his own and the people's happiness because of the wealth of food and goods that is in their well stocked barns. Well, our Lord God does not expect nor does He want His law abiding subjects to starve to death or live miserable lives in abject poverty. Indeed, He does not *want* to see *any* of us in desperate need or in ill health, crawling around in filthy rags not knowing where our next morsal of food is coming from. On the contrary, God wants His subjects to thrive and rejoice in their prosperity which He will so freely and abundantly supply to those that love Him. So how *do* we love Him? well He tells us in **John 14: 15**. *'If you love Me, keep My commandments'*. The Lord will freely supply for us that which we need as opposed to that which we think that we need, or more accurately those material things which we desire and covet and which we *suppose* will bring us happiness. As we know, there is a marked difference between a necessity and a luxury, but even so, the Lord is not such a severe Father as to deny His subjects their little 'luxuries', provided, and this is an important proviso, that we do not, as is the way with mankind, become obsessed or totally dependent on them to the exclusion of everything and everybody else, *especially* the Lord God Himself !

Let's have a read from **Proverbs 3: 13-20**. *'Happy is the man that gets wisdom and finds understanding, because the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof more than fine gold. She (wisdom) is more precious than rubies, and all the things that you desire are not compared to her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand is riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is everyone who keeps her. The Lord, by wisdom, has founded the earth and by understanding He established the heavens. By His knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down their dew'*. These words from this psalm are surely describing Godly happiness. True Christians know, and here I'll quote a line from a Beatles song, 'money can't buy me love', it never could and it never will. Sure, money, at least *enough* of it, can buy you any material thing that you want, it can buy you a whole crowd of people that you can call friends if you want to, it can buy you worldly position and power, but all of these things are temporary, they will cease to exist when you cease to exist and even sooner if the money runs out first. *True* love, however, *never dies*. And so, if our God is not the God of worldly, material happiness, He most certainly *is* the God of true love which leads to spiritual happiness. God Is Love. If we *allow* ourselves to go through the process of getting to know our God then we will discover that we do indeed love Him and what is more, we shall begin to realize that we have loved Him all along, but it is only when we take time out and step back from the tugs and the pulls of this material world that we can achieve this realization. If we achieve spiritual wisdom, as opposed to worldly wisdom, it will greatly help us to get to know our God. It will make things concerning Him clearer for us to understand because it acts as a pointer, a guide, it enables us to push aside all of the childish and vain imaginings which so often cloud the judgments and beliefs of those who do not possess it. Happiness alone cannot do this, because *true* happiness can only be attained through the knowledge of the Lord God, and this can only be achieved through wisdom as stated in the first seven words of Proverbs 3: 13. which you have just read. False happiness, that is to say worldly, possession of material riches happiness, more often than not leads to a person developing an 'I'm alright Jack' attitude. This is an attitude of selfish contentment which in turn leads the person in this state of false euphoria to adopt a 'who needs God anyway?' frame of mind. But, and here lies the very real danger for

them, what these selfish and smug people fail to realize in *their`happiness`* is that they do have a `god`, a `god` who pays particular attention to their every greedy material need and ill-gotten gain, but he is not the true Christian's God, he is *not* the one true God, instead he is the `god` of this earth, Satan. Satan, the arch demon `god` who just loves the fact that the majority of the world thinks that he does not even exist, that he is just the figment of some childish imaginings, fables, myths and Jewish folklore when in fact he is the most notorious and the most powerful of the *demonic* spirit beings mentioned in the scriptures. He is no `fairytale`, he is the most vile, merciless, tyrannical, violent, untrustworthy, perverse and evil being in the whole of creation, and millions of people living on this earth are enjoying a state of `happiness` in part or in whole, because of his influence! We are living in a world where the majority of people, even those on a modest income, are hell-bent on hedonism, a manic desire to experience every known form of material and fleshly pleasure possible to achieve within this the shortest of lifetimes, their life goal is the pursuit of `happiness`, and why? *because they do not have the one true God in their lives and as a direct consequence of that fact, they are miserable!* What most people fail to realize is that the more material possessions that they lust after and then acquire, rather than making them happy and free to enjoy them, having acquired their latest possession merely makes them more manic to acquire the next and this in turn leads them to become enslaved to them, they are no longer free, they have become a prisoner of their own pursuit for what they imagine is happiness. True happiness, like true love, cannot be bought with money and therefore it is not constrained by it, or rather, the lack of it!

Constantly spending money on whatsoever an individual's heart desires, or religiously attending football matches, following fashion trends or idols of screen or of pop music etc. may promote in the individual concerned a feeling of happiness, but what they fail to realise is that these things that they do and follow continually have become their `gods`. They do not understand that a way of life or an object of their affection does not have to be consciously worshipped in order for it to become an idol, thus creating a barrier between themselves and the Lord God. Their wrongly directed thoughts and actions may well induce a feeling of happiness, but unbeknown to them they also induce a false sense of security, they are in effect `asleep`, they are enjoying their dreamtime and woe betides anybody who would dare to try to wake them up by telling them the truth about what they do. Let's have a read from **Proverbs 6: 9-11**. *How long will you sleep O sluggard? when will you wake up? A little sleep, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall your poverty come, as one who wanders, as a desperate man`.* And what happens when the provider of their happiness, their money, finally runs out and with it all of their `fairweather friends`? **Proverbs 14: 20**. *The poor person is despised, even by his own neighbour, but the rich person has many friends`.* Don't get me wrong, money and having money is not necessarily in itself evil, its` what people do to get it and then how they spend it that is so often evil. As the scripture states in **1 Timothy 6: 10**. *Because the love of money is the root of all evil. .`.*

The rich do indeed have many `friends`, and even though some rich people do realise that it is only because of their money that these `friends` are even with them at all, it suits their purpose for the time being and they allow it to continue. With others this knowledge of false friendship becomes a nagging obsession, they even begin to doubt the sincerity of any true friends that they may still have, and they eventually plummet into the depths of loneliness and despair often resorting to alcohol or drugs to numb the emotional pain of it all. Does this sound like true happiness?

How then can a rich person spend his money in a way that will promote true, Godly

happiness within him/herself? well let's read from **Proverbs 14: 21**. He that despises his (poor) neighbour sins, but he that has mercy on the poor, happy is he. That which is a lot more important than worldly happiness is to be found in this next scripture, and any wealthy person should take serious notice of what it has to say, let's read **Matthew 19: 20-23**. The young man said to Jesus, all these things (commandments) I have obeyed from my youth, what do I still lack? And Jesus said to him, If you want to be perfect, go and sell all that you have and give the money to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven: then come and follow Me. But when the young man heard these words he went away sorrowful because he had great riches. Then said Jesus to His disciples, Truly I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now, knowing that you are worthy to enter into the kingdom of heaven, that would be true happiness! So how does a person become worthy to enter into the kingdom of heaven? well by keeping, or at the very least sincerely striving to keep, God's laws, the ten commandments. Let's read **Proverbs 29: 18**. Where there is no (God-inspired) revelation, the people perish, but happy is he who keeps the law. By obeying the Lord's commandments and thereby doing His will, a person gets to know the Lord, and that person can then rest assured that the Lord God knows them and that they have found true love, because God is love! Money cannot buy a person love and neither can it buy knowledge of the Lord or anything else pertaining to Him, as this next scripture tells us, **Acts 8: 18-21**. And when Simon (the sorcerer) saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands on a person, the power of the holy spirit was given to that person, he offered them money saying, Give me also this power that whomsoever I lay my hands upon may receive the holy spirit. But Peter said to him, Your money perish along with yourself because you have thought that the gift of God can be purchased with money. You have neither part nor portion in this matter because your heart is not right in the sight of God.

There are of course those, who unfortunately for the wrong reasons, make up the great majority of 'happy' people in this world and they are the ones who experience a happiness which is not of or from the Lord God. Their happiness is of this world and it stems from the obtaining of money, material 'delights' and sexual gratification. Even the most wicked people on this earth can be happy, and the Lord does not prevent them from being happy, **Jeremiah 12: 1**. Righteous are You O Lord when I plead with You: yet let me talk with You about Your judgments: Why does the way of the wicked prosper? why are all they that deal treacherously, happy?. Yes these people are 'happy', but it is a passing happiness, they may well be happy until the day that they die, but beyond that what will their happiness be worth to them? Dare they take and parade their worldly happiness before the judgment seat and the very presence of the Lord God? But, some may say, most of these people have had wives, sons and daughters and family who they have truly loved and doted upon, won't that count for anything in the day of judgement? Well what does the Lord God think about people who dearly love their own? Let's read the words of Jesus Christ to find out, **Matthew 7: 9-11**. What man is there of you whom if his son asks him for bread will instead give him a stone to eat? Or if he ask him for fish will instead give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your own children, how much more then will your Father which is in heaven, give good things to those who ask of Him?. Can we see, loving your own family and providing for them as best as you can is nothing special for a person to do in the eyes of the Lord, rather, *it is expected of them!*

Any true Christian knows that love, true love, does not need to be supported by possessions, money, status or power, it stands on its own and can never die. Of course it will take a few knocks and get dented from time to time and it can cause great emotional pain but it will survive these things and always emerge from them as good as new or even better.

According to the scriptures it is not only the wicked who are happy with their lot on this earth, **Malachi 3: 15.** tells us; `And now we call the proud, happy. Yes, they that work wickedness are set up. Yes, even those who tempt the Lord God are delivered`. This scripture tells us that even the arrogant and the proud are being allowed to have their `day in the sun`, their reward, during their lifetime on this earth, but we who obey the Lord`s commandments should not feel somehow cheated by that fact, these Godless people are being given their reward right now in this lifetime, so imagine if we can, just how much better a true Christian`s reward will be when they receive it in the next life. **Romans 8: 16-18.** `The holy spirit itself bears witness with our own spirit that we are the children of God. And if we are the children of God then we are heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him so that we may be glorified together with Him. Because I think that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us`. Well, reading that scripture should make any true Christian truly happy!

Genuine Christians should not be trying to find or buy happiness for themselves during their sojourning upon this earth by surrounding themselves with material `treasures`, and the words of Jesus Christ in this next portion of scripture underline that fact. **Matthew 6: 19-21.** `Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon this earth, where moth and rust will destroy them, and where thieves break in and steal them. Instead lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust does destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal them. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also`. That last sentence of that scripture really sums it all up, if we have no great material possessions that tie us down and bind us to this world and as a consequence make us a prisoner of it and its` controlling Babylonian system, then we are free of it, and it can have no power over us! In the words of a Bob Dylan song, `When you got nothing, (material possessions) you got nothing to lose`.

Freely giving yourself to the helping of others is another thing that can help the true Christian acquire happiness on this earth, as demonstrated to us once again by our Creator Jesus Christ in the book of **John 13: 13-17.** `You call Me Master and Lord, and you say correctly, for so I Am. If I then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another`s feet. Because I have given you an example that you should do for one another as I have done for you. Truly truly I say to you, the servant is not greater than his lord, neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If you understand these things, then happy are you if you do them`. If our very God in the shape and form of Jesus Christ can humble Himself by washing his own servant`s (the disciple`s) feet, then who are we to think that such an act or similar acts are too demeaning for us? In this next portion of scripture we can read of the Lord`s feelings towards the proud and haughty people of this world, **1 Peter 5: 5-7.** `...Yes, all of you be subject to one another, and be clothed with humility, because the Lord God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your cares (worries) upon Him, because He cares for you`. Just imagine how happy a person is without a single worry in the world because they have unburdened them all on the Lord. Even if a person can only manage to off-load *some* of their worries onto the shoulders of the Lord, the relief can be tremendous. But we should bear in mind that *caring faith* rather than careless irresponsibility is needed in order to successfully do this in a manner that is acceptable in the eyes of the Lord God so that a person does not develop a `I don`t give a hoot for anything` attitude.

A right-thinking frame of mind is what usually makes a person happy, even in the most difficult and challenging of circumstances as the apostle Paul demonstrated as he was paraded

before one `person of importance` after another when he was arrested and was on his journey to Rome to appear before Caesar as we can read of in the book of **Acts 26: 2.** `I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before you touching all the things that I am accused of by the Jews`. Paul was happy in this situation even though he knew that the end of his journey would result in almost certain death because he saw it as a series of ideal opportunities to witness the gospel of Jesus Christ before men but more importantly before their rulers and officials.

The apostle Paul played the `game` of life to the full, he gambled his life against the probability of his death many times. Just like any gambler on a slot machine, he played the `slot machine of life` and never tired of it, but *unlike* any ordinary gambler he never ran out of money to feed the machine because he fed it with his very being. He knew that the `machine of life` that he played would not pay out in this lifetime but he also knew that it would pay out handsomely in the next, all he had to do was keep on feeding it and never give up. Like any serious gambler, the real happiness of gambling was derived by the playing of the machine and of the game *but*, in the apostle Paul`s case, and also in any true Christian`s case the very real expectation and knowledge of one day actually hitting the jackpot!

Let`s have a read of **Romans 14: 22.** `Have you faith? have it to yourself before God. Happy is the person who does not condemn themselves in that thing which they do`. Basically what this piece of scripture is telling us is that if we believe that the thing or the action that we are about to commit to is the right thing to do in the eyes of the Lord then we should go ahead and do it with confidence, never doubting. Because once doubt sets in then we are allowing Satan to influence the outcome of the very thing that we set out in Godly confidence to achieve and we will no longer be happy in doing it and probably not happy with the end result. Remember, it only took one split-second of doubt to send the apostle Peter plummeting into the depths of the storm-tossed sea whereas before-hand he was quite confident of walking upon it, let`s read about it in **Matthew 14: 28-31.** `And Peter answered Him and said, Lord, if it really is You, then command me to come to You by enabling me to walk upon the water. And Jesus said, Come. And when Peter had got himself over the side of the ship, he began to walk on the water towards Jesus. But when he noticed how strong the wind was he began to be afraid; and beginning to sink he cried, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him, and said to him, O you of little faith, why did you doubt?`.

Reading that piece of scripture we can realise that it is yet another example concerning a person`s calling to the Christian way of life. It appears easy at first, but when persecution or troubles start to arise then only those with true faith will be strong enough to see it through. Nevertheless, we should realise that Jesus is always there to give us a helping hand when in faith we ask Him for it, because there will be times for all of us when things get too much for us to bear on our own.

Any true Christian has to be happy with and in their faith, and that faith must build over the years so that it becomes deeper rooted and stronger than Peter`s was when *he* was first called to `walk upon the water`, why? well because there will be no physical helping hand of Jesus Christ to reach out for any of us. Our own faith in Jesus Christ must provide us with a spiritual hand to reach out for Him, **and then He will reach out for us!** That kind of knowledge provides the true Christian with true, inner happiness, the sort of happiness that in turn promotes endurance and contentment in situations which to a non-Christian would be unacceptable in their Godless way of life. If we read from the book of James we can read of just such happiness, **James 5: 10-11.** `Take, my bretheren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, as an example of

suffering affliction and of patience. Behold, we count them happy who endure, You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the way of the Lord, that the Lord has great pity and tender mercy`. And for another example we shall read from **1 Peter 3: 12-14**. `For the eyes of the Lord watch over the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers, , but the face of the Lord is against those who commit evil. And who is he that can harm you if you be followers of that which is good? But, and if you suffer because of the righteous way that you live, then happy are you, and do not be afraid of their terror, (them, or the things that frighten them) neither be you troubled`.

For the final scripture for this article and the one that perhaps sums up all that I have been trying to convey about any true Christian`s state of happiness whilst living this our fleshly life and of the Lord`s part in the promotion of that happiness, we`ll read **1 Peter 4: 14**. `If you are reproached because of the name of Jesus Christ, then happy are you, because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. As for those who commit the reproaching, Jesus is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified`.

Is our God the God of happiness? well of course He is! But it is not the sort of happiness that the world seeks after. The happiness that the Lord gives to an individual is way higher than that because in essence it is LOVE. As the scripture tells us, `God is love`. And a person cannot be any happier than knowing that they are loved, especially when they know that they are loved by the Lord, and that being the case, *knowing that they will be loved for ever!*