

QUALITY  
OF  
LIFE  
BIBLE  
STUDY



*Happiness*<sup>©</sup>

COMPILED BY  
S.MCRAE

# HAPPINESS

## Quality of Live Series

**LEADER: What makes you happy?**

(give time to answer)

**LEADER: Is happiness found in pleasure?**

**READER: Happiness #1**

Source: <http://www.bible.org/illus/h/h-06.htm#TopOfPagerances> Schaeffer

Happiness is not found in pleasure, Christian author Clarence Macartney said. Romantic poet Lord Byron (1788-1824) lived such a life if anyone did. He wrote, "The worm, the canker, and the grief are mine alone."

**LEADER: Is happiness found in money?**

**READER: Happiness #2**

Source: <http://www.bible.org/illus/h/h-06.htm#TopOfPagerances>

Happiness is not found in money—Jay Gould, the American millionaire, had plenty of that. When dying, he said, "I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth."

**READER: QUOTE #1**

Source: <http://www.crusade.org/word/word413.html>

Someone asked J. D. Rockefeller, "How much money would it take to make a person happy?" He answered, "Just a little bit more."

**READER: QUOTE #2**

Source: [http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_ha](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_ha)

"I'm fulfilled in what I do... I never thought that a lot of money or fine clothes -- the finer things of life -- would make you happy. My concept of happiness is to be filled in a spiritual sense." - Coretta Scott King , Wife of Martin Luther King

**READER: Luke 16:13**

*"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."*

**READER: QUOTE #3**

Source: [http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_ha](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_ha)

"It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy, that makes happiness." - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 1834-1892, Popular English Pastor/Author

**LEADER: Is happiness found in position or fame?**

**READER: Happiness #3**

Source: <http://www.bible.org/illus/h/h-06.htm#TopOfPagerances>

Happiness is not found in position and fame—Lord Beaconsfield (1804-1881, Prime Minister to Queen Victoris and novelist) enjoyed more than his share of both. He wrote, "Youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle, and old age a regret."

**READER: "Elvis"**

Source: <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/happiness.htm>

6 weeks before he died, a reporter asked Elvis Presley, "Elvis, when you first started playing music, you said you wanted to be rich, famous and happy. Are you happy?"

"I'm lonely as hell" he replied.

**LEADER: Is happiness found in position of military glory?**

**READER: Happiness #4**

Source: <http://www.bible.org/illus/h/h-06.htm#TopOfPagerances>

Happiness is not found in military glory—Alexander the Great conquered the known world in his day. Having done so, he wept in his tent because, he said, “There are no more worlds to conquer.”

**LEADER: Is happiness found in worrying till it’s right?**

**READER: Happiness #5**

Source: <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/happiness.htm>

An old man was asked what had robbed him of joy the most in his lifetime. He replied, “Things that never happened!”

**READER: John 13:1**

*Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*

**LEADER: We should “Fret Not” because He loves us.**

**READER: Psalm 139:10**

*Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.*

**LEADER: We should “Faint Not” because He holds us.**

**READER: Psalm 121:5**

*The LORD is your keeper; The LORD is your shade on your right hand.*

**LEADER: We should “Fear Not” because He keeps us.**

**READER: Psalm 23:1**

*The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.*

**LEADER: Fret not; Faint not; Fear not; Want Not...because He is our Shepherd.**

**READER: QUOTE #4**

Source: <http://www.quotationspage.com/subjects/happiness/>

“You can never get enough of what you don’t need to make you happy.” - Eric Hoffer, 1902-1983 American Social Philosopher

**READER: Philippians 4:6-8**

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.*

**LEADER: “Declaration of Independence” (Excerpt)**

Source: <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/happiness.htm>

Every day, it seems, we’re flooded with pop-psych advice about happiness. The relentless message is that there’s something we’re supposed to do to be happy -- make the right choices, or have the right set of beliefs about ourselves. Our Founding Fathers even wrote the pursuit of happiness into the Declaration of Independence.

**LEADER: What makes people really satisfied with their lives?**

**READER: “American Journal of Psychiatry” Today in the Word**

Source: <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/happiness.htm>

What really makes people satisfied with their lives? Amazingly, the secret may lie in a person's ability to handle life's blows without blame or bitterness. These are the conclusions of a study of 173 men who have been followed since they graduated from Harvard University in the early 1940s. The study, reported in the American Journal of Psychiatry, noted that one potent predictor of well-being was the ability to handle emotional crisis maturely.

**READER: "Bubbles"** The Applause of Heaven, Max Lucado

Source: <http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon6/bubbles.htm>

She has every reason to be bitter. Though talented, she went unrecognized for years. Prestigious opera circles closed their ranks when she tried to enter. American critics ignored her compelling voice. She was repeatedly rejected for parts for which she easily qualified. It was only after she went to Europe and won the hearts of tough-to-please European audiences that stateside opinion leaders acknowledged her talent.

Not only has her professional life been a battle, her personal life has been marked by challenge. She is the mother of two handicapped children, one of whom is severely retarded. Years ago, in order to escape the pace of New York City, she purchased a home on Martha's Vineyard. It burned to the ground two days before she was to move in.

Professional rejection. Personal setbacks. Perfect soil for the seeds of bitterness. A receptive field for the roots of resentment. But in this case, anger found no home.

Her friends don't call her bitter; they call her "Bubbles." Beverly Sills. Internationally acclaimed opera singer. Retired director of the New York City Opera.

Her phrases are sugared with laughter. Her face is softened with serenity. Upon interviewing her, Mike Wallace stated that "she is one of the most impressive-if not the most impressive-ladies I've ever interviewed."

How can a person handle such professional rejection and personal trauma and still be known as Bubbles? "I choose to be cheerful," she says. "Years ago I knew I had little or no choice about success, circumstances or even happiness; but I knew I could choose to be cheerful."

**READER: QUOTE #5**

Source: <http://www.followyourdreams.com/happiness.html>

"The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain." - Dolly Parton, Singer/Songwriter/Actress/Entertainer

**READER: "I Know the Secret"**

Source: [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2a/i\\_know\\_the\\_secret.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2a/i_know_the_secret.htm)

A woman named Frances once knew a young person at church named Debbie. Debbie always seemed effervescent and happy, although Frances knew she had faced struggles in her life. Her long-awaited marriage had quickly ended in divorce. She had struggled to get a grip on her single life. She hadn't chosen it, but she decided she would live it with utmost enjoyment and satisfaction.

Debbie was active in Sunday school, in the choir, as a leader of the junior high girls' group, and in the church renewal movement. Frances enjoyed knowing Debbie. Debbie's whole face seemed to smile and she always greeted Frances with a hug.

One day she asked Debbie, "How is it that you are always so happy - you have so much energy, and you never seem to get down?"

With her eyes smiling, Debbie said, "I know the secret!"

"What secret is that? What are you talking about?" Frances asked.

Debbie replied, "I'll tell you all about it, but you have to promise to share the 'secret' with others."

Frances agreed, "Okay, now what is it?"

"The secret is this: I have learned there is little I can do in my life that will make me truly happy. I must depend on God to make me happy and meet my needs. When a need arises in my life, I have to trust God to

supply according to HIS riches. I have learned most of the time I don't need half of what I think I do. HE has never let me down. Since I learned that secret I am happy."

Frances' first thought was, That's too simple! But upon reflecting over her own life she recalled how she thought a bigger house would make her happy -- but it didn't! She thought a better-paying job would make her happy -- but it hadn't. When did she realize her greatest happiness? Sitting on the floor with her grandchildren, eating pizza and watching a movie -- a simple gift from God.

It's no secret....it's in the book!

**READER: Philippians 4:19**

*And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus*

**LEADER: Do circumstances make us happy?**

**READER: QUOTE #6**

Source: [http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_ha](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_ha)

"A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes." - Hugh Downs, Former anchor of 20/20

**READER: QUOTE #7**

Source: [http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_ha](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_ha)

"Happiness doesn't come from doing what we like to do but from liking what we have to do." - Wilferd A. Peterson, Inspirational Poet

**READER: QUOTE #8**

Source: [http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_ha](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_ha)

"If you can't be happy where you are, it's a cinch you can't be happy where you ain't." - Charles "Tremendous" Jones, Christian Motivational Speaker

**READER: "Our Greatest Need" (Excerpt) Our Daily Bread**

Source: <http://www.bible.org/illus/h/h-06.htm#TopOfPagerances>

What is our greatest need in life? Is it to be happy? We may long for a change in our circumstances, and sometimes that's what we get. But a changed life is our deepest need. Changed circumstances may make us happier, but a changed life will make us better, for it will make us like Christ.

**READER: "The Happiest Man on Earth" WIT and WISDOM**

Source: [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2a/happiest\\_man\\_on\\_earth.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2a/happiest_man_on_earth.htm)

There once was a king who had more money than he knew what to do with. He owned all of the land as far as the eye could see, several castles, and he ruled his land with an iron fist. But no matter how much he had, he never seemed to have enough and was a very miserable man.

One day he told his servant, "I want you to go out and scour the land, from one horizon to the other, and find the happiest man on earth, and bring me his shirt. Once I have the shirt of the happiest man, I will be able to be happy myself. And I don't want you to return without that shirt or you will be beheaded."

The servant set out about his mission and was gone for many moons. The king was getting impatient as he waited and waited. Finally, after many months of searching, the servant returned, on hands and knees, crawling before the king. The king noticed the servant's hands were empty and became very angry.

He told the servant that he had one minute before he was to be beheaded and he had better explain why he had disobeyed his orders. With tears in his eyes, the servant looked to the king and said

"Master, I did as you said, I searched from horizon to horizon looking for the happiest man on earth, and I finally found him."

So the king asks, "Why didn't you bring me the shirt of this man?"

The servant replied, "Master, the happiest man on earth did not own a shirt."

## **READER: I Thessalonians 5:16**

*Rejoice always*

**LEADER: “Rejoice Always”** By Dr. Grant C. Richison, Today’s Word

Source: <http://www.crusade.org/word/word1425.html> (Excerpt)

This is the shortest verse in the Greek New Testament.

A rejoicing attitude does not tumble into a survival mode toward life. The Holy Spirit commands the believer at Thessalonica to “rejoice” even in duress situations. The Thessalonians were living with deep and daily persecution. Their circumstances did not alter their joy. True joy transcends circumstance. This is not self-hypnosis. Biblical joy rests in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Always*

God wants us to rejoice “always,” not just some of the time but all of the time.

**LEADER: Look at Paul’s circumstances...**

- He had a thorn in his flesh he prayed to be removed, but God said “No”.
- He had a terrible history of persecuting the Christians.
- He was born again.
- He spent time in a jail cell in bad conditions while continuing to write the letters in our New Testament.

## **READER: In Philippians 4:11**

*“I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty; Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.”*

**LEADER: Can contentment make us happy?**

**READER: “Tired of the Farm”** By Charles L. Paddock Signs of the Times

Source: [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2d/tired\\_of\\_the\\_farm.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon2d/tired_of_the_farm.htm)

A farmer became tired of his farm; and no wonder, you’ll say, for he was born on the place. He had spent all his days on that quarter section. When a boy, he drove the cows to and from the pasture, picked apples in the orchard, swam in the creek just around the bend, trudged across the meadow and through the woods to the little frame schoolhouse down at the crossroads.

When he grew to young manhood, he had plowed every acre of the tillable land in the spring, helped to put up the hay in the summer, threshed in the fall, and hauled fodder for the stock in winter. To this same old home he brought his bride. His three children had been born under the same roof where he was born. They had now grown up and gone to homes of their own.

He was sick and tired of the surroundings. He wanted a change; and often in his dreams he pictured a quiet spot where conditions were ideal, where he could spend his old age in comfort and be happy. He told the real estate dealer in town how he felt, so the agent drove out and looked the farm over carefully. He felt sure he would have no difficulty in finding a buyer.

When the weekly paper came on Thursday, the old farmer looked over the ads, and found his farm listed. It stated that the Hammond place of one hundred sixty acres was for sale. The land was fertile and productive - a crop failure had never been known. Forty acres were covered with the best of timber; an artesian well furnished water the year round. There was an abundance of pasture land, through which flowed a small creek; and there was an ideal dwelling house of eight rooms. The barn was large and modern; there were machine sheds, and a granary with spacious bins.

The place was well stocked with horses, cows, sheep, and chickens. It was close to the city, on the rural free delivery, and had a telephone. There were all kinds of fruit trees, both large and small, with abundance of shade around the house.

The old man read the advertisement the second time, then hitched up the team and drove to town to see the real estate agent. “I have read that advertisement,” he said, “and as nearly as I can figure out, that’s exactly the kind of place I have been wanting. I think I will keep it myself.”

**LEADER: So is there some attitude involved with happiness?**

**READER: QUOTE #9**

Source: <http://www.followyourdreams.com/happiness.html>

“You grow up the day you have your first real laugh at yourself.” - Ethel Barrymore, 1879-1959 Stage, Screen, TV Actress

**READER: QUOTE #10**

Source: <http://www.followyourdreams.com/happiness.html>

“More important than talent, strength, or knowledge is the ability to laugh at yourself and enjoy the pursuit of your dreams.” - Amy Grant, Award winning Christian singer/songwriter

**READER: “A Simple Pleasure” A Life of One’s Own**

Source: [http://www.ozsermonillustrations.com/frames/happiness\\_frameset.htm](http://www.ozsermonillustrations.com/frames/happiness_frameset.htm)

In 1926 a young Englishwoman, Joanna Field, began to feel that she was not living a truly authentic life, that she did not know what made her truly happy. To remedy this she kept a journal in order to discover what specifically triggered the feeling of delight in her daily life. The journal, *A Life of One’s Own*, was published in 1934. It was written, she confided, in the spirit of a detective who searches through the minutiae of the mundane in hopes of finding clues for what was missing in her life.

Joanna Field discovered that she delighted in red shoes, good food, sudden bursts of laughter, reading in French, answering letters, loitering in a crowd at a fair and “a new idea when it is grasped.”

What is missing from many of our days is a true sense that we are enjoying the lives we are living. It is difficult to experience moments of happiness if we are not aware of what it is we genuinely love. We must learn to savor small, authentic moments that bring us contentment. Experiment with a new cookie recipe. Take the time to slowly arrange a bouquet of flowers in order to appreciate their colors, fragrance and beauty. Sip a cup of tea on the front stoop in the sunshine. Pause for five minutes to pet a purring cat. Simple pleasures waiting to be enjoyed. Simple pleasures often overlooked.

**READER: QUOTE #11**

Source: <http://www.followyourdreams.com/happiness.html>

“All my life I have tried to pluck a thistle and plant a flower wherever the flower would grow in thought and mind.” - Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States

**READER: “Overflow With Joy” By Paula Friedrichsen (Excerpt)**

Source: [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon4/overflow\\_with\\_joy.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon4/overflow_with_joy.htm)

Have you ever met someone who just overflows with the “Joy of the Lord?” I certainly have, but one experience really stands out in my mind because it happened recently.

This last July my family and I were on vacation, and I was having my quiet time down by the beach, sitting in a lawn chair. I had decided early on in this vacation that I would try to get alone for a few minutes at the start of every day, so I could read my Bible and pray. (Let me say here that I’ve taken more than a few vacations where I did not do this, and I can attest with confidence that I am a nicer mommy and a happier wife, if I take the time to be alone with God each day.)

So anyway, I was sitting a few feet from the most amazing green/blue ocean water I have ever seen, just praising God for the beauty of it all. The waves were rolling in, and a brilliant blue sky hosted large puffy clouds, a balmy breeze rustled the palm trees above my head and all I could think was “this is absolutely glorious.” And as I sat there, just lost in it all, I noticed a balding middle-aged man standing knee deep in the water, about twenty feet in front of me. He was looking around at the beauty and then suddenly he lifted his hands high in the air, as in exultation. What a wonderful sight!

He was overflowing with God’s amazing goodness and when that happens - it cannot be contained. A few minutes later he headed up toward the condo complex and as he did he passed me and took notice of the Bible on my lap. He stopped and said to me “Since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made... Romans 1:20” Obviously at that point we struck up a conversation and had a pleasant discourse that lasted a minute or two and then he was gone. But what I was left with was a touch from God, administered by another

believer's childlike exuberance over God's delightful creation.

Oh, why must we be so very staid most of the time? God has done so much for us, revealing his goodness and majesty to us in so many ways. Why are we so prone to put a "lid on it" and keep it all to ourselves. I was so deeply touched by this fellow Christian and his willingness to "speak out" what he was thinking. And I can tell you with certainty, that the joy he was experiencing overflowed onto me as he spoke out that piece of scripture. In fact the first thing I did when I returned to the condo was to tell my husband about the experience and relate to him how inspiring it was.

We underestimate the effect we can have on the people around us. We underestimate the power and anointing that is on God's word. We underestimate the power that is in joy-filled actions and words. And in a world where it's completely acceptable to scream your lungs out while attending a football game, maybe we should feel the freedom to shout out "Thank You Lord!" next time we see a gorgeous rainbow or shimmering mountain stream. Because we may never know the profound affect that our adoration of God may have in the life of another.

**LEADER: The attitude of the heart** can light the face, twinkle the eye and smile at life. It effects those around you; have you ever thought about how it can effect even a job interview?

**READER: "Smile when you say that!"** Bits & Pieces

Source: <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/happiness.htm>

Holiday Inn, when looking for 500 people to fill positions for a new facility, interviewed 5,000 candidates. The hotel managers interviewing these people excluded all candidates who smiled fewer than four times during the interview. This applied to people competing for jobs in all categories.

**LEADER: Can you choose happiness...can you choose a good attitude?**

**READER: QUOTE #12**

Source: [http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_ha](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_ha)

"Happiness is a sort of action." - Aristotle 384-322 BC Great Greek Philosopher

**READER: QUOTE #13**

Source: <http://www.followyourdreams.com/happiness.html>

"Most folks are about as happy as they make their minds up to be." - Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States

**READER: "Happiness Is a Choice"** (Excerpt) Condensed from Glamour, Adair Lara, Reader's Digest.

Source: <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/happiness.htm>

While you're walking home with a head full of problems, try to notice the sun set the windows of the city on fire. Listen to the shouts of kids playing basketball in the fading light, and feel your spirits rise, just from having paid attention.

Happiness is an attitude, not a condition. It's cleaning the Venetian blinds while listening to an aria, or spending a pleasant hour organizing your closet. Happiness is your family assembled at dinner. It's in the present, not in the distant promise of a "someday when..." How much luckier we are -- and how much more happiness we experience -- if we can fall in love with the life we're living.

Happiness is a choice. Reach out for it at the moment it appears, like a balloon drifting seaward in a bright blue sky.

**READER: QUOTE #14**

Source: <http://www.followyourdreams.com/happiness.html>

"Slow down and enjoy life. It's not only the scenery you miss by going too fast-you also miss the sense of where you are going and why." - Eddie Cantor, 1892-1964 Comedian/Singer

**LEADER: What about sharing happiness?**

**READER: QUOTE #15**

Source: <http://www.followyourdreams.com/happiness.html>

“Friendship improves happiness, and abates misery, by doubling our joys, and dividing our grief.” - Joseph Addison, 1672-1719 English Dramatist

**READER: QUOTE #16**

Source: [http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes\\_ha](http://www.cybernation.com/victory/quotations/subjects/quotes_ha)

“Realize that true happiness lies within you. Waste no time and effort searching for peace and contentment and joy in the world outside. Remember that there is no happiness in having or in getting, but only in giving. Reach out. Share. Smile. Hug. Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself.” - Og Mandino, 1923-1996 Inspirational Author (Wrote “The Greatest Salesman in the World”)

**LEADER: Let’s look at “The Golden Rule Principle”**

**READER: “The Golden Rule Principle”** Martin & Diedre Bobgan, How To Counsel From Scripture

Source: <http://www.higherpraise.org/illustrations/happiness.htm>

A fascinating study on the principle of the Golden Rule was conducted by Bernard Rimland, director of the Institute for Child Behavior Research. Rimland found that “The happiest people are those who help others.” Each person involved in the study was asked to list ten people he knew best and to label them as happy or not happy. Then they were to go through the list again and label each one as selfish or unselfish, using the following definition of selfishness: a stable tendency to devote one’s time and resources to one’s own interests and welfare--an unwillingness to inconvenience one’s self for others.” (Rimland, ‘The Altruism Paradox,’ Psychological Reports 51 [1982]: 521) In categorizing the results, Rimland found that all of the people labeled happy were also labeled unselfish. He wrote that those “whose activities are devoted to bringing themselves happiness...are far less likely to be happy than those whose efforts are devoted to making others happy” Rimland concluded: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” (Ibid, p. 522).

**READER: Luke 10:27**

*You shall love the Lord your God with all you heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.”*

**READER: Philippians 2:1-7**

*Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.*

*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.*

**READER: John 13:15-17 (Jesus said)**

*“For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.*

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. “If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.*

**LEADER: John 13:17, teaches how to find true happiness**

- “If ye know these things” = knowledge
- “if ye do them” = obedience
- “happy are ye” = happiness
- Knowledge + Obedience = Happiness

**READER: “How Could a King Lose Everything in One Instant?”** The Applause of Heaven, Max Lucado  
Source: [http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon6/how\\_could\\_a\\_king\\_lose\\_everything.htm](http://www.sermonillustrator.org/illustrator/sermon6/how_could_a_king_lose_everything.htm)

No man had more reason to be miserable than this one-yet no man was more joyful.

His first home was a palace. Servants were at his fingertips. The snap of his fingers changed the course of history. His name was known and loved. He had everything-wealth, power, respect.

And then he had nothing.

Students of the event still ponder it. Historians stumble as they attempt to explain it. How could a king lose everything in one instant?

One moment he was royalty; the next he was in poverty. His bed became, at best, a borrowed pallet-and usually the hard earth. He never owned even the most basic mode of transportation and was dependent upon handouts for his income. He was sometimes so hungry he would eat raw grain or pick fruit off a tree. He knew what it was like to be rained on, to be cold. He knew what it meant to have no home.

His palace grounds had been spotless; now he was exposed to filth. He had never known disease, but was now surrounded by illness.

In his kingdom he had been revered; now he was ridiculed. His neighbors tried to lynch him. Some called him a lunatic. His family tried to confine him to their house.

Those who didn't ridicule him tried to use him. They wanted favors. They wanted tricks. He was a novelty. They wanted to be seen with him-that is, until being with him was out of fashion. Then they wanted to kill him.

He was accused of a crime he never committed. Witnesses were hired to lie. The jury was rigged. No lawyer was assigned to his defense. A judge swayed by politics handed down the death penalty.

They killed him.

He left as he came-penniless. He was buried in a borrowed grave, his funeral financed by compassionate friends. Though he once had everything, he died with nothing.

He should have been miserable. He should have been bitter. He had every right to be a pot of boiling anger. But he wasn't.

He was joyful.

Sourpusses don't attract a following. People followed him wherever he went.

Children avoid soreheads. Children scampered after this man.

Crowds don't gather to listen to the woeful. Crowds clamored to hear him.

Why? He was joyful. He was joyful when he was poor. He was joyful when he was abandoned. He was joyful when he was betrayed. He was even joyful as he hung on a tool of torture, his hands pierced with six-inch Roman spikes.

Jesus embodied a stubborn joy. A joy that refused to bend in the wind of hard times. A joy that held its ground against pain. A joy whose roots extended deep into the bedrock of eternity.

**LEADER: “Rejoice”** By Dr. Grant C. Richison Today's Word  
Source: <http://www.crusade.org/word/word413.html> (Excerpt)

The joyous Christian is not necessarily the one with the least trouble. Often, he is the one with the greatest trouble. He has found the truth that Christ is with him in his difficulty. Nowhere does God promise us an easy path of roses. Anyone can glory in prosperity. To say with Job, “though he slays me, yet will I trust him” is true Christian living.

Did you ever notice that Jesus sang before He went to the garden of Gethsemane? Matthew 26:30 “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” On His way to the cross He was singing! He knew that the cross led to the empty tomb and victory over sin. He knew His Father was with Him. These principles transcended circumstances.

Why wait till we get to heaven to receive true joy? We can find joy as we travel along. It is foolish to wait for the heights before we enjoy the scenery. Yesterday's meals will not satisfy today's hunger. Neither will yesterday's faith satisfy today's joy. Present joy depends on present faith.

**READER: I Peter 1:6-9**

*In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.*

**READER: Galatians 5:22-23**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

**LEADER: "The Fruit of Joy" by Dr. Grant C. Richison Today's Word**

Source: <http://www.crusade.org/word/word1688.html> (Excerpt)

Joy is a character quality produced by the Holy Spirit that has a sense of well-being knowing that all is well in God's sovereign purposes in our lives. Joy does not come from living a rosy bed of ease but from knowing that God has all things in control. This joy comes from the Spirit-filled life.

Romans 14:17 says: "...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit".

The Spirit filled believer carries joy in difficult circumstances. The fruit of the Spirit called "joy" does not depend on circumstances to orient one's life. A person with joy is independent from negative circumstances because he knows that God sovereignly controls all aspects of his life. We know *all things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose.* (Romans 8:28).

**READER: "Ten rules for happier living" Call Out #s**

1. Give something away (no strings attached)
2. Do a kindness (and forget it)
3. Spend a few minutes with the aged (their experience is a priceless guidance)
4. Look intently into the face of a baby (and marvel)
5. Laugh often (it's life's lubricant)
6. Give thanks (a thousand times a day is not enough)
7. Pray (or you will lose the way)
8. Work (with vim and vigor)
9. Plan as though you'll live forever (because you will)
10. Live as though you'll die tomorrow (because you will on some tomorrow)

**LEADER: QUOTE #17**

Source: <http://www.followyourdreams.com/happiness.html>

"May you live all the days of your life." - Jonathon Swift, 1667-1745 (Author, wrote "Gulliver's Travels")

**COMMENTS IF TIME:**

**ALLOW TEN MINUTES BEFORE CLOSING FOR PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES:**

**COPY AND DISTRIBUTE THE FOLLOWING PAGES TO YOUR READERS:**

# READERS

## Happiness #1

Happiness is not found in pleasure, Christian author Clarence Macartney said. Romantic poet Lord Byron (1788-1824) lived such a life if anyone did. He wrote, "The worm, the canker, and the grief are mine alone."

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## Happiness #2

Happiness is not found in money—Jay Gould, the American millionaire, had plenty of that. When dying, he said, "I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth."

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## QUOTE #1

Someone asked J. D. Rockefeller, "How much money would it take to make a person happy?" He answered, "Just a little bit more."

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## QUOTE #2

"I'm fulfilled in what I do... I never thought that a lot of money or fine clothes -- the finer things of life -- would make you happy. My concept of happiness is to be filled in a spiritual sense." - Coretta Scott King , Wife of Martin Luther King

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## Luke 16:13

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## QUOTE #3

"It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy, that makes happiness." - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 1834-1892, Popular English Pastor/Author

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## Happiness #3

Happiness is not found in position and fame—Lord Beaconsfield (1804-1881, Prime Minister to Queen Victoris and novelist) enjoyed more than his share of both. He wrote, "Youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle, and old age a regret."

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## "Elvis"

6 weeks before he died, a reporter asked Elvis Presley, "Elvis, when you first started playing music, you said you wanted to be rich, famous and happy. Are you happy?"

"I'm lonely as hell" he replied.

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## Happiness #4

Happiness is not found in military glory—Alexander the Great conquered the known world in his day. Having done so, he wept in his tent because, he said, "There are no more worlds to conquer."

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## Happiness #5

An old man was asked what had robbed him of joy the most in his lifetime. He replied, "Things that never happened!"

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## John 13:1

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**Psalm 139:10**

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**Psalm 121:5**

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**Psalm 23:1**

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**QUOTE #4**

“You can never get enough of what you don’t need to make you happy.” - Eric Hoffer, 1902-1983 American Social Philosopher

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**Philippians 4:6-8**

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**“American Journal of Psychiatry”**

What really makes people satisfied with their lives? Amazingly, the secret may lie in a person’s ability to handle life’s blows without blame or bitterness. These are the conclusions of a study of 173 men who have been followed since they graduated from Harvard University in the early 1940s. The study, reported in the American Journal of Psychiatry, noted that one potent predictor of well-being was the ability to handle emotional crisis maturely.

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**“Bubbles”**

She has every reason to be bitter. Though talented, she went unrecognized for years. Prestigious opera circles closed their ranks when she tried to enter. American critics ignored her compelling voice. She was repeatedly rejected for parts for which she easily qualified. It was only after she went to Europe and won the hearts of tough-to-please European audiences that stateside opinion leaders acknowledged her talent.

Not only has her professional life been a battle, her personal life has been marked by challenge. She is the mother of two handicapped children, one of whom is severely retarded. Years ago, in order to escape the pace of New York City, she purchased a home on Martha’s Vineyard. It burned to the ground two days before she was to move in.

Professional rejection. Personal setbacks. Perfect soil for the seeds of bitterness. A receptive field for the roots of resentment. But in this case, anger found no home.

Her friends don’t call her bitter; they call her “Bubbles.” Beverly Sills. Internationally acclaimed opera singer. Retired director of the New York City Opera.

Her phrases are sugared with laughter. Her face is softened with serenity. Upon interviewing her, Mike Wallace stated that “she is one of the most impressive-if not the most impressive-ladies I’ve ever interviewed.”

How can a person handle such professional rejection and personal trauma and still be known as Bubbles? “I choose to be cheerful,” she says. “Years ago I knew I had little or no choice about success, circumstances or even happiness; but I knew I could choose to be cheerful.”

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**QUOTE #5**

“The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.” - Dolly Parton, Singer/Songwriter/ Actress/Entertainer

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## **“I Know the Secret”**

A woman named Frances once knew a young person at church named Debbie. Debbie always seemed effervescent and happy, although Frances knew she had faced struggles in her life. Her long-awaited marriage had quickly ended in divorce. She had struggled to get a grip on her single life. She hadn't chosen it, but she decided she would live it with utmost enjoyment and satisfaction.

Debbie was active in Sunday school, in the choir, as a leader of the junior high girls' group, and in the church renewal movement. Frances enjoyed knowing Debbie. Debbie's whole face seemed to smile and she always greeted Frances with a hug.

One day she asked Debbie, “How is it that you are always so happy - you have so much energy, and you never seem to get down?”

With her eyes smiling, Debbie said, “I know the secret!”

“What secret is that? What are you talking about?” Frances asked.

Debbie replied, “I'll tell you all about it, but you have to promise to share the 'secret' with others.”

Frances agreed, “Okay, now what is it?”

“The secret is this: I have learned there is little I can do in my life that will make me truly happy. I must depend on God to make me happy and meet my needs. When a need arises in my life, I have to trust God to supply according to HIS riches. I have learned most of the time I don't need half of what I think I do. HE has never let me down. Since I learned that secret I am happy.”

Frances' first thought was, That's too simple! But upon reflecting over her own life she recalled how she thought a bigger house would make her happy -- but it didn't! She thought a better-paying job would make her happy -- but it hadn't. When did she realize her greatest happiness? Sitting on the floor with her grandchildren, eating pizza and watching a movie -- a simple gift from God.

It's no secret...it's in the book!

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## **Philippians 4:19**

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## **QUOTE #6**

“A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes.” - Hugh Downs, Former anchor of 20/20

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## **QUOTE #7**

“Happiness doesn't come from doing what we like to do but from liking what we have to do.”  
Wilferd A. Peterson , Inspirational Poet

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## **QUOTE #8**

If you can't be happy where you are, it's a cinch you can't be happy where you ain't. - Charles “Tremendous” Jones , Christian Motivational Speaker

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## **“Our Greatest Need”**

What is our greatest need in life? Is it to be happy? We may long for a change in our circumstances, and sometimes that's what we get. But a changed life is our deepest need. Changed circumstances may make us happier, but a changed life will make us better, for it will make us like Christ.

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## **“The Happiest Man on Earth”**

There once was a king who had more money than he knew what to do with. He owned all of the land as far as the eye could see, several castles, and he ruled his land with an iron fist. But no matter how much he had, he never seemed to have enough and was a very miserable man.

One day he told his servant, “I want you to go out and scour the land, from one horizon to the other, and find the happiest man on earth, and bring me his shirt. Once I have the shirt of the happiest man, I will be able to be happy myself. And I don’t want you to return without that shirt or you will be beheaded.”

The servant set out about his mission and was gone for many moons. The king was getting impatient as he waited and waited. Finally, after many months of searching, the servant returned, on hands and knees, crawling before the king. The king noticed the servants hands were empty and became very angry.

He told the servant that he had one minute before he was to be beheaded and he had better explain why he had disobeyed his orders. With tears in his eyes, the servant looked to the king and said

“Master, I did as you said, I searched from horizon to horizon looking for the happiest man on earth, and I finally found him.”

So the kings asks, “Why didn’t you bring me the shirt of this man?”

The servant replied, “Master, the happiest man on earth did not own a shirt.”

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## **I Thessalonians 5:16**

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## **In Philippians 4:11**

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## **“Tired of the Farm”**

A farmer became tired of his farm; and no wonder, you’ll say, for he was born on the place. He had spent all his days on that quarter section. When a boy, he drove the cows to and from the pasture, picked apples in the orchard, swam in the creek just around the bend, trudged across the meadow and through the woods to the little frame schoolhouse down at the crossroads.

When he grew to young manhood, he had plowed every acre of the tillable land in the spring, helped to put up the hay in the summer, threshed in the fall, and hauled fodder for the stock in winter. To this same old home he brought his bride. His three children had been born under the same roof where he was born. They had now grown up and gone to homes of their own.

He was sick and tired of the surroundings. He wanted a change; and often in his dreams he pictured a quiet spot where conditions were ideal, where he could spend his old age in comfort and be happy. He told the real estate dealer in town how he felt, so the agent drove out and looked the farm over carefully. He felt sure he would have no difficulty in finding a buyer.

When the weekly paper came on Thursday, the old farmer looked over the ads, and found his farm listed. It stated that the Hammond place of one hundred sixty acres was for sale. The land was fertile and productive - a crop failure had never been known. Forty acres were covered with the best of timber; an artesian well furnished water the year round. There was an abundance of pasture land, through which flowed a small creek; and there was an ideal dwelling house of eight rooms. The barn was large and modern; there were machine sheds, and a granary with spacious bins.

The place was well stocked with horses, cows, sheep, and chickens. It was close to the city, on the rural free delivery, and had a telephone. There were all kinds of fruit trees, both large and small, with abundance of shade around the house.

The old man read the advertisement the second time, then hitched up the team and drove to town to see the real estate agent. “I have read that advertisement,” he said, “and as nearly as I can figure out, that’s exactly the kind of place I have been wanting. I think I will keep it myself.”

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**QUOTE #9**

“You grow up the day you have your first real laugh at yourself.” - Ethel Barrymore, 1879-1959 Stage, Screen, TV Actress

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**QUOTE #10**

“More important than talent, strength, or knowledge is the ability to laugh at yourself and enjoy the pursuit of your dreams.” - Amy Grant, Award winning Christian singer/songwriter

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**“A Simple Pleasure”**

In 1926 a young Englishwoman, Joanna Field, began to feel that she was not living a truly authentic life, that she did not know what made her truly happy. To remedy this she kept a journal in order to discover what specifically triggered the feeling of delight in her daily life. The journal, A Life of One’s Own, was published in 1934. It was written, she confided, in the spirit of a detective who searches through the minutiae of the mundane in hopes of finding clues for what was missing in her life.

Joanna Field discovered that she delighted in red shoes, good food, sudden bursts of laughter, reading in French, answering letters, loitering in a crowd at a fair and “a new idea when it is grasped.”

What is missing from many of our days is a true sense that we are enjoying the lives we are living. It is difficult to experience moments of happiness if we are not aware of what it is we genuinely love. We must learn to savor small, authentic moments that bring us contentment. Experiment with a new cookie recipe. Take the time to slowly arrange a bouquet of flowers in order to appreciate their colors, fragrance and beauty. Sip a cup of tea on the front stoop in the sunshine. Pause for five minutes to pet a purring cat. Simple pleasures waiting to be enjoyed. Simple pleasures often overlooked.

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**QUOTE #11**

“All my life I have tried to pluck a thistle and plant a flower wherever the flower would grow in thought and mind.” - Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States

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## **“Overflow With Joy”**

Have you ever met someone who just overflows with the “Joy of the Lord?” I certainly have, but one experience really stands out in my mind because it happened recently.

This last July my family and I were on vacation, and I was having my quiet time down by the beach, sitting in a lawn chair. I had decided early on in this vacation that I would try to get alone for a few minutes at the start of every day, so I could read my Bible and pray. (Let me say here that I’ve taken more than a few vacations where I did not do this, and I can attest with confidence that I am a nicer mommy and a happier wife, if I take the time to be alone with God each day.)

So anyway, I was sitting a few feet from the most amazing green/blue ocean water I have ever seen, just praising God for the beauty of it all. The waves were rolling in, and a brilliant blue sky hosted large puffy clouds, a balmy breeze rustled the palm trees above my head and all I could think was “this is absolutely glorious.” And as I sat there, just lost in it all, I noticed a balding middle-aged man standing knee deep in the water, about twenty feet in front of me. He was looking around at the beauty and then suddenly he lifted his hands high in the air, as in exultation. What a wonderful sight!

He was overflowing with God’s amazing goodness and when that happens - it cannot be contained. A few minutes later he headed up toward the condo complex and as he did he passed me and took notice of the Bible on my lap. He stopped and said to me “Since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made... Romans 1:20” Obviously at that point we struck up a conversation and had a pleasant discourse that lasted a minute or two and then he was gone. But what I was left with was a touch from God, administered by another believer’s childlike exuberance over God’s delightful creation.

Oh, why must we be so very staid most of the time? God has done so much for us, revealing his goodness and majesty to us in so many ways. Why are we so prone to put a “lid on it” and keep it all to ourselves. I was so deeply touched by this fellow Christian and his willingness to “speak out” what he was thinking. And I can tell you with certainty, that the joy he was experiencing overflowed onto me as he spoke out that piece of scripture. In fact the first thing I did when I returned to the condo was to tell my husband about the experience and relate to him how inspiring it was.

We underestimate the effect we can have on the people around us. We underestimate the power and anointing that is on God’s word. We underestimate the power that is in joy-filled actions and words. And in a world where it’s completely acceptable to scream your lungs out while attending a football game, maybe we should feel the freedom to shout out “Thank You Lord!” next time we see a gorgeous rainbow or shimmering mountain stream. Because we may never know the profound affect that our adoration of God may have in the life of another.

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## **“Smile when you say that!”**

Holiday Inn, when looking for 500 people to fill positions for a new facility, interviewed 5,000 candidates. The hotel managers interviewing these people excluded all candidates who smiled fewer than four times during the interview. This applied to people competing for jobs in all categories.

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## **QUOTE #12**

“Happiness is a sort of action.” - Aristotle 384-322 BC Great Greek Philosopher

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## **QUOTE #13**

“Most folks are about as happy as they make their minds up to be.” - Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States

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## “Happiness Is a Choice”

While you're walking home with a head full of problems, try to notice the sun set the windows of the city on fire. Listen to the shouts of kids playing basketball in the fading light, and feel your spirits rise, just from having paid attention.

Happiness is an attitude, not a condition. It's cleaning the Venetian blinds while listening to an aria, or spending a pleasant hour organizing your closet. Happiness is your family assembled at dinner. It's in the present, not in the distant promise of a "someday when..." How much luckier we are -- and how much more happiness we experience -- if we can fall in love with the life we're living.

Happiness is a choice. Reach out for it at the moment it appears, like a balloon drifting seaward in a bright blue sky.

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### QUOTE #14

“Slow down and enjoy life. It's not only the scenery you miss by going too fast-you also miss the sense of where you are going and why.” - Eddie Cantor, 1892-1964 Comedian/Singer

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### QUOTE #15

“Friendship improves happiness, and abates misery, by doubling our joys, and dividing our grief.” - Joseph Addison, 1672-1719 English Dramatist

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### QUOTE #16

“Realize that true happiness lies within you. Waste no time and effort searching for peace and contentment and joy in the world outside. Remember that there is no happiness in having or in getting, but only in giving. Reach out. Share. Smile. Hug. Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself.” - Og Mandino, 1923-1996 Inspirational Author (Wrote “The Greatest Salesman in the World”)

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## “The Golden Rule Principle”

A fascinating study on the principle of the Golden Rule was conducted by Bernard Rimland, director of the Institute for Child Behavior Research. Rimland found that “The happiest people are those who help others.” Each person involved in the study was asked to list ten people he knew best and to label them as happy or not happy. Then they were to go through the list again and label each one as selfish or unselfish, using the following definition of selfishness: a stable tendency to devote one's time and resources to one's own interests and welfare--an unwillingness to inconvenience one's self for others.” (Rimland, ‘The Altruism Paradox,’ Psychological Reports 51 [1982]: 521) In categorizing the results, Rimland found that all of the people labeled happy were also labeled unselfish. He wrote that those “whose activities are devoted to bringing themselves happiness...are far less likely to be happy than those whose efforts are devoted to making others happy” Rimland concluded: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” (Ibid, p. 522).

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### Luke 10:27

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### Philippians 2:1-7

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### John 13:15-17 (Jesus said)

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## “How Could a King Lose Everything in One Instant?”

No man had more reason to be miserable than this one-yet no man was more joyful.

His first home was a palace. Servants were at his fingertips. The snap of his fingers changed the course of history. His name was known and loved. He had everything-wealth, power, respect.

And then he had nothing.

Students of the event still ponder it. Historians stumble as they attempt to explain it. How could a king lose everything in one instant?

One moment he was royalty; the next he was in poverty. His bed became, at best, a borrowed pallet-and usually the hard earth. He never owned even the most basic mode of transportation and was dependent upon handouts for his income. He was sometimes so hungry he would eat raw grain or pick fruit off a tree. He knew what it was like to be rained on, to be cold. He knew what it meant to have no home.

His palace grounds had been spotless; now he was exposed to filth. He had never known disease, but was now surrounded by illness.

In his kingdom he had been revered; now he was ridiculed. His neighbors tried to lynch him. Some called him a lunatic. His family tried to confine him to their house.

Those who didn't ridicule him tried to use him. They wanted favors. They wanted tricks. He was a novelty. They wanted to be seen with him-that is, until being with him was out of fashion. Then they wanted to kill him.

He was accused of a crime he never committed. Witnesses were hired to lie. The jury was rigged. No lawyer was assigned to his defense. A judge swayed by politics handed down the death penalty.

They killed him.

He left as he came-penniless. He was buried in a borrowed grave, his funeral financed by compassionate friends. Though he once had everything, he died with nothing.

He should have been miserable. He should have been bitter. He had every right to be a pot of boiling anger. But he wasn't.

He was joyful.

Sourpusses don't attract a following. People followed him wherever he went.

Children avoid soreheads. Children scampered after this man.

Crowds don't gather to listen to the woeful. Crowds clamored to hear him.

Why? He was joyful. He was joyful when he was poor. He was joyful when he was abandoned. He was joyful when he was betrayed. He was even joyful as he hung on a tool of torture, his hands pierced with six-inch Roman spikes.

Jesus embodied a stubborn joy. A joy that refused to bend in the wind of hard times. A joy that held its ground against pain. A joy whose roots extended deep into the bedrock of eternity.

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**I Peter 1:6-9**

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**Galatians 5:22-23**

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### **“Ten rules for happier living”**

1. Give something away (no strings attached)
2. Do a kindness (and forget it)
3. Spend a few minutes with the aged (their experience is a priceless guidance)
4. Look intently into the face of a baby (and marvel)
5. Laugh often (it's life's lubricant)
6. Give thanks (a thousand times a day is not enough)
7. Pray (or you will lose the way)
8. Work (with vim and vigor)
9. Plan as though you'll live forever (because you will)
10. Live as though you'll die tomorrow (because you will on some tomorrow)

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