

## TRUE HAPPINESS: IS IT POSSIBLE?

Ecclesiastes 1:1-18

INTRODUCTION: In just a few months from now many young people will be graduating from high school. They will go into many different directions after graduating. They will have different goals in mind but one goal each of them will have is to have a happy life. Sadly many people today never reach that goal of having a happy life. Many times as we grow older people find themselves asking "Is true happiness really even possible? Why are so many people unhappy we wonder? Could it be that most people are looking in all the wrong places to find true lasting happiness? Solomon, the son of King David although very rich and very wise wrote: Ecclesiastes 1:1. "Under the sun" is a statement repeated 29 times in the Book of Ecclesiastes and it means "I'm going to keep God out!" I am going to see where I can find happiness under the sun without reference to God. Ecclesiastes 1:12-13. Solomon looked in six different areas to find happiness as a "man under the sun" and those six areas are still the areas many are looking at today to find happiness under the sun. Let's see how he did!

### I. WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE!

Solomon concluded that happiness could not be found in the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge apart from the knowledge of God: Ecclesiastes 1:17-18. Knowing, learning, and wisdom apart from the knowledge of God is not going to make you happy: Ecclesiastes 1:18.

### II. PLEASURE AND LAUGHTER!

Happiness is also not found in pleasure and laughter apart from a knowledge of God: Ecclesiastes 2:1-2; Proverbs 14:13. We can be laughing on the outside but so very sad on the inside.

### III. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL!

Solomon also learned the hard way you will never find true happiness by the use of drugs or alcohol apart from a knowledge of God: Ecclesiastes 2:3. It is so sad that along with Solomon many others must learn the hard way that happiness cannot be found in a bottle or a pill: Proverbs 20:1; Proverbs 23:29-35.

### IV. TRUE HAPPINESS IS NOT FOUND IN MONEY AND POSSESSIONS!

Next Solomon learned that true happiness cannot be found in money or possessions apart from a knowledge of God. Solomon had more money than perhaps any other man on this earth: Ecclesiastes 2:8. Even today most people think their problems would all be done away with if they just had more money: Ecclesiastes 5:10. Money is like drinking salt water because salt water cannot quench your thirst. 1 Timothy 5:9-10. So when we add God back into the equation of our life we can learn to be content with what God has entrusted to us.

### V. TRUE HAPPINESS IS NOT FOUND IN SEX AND SEXUAL IMMORALITY!

Solomon tried sex and sexual immorality next and found out that you cannot find true happiness in sex or sexual immorality apart from God: Ecclesiastes 2:8. Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines waiting in the bullpen for Solomon to call them up. Sin is pleasurable but only for a season: Hebrews 11:24-26. Today we have in our society a Romans chapter 1 society that does not desire to keep the knowledge of God. What did God do? He gave them over to their desires. Hebrews 13:4-6. You will never find true happiness by pursuing the very things that our God tells us to avoid!

### VI. TRUE HAPPINESS IS NOT FOUND IN WORK AND ACHIEVEMENT!

Solomon thought wrongly as so many do today that if they can just achieve great works surely they will find happiness in that. He was wrong: Ecclesiastes 2:4-11. All the stuff Solomon built did not bring him happiness and it won't for you either if you are doing it as "a man under the sun!" Ecclesiastes 2:17-23. Sure enough, when Solomon passed the kingdom down to his son, Rehoboam it turned out that Rehoboam was indeed a fool.

Why don't any of these six ways bring us true lasting happiness under the sun? It is because true happiness is not found in any man living under the sun! True happiness, lasting happiness is only found in those who chose to live as a man under the Son! Ecclesiastes 2:24-25. True happiness is only found by those who chose to pursue the knowledge of God: Psalm 128:1-4. The fear of the Lord and choosing to walk in obedience to His ways is the only way to find true happiness in this life and the life to come. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.

This section was added by Pastor Larkin Sunday Night.

#### VII. HOW DOES THE WORD OF GOD SAY A PERSON UNDER THE SON CAN BE HAPPY?

How does the Word of God say a believer in Jesus Christ, as one under the Son can have a happy life both here and now and forever? Matthew 5:2-12; Psalm 1:1-3; Philippians 4:4-9 James 1:2-5. When God does allow trials in this life for His children it is meant to produce spiritual maturity and should be counted as joy. 1 Peter 4:12-19. Suffering is the norm for Christians, not a surprising exception. To suffer as a Christian is a call to rejoice as a disciple of Christ. Philippians 1:29.

As we continue to trust in our Lord and to do good, He will give us new desires, and we will want to do what our God has called on us to do for His glory and mankind's good. Psalm 37:4-6.

We will find that keeping the commands of our Lord will bring us joy instead of dread. John 15:10-11. As we continue to rejoice in our salvation through our faith in Jesus Christ. We have been justified with our God; our sins are all forgiven; and we are heading for our eternal home in heaven. Romans 5:1-2. Our great hope in Jesus Christ gives us hope in this life as well as joy and peace and in the life to come everlasting happiness!