

## How to Be Happy No Matter What

### I. Introduction

### II. Solomon's Search for Happiness Found Out . . .

#### A. Wisdom doesn't bring happiness.

1. Ecclesiastes 1:16-18a (NLT) <sup>16</sup>*I said to myself, "Look, I am wiser than any of the kings who ruled in Jerusalem before me. I have greater wisdom and knowledge than any of them."* <sup>17</sup>*So I worked hard to distinguish wisdom from foolishness. But now I realize that even this was like chasing the wind.* <sup>18a</sup>*For the greater my wisdom, the greater my grief.*

#### B. Pleasure doesn't bring happiness.

1. Ecclesiastes 2:1-2 (NLT) <sup>1</sup>*I said to myself, "Come now, let's give pleasure a try. Let's look for the 'good things' in life." But I found that this, too, was meaningless.* <sup>2</sup>*"It is silly to be laughing all the time," I said. "What good does it do to seek only pleasure?"*

#### C. Achievement doesn't bring happiness.

1. Ecclesiastes 2:4-5, 20 (NLT) <sup>4</sup>*I also tried to find meaning by building huge homes for myself and by planting beautiful vineyards.* <sup>5</sup>*I made gardens and parks, filling them with all kinds of fruit trees.* <sup>20</sup>*So I turned in despair from hard work. It was not the answer to my search for satisfaction in this life.*

#### D. Wealth doesn't bring happiness.

1. Ecclesiastes 2:7b-8 (NLT) <sup>7b</sup>*I also owned great herds and flocks, more than any of the kings who lived in Jerusalem before me.* <sup>8</sup>*I collected great sums of silver and gold, the treasure of many kings and provinces. I hired wonderful singers, both men and women, and had many beautiful concubines. I had everything a man could desire!*

#### E. Success doesn't bring happiness.

1. Ecclesiastes 2:9, 11 (NLT) <sup>9</sup>*So I became greater than any of the kings who ruled in Jerusalem before me. And with it all, I remained clear-eyed so that I could evaluate all these things.* <sup>11</sup>*But as I looked at everything I had worked so hard to accomplish, it was all so meaningless. It was like chasing the wind. There was nothing really worthwhile anywhere.*
2. Ecclesiastes 2:17 (NLT) *So now I hate life because everything done here under the sun is so irrational. Everything is meaningless, like chasing the wind.*

### III. Jesus' Keys to Happiness

#### A. Get to know God

1. Matthew 5:3 (NAS) *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*
2. If anything but God is at the center of your life, you will not be satisfied!
3. "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in You." (St. Augustine)

#### B. Trust God when life is disappointing

1. Matthew 5:4 (NAS) *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."*
2. If you have to live a problem-free life in order to be happy, you're never going to be happy!
3. Let God handle your hurts!
4. Matthew 28:20b (NAS) *"And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

#### C. Expect God to meet my needs

1. Matthew 5:5 (NAS) *"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth."*
2. Psalm 24:1 (NAS) *The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it.*

#### D. Follow God's instructions

1. Matthew 5:6 (NAS) *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."*

2. When you follow God's principles, you benefit! When you ignore them, you get hurt!
- E. Cultivate a forgiving heart
  1. In life, there will be people who hurt you.
  2. Your response to that hurt will determine whether you become bitter or joyful.
  3. Matthew 5:7 (NAS) *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."*
- F. Maintain a clear conscience
  1. Matthew 5:8 (NAS) *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."*
  2. Guilt destroys happiness!
  3. You can live guilt free!
    - a. I John 1:9 (NAS) *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- G. Build healthy relationships
  1. Matthew 5:9 (NAS) *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."*
  2. It doesn't matter if everything else in your life is great. If your relationships are bad, life stinks!
- H. Live with an eternal perspective
  1. Matthew 5:10 (NAS) *"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*
  2. Doing the right thing is not always easy. But, you'll have eternity to enjoy the rewards for doing the right thing!

#### **IV. Happiness Is Not a Result of Circumstances! Happiness Is a Choice!**

#### **V. Conclusion**