



LIFELINE

Christian Happiness: Good News Worth Sharing

By RANDY ALCORN

G. K. Chesterton is widely credited with saying, “Jesus promised His disciples three things—that they would be completely fearless, absurdly happy, and in constant trouble.” It could be argued that many Western Christians today lack all three of these traits, but perhaps none more so than being absurdly happy.

We often perceive Christianity as a matter of tradition and morality rather than joy. While morality is essential, some Christians adopt a somber, paint-by-the-numbers religious existence in the name of duty, appearing to wear their displeasure as a badge of honor. However, the path to happiness and contentment is not found in such a rigid approach.

Gloomy Christians don’t win friends or invite gospel curiosity.

Hannah Whitall Smith, author of the classic bestseller *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life*, was raised in a strictly religious home. Years before truly coming to Christ, she recorded observations in her journal about the joyless nature of many churchgoers she encountered. For her, the gospel good news of happiness was not readily apparent in those early days.

“Some look almost as if they think it is a sin to smile or speak a pleasant word. It appears to me that religion is supposed to make one happy, not miserable and disagreeable. . . . Instead of a cheerful voice there is a long, drawing, melancholy whisper . . . instead of love and concern for those who have not yet found the path of life . . . there is a cool standoffishness, a feeling of “I’m better than you”—that effectually closes off the slightest opening... And

so, instead of the noble, beautiful, humble, liberal-minded, and happy religion I have so often pictured to myself, I see it as cross, gloomy, proud, bigoted, and narrow minded.”

Sadly, some people still misrepresent Christianity this way, and equally sadly, some attempt to solve the problem not by drawing near to Christ but by watering down biblical truth to make it more appealing. The gospel is attacked on both fronts—on the one hand, stripped of its intrinsic happiness and on the other, stripped of its holy uniqueness and ability to deliver happiness.

After her conversion, Smith wrote to her son, “The Gospel is good news, something to make people happy; not a law to bind them.”

Unbelievers have valid reasons to fear that becoming a Christian will result in their unhappiness.

They’ve known—as many of us churchgoers have also known—professing Christians who go out of their way to promote misery, not gladness.

I’ve seen Bible-believing, Christ-centered people post thoughts on a blog or on social media only to receive a string of hypercritical responses from people who wield Scripture verses like pickaxes, swiftly condemning the slightest hint of a viewpoint they consider suspicious. How is it that perpetual disdain, suspicion, unkindness, and hostility are seen as taking the spiritual high ground? If I were an unbeliever reading such responses, I certainly wouldn’t be drawn to the Christian faith.

In refreshing contrast, J. C. Ryle said, “I assert without hesitation, that the conversion described in Scripture is a happy thing and not a miserable one, and that if converted persons are

happiness
HABITUDES



continues on page 3





The Happiest Man on Earth



with. He owned land as far as the eye could see. He built dozens of castles and filled them with silver and gold. He had hundreds of servants at his beck and call.

But no matter how much the king acquired, he never seemed to have enough. As a result he was a miserable man.

One day the king called for one of his servants and gave him these instructions: "I want you to scour the land from one horizon to the other and find the happiest man on earth. Once you've found him, I want you to take all that he owns and bring it to me. Kill him, if necessary. I must have what he has, because then I will be happy myself! By the way, if you fail in your mission, you will be beheaded."

After many months of searching, the servant returned. The king noticed the servant's hands were empty and became very angry. He gave the servant one minute to explain why he had disobeyed the king's orders.

With tears in his eyes, the servant looked at the king and said with a trembling voice, "Master, I did as you said. I searched from horizon to horizon looking for the happiest man on earth, and I finally found him."

The king stood and shouted at the servant, "Then why didn't you bring me this man's possessions?"

The servant replied, "Master, the happiest man on earth didn't have any."

It's no secret that rich people are often unhappy. There is no relationship between an increase in one's

bank account and an increase in one's personal happiness. In fact studies show that the majority of state lottery winners say they regret having won at all. Their sudden wealth actually creates more problems for them than happiness.

Jesus said, "Blessed [or "happy"] are you who are poor" (Luke 6:20). And he wasn't just trying to make poor people feel better about themselves! The Bible tells us that Jesus himself had "no place to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20). What's more, he had no possessions of his own.

God may bless you with more than you need to get by in today's world, and if he does, you can be very grateful. But never mistake possessions for the abundant life that Jesus offers (John 10:10).

Possessions can't possibly provide you with happiness or anything else of true value in life. Remember the story of the rich young ruler? "He went away sad because he had great wealth" (Mark 10:17-22).

We continue our study through the book of Philippians as we find Paul's "HAPPINESS Habitudes." You are as happy as you choose to be. If you're not happy now, you're not going to be happy later. Happiness is a choice.

Why not join us?

Pastor Greg



not happy, the fault must be in themselves. . . . I am confident the converted man is the happiest man.” Charles Spurgeon loved to connect the gospel and happiness: “There is nothing that more tends to strengthen the faith of the young believer than to hear the veteran Christian, covered with scars from the battle, testifying that the service of his Master is a happy service...”

Happiness in Christ is one of our most powerful evangelistic tools.

Throughout history, the Christian worldview has accounted for such happiness-generating developments as hospitals and schools, science and industry, music, drama, and the arts. And on a more personal level, nearly every community includes people with quiet confidence in Christ who are extraordinarily loving, kind, helpful, and cheerful. They gladly give of their time and money to those in need. Such people are rarely in the public eye, but they certainly exist. Sadly, however, to many people, they seem to be the exception rather than the rule. Christopher Parkening, considered by many to be the world’s greatest classical guitarist, achieved his musical dreams by the age of thirty. By then he was also a world-class fly-fishing champion. However, his successes failed to bring him happiness.

Weary of performances and recording sessions, Parkening bought a ranch and gave up on the guitar. He wrote, “If you arrive at a point in your life where you have everything that you’ve ever wanted and thought would make you happy and it still doesn’t, then you start questioning things... I thought, ‘Well, what’s left?’”

While visiting friends, he attended church and put his faith in Christ. Parkening developed a hunger for Scripture and was struck by 1 Corinthians 10:31: “Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (NIV).

He explains, “I realized there were only two things I knew how to do: fly fish for trout and play the guitar. Well, I am playing the guitar today absolutely by the grace of God. . . . I have a joy, a peace, and a deep-down fulfillment in my life I never had before. My life has purpose. . . . I’ve learned first-hand the true secret of genuine happiness.”

John Piper says, “If you ask me, ‘Doesn’t the world need to see Christians as happy in order to know the truth of our faith and be drawn to the great Savior?’ my answer is ‘Yes, yes, yes!’ And they need to see that our happiness is the indomitable work of Christ in the midst of our sorrow.”



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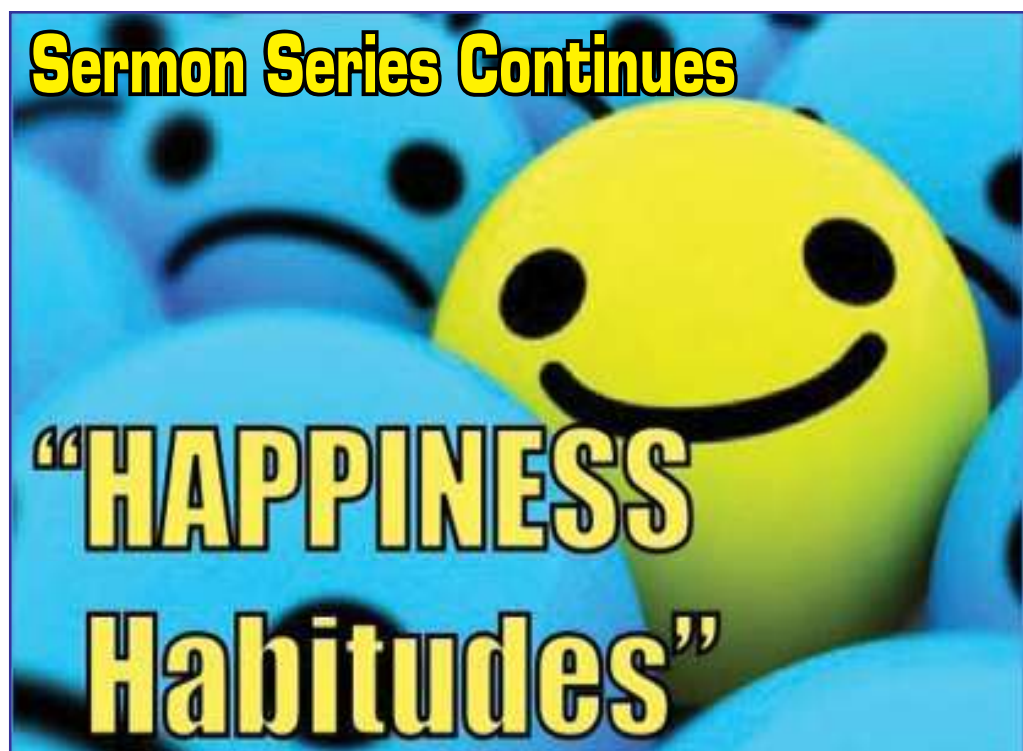
The
CHOSEN
WEDNESDAY
NIGHT
BIBLE
STUDY

6:30pm in the
Food Court



Ladies'
BIBLE STUDY

Mondays 12:30p-2:30p in the Food Court





Will Rogers Church

LIFELINE

1138 South Yale Tulsa, OK 74112-5395 (918) 834-0891

Return Service Requested

October 2026

WILL ROGERS CHURCH

WORSHIP WITH US SUNDAY @ 10:15AM

Everyone's Welcome Nobody's Perfect Anything's Possible

SUNDAY SCHOOL @ 9:00AM

Church website: <http://www.wrctulsa.org>

[facebook.com/Will Rogers Church Tulsa OK](https://facebook.com/WillRogersChurchTulsaOK)

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Thursday
9:00am - 4:00pm

Service times:

10:15am - Blended Worship

Livestreaming

Find link on Facebook or www.wrctulsa.org

9:00am - Sunday School