The Struggle For Happiness

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Who wants to be happy?

Write down three things that bring a little bit of happiness into your life:

Write down three things that prevent happiness in your life:

The world's idea of happiness

Biblical definition of happiness

- to be made happy, be blessed
- to go straight, walk, go on, advance, make progress
- rejoice/glad

- at ease/rest
- things are well
- things are good

How do we become happy – version 1

Some say happiness comes from

- _____
- Riches

- _____
- An attitude of mind

Whilst there is some truth in these things, understand that worldly happiness is person-centered, fragile and changeable.

Job 20:5 (NLT)
The triumph of the wicked has been short lived and the joy of the godless has been only temporary?

The _____ dependable God

The Bible gives us a different source for our happiness. God is unchanging so happiness in God is unchanging.

Malachi 3:6 (NLT) *I am the Lord, and I do not change….*
Psalm 119:89 (NLT) *Your eternal word, O Lord, stands firm in heaven.*
Isaiah 26:4 (NLT) *Trust in the Lord always, for the Lord God is the eternal Rock.*
James 1:17 (NLT) *Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father... He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.*

How do we become happy – the Bible version

Trust God by giving him your life.

Psalm 22:26 (NLT)
The poor will eat and be satisfied. All who seek the LORD will praise him. Their hearts will rejoice with everlasting joy.

Psalm 33:12 (NLT)
What joy for the nation whose God is the LORD, whose people he has chosen as his inheritance.

Psalm 28:7 (NLT)
The LORD is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.

Have a _____ relationship with God

Psalm 40:8 (NLT)
I take joy in doing your will, my God, for your instructions are written on my heart."

Jeremiah 15:16 (NLT)
When I discovered your words, I devoured them. They are my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God of Heaven's Armies.

Be filled with the Holy Spirit

Romans 14:17 (NLT)
For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Be committed to _____

Ezra 6:16 (NLT)
The Temple of God was then dedicated with great joy by the people of Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the people who had returned from exile.

Job 5:17 (NLT)
"But consider the joy of those corrected by God! Do not despise the discipline of the Almighty when you sin."

Develop _____ relationships

Nehemiah 8:12 (NLT)
So the people went away to eat and drink at a festive meal, to share gifts of food, and to celebrate with great joy because they had heard God's words and understood them.

Nehemiah 12:43 (NLT)
Many sacrifices were offered on that joyous day, for God had given the people cause for great joy. The women and children also participated in the celebration, and the joy of the people of Jerusalem could be heard far away.

Develop a Godly _____

Psalm 45:7 (NLT)
You love justice and hate evil. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you, pouring out the oil of joy on you more than on anyone else.

Psalm 97:11 (NLT)
Light shines on the godly, and joy on those whose hearts are right.

Be generous

Philemon 7 (NLT)
Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the hearts of God's people.

Learn to _____God

Psalm 43:4 (NLT)
There I will go to the altar of God, to God—the source of all my joy. I will praise you with my harp, O God, my God!

Psalm 68:3 (NLT)
But let the godly rejoice. Let them be glad in God's presence. Let them be filled with joy.

Conclusion

In a very real sense we choose joy by the decisions we make as we walk life's path!

2 Corinthians 13:11 (NLT)
Dear brothers and sisters, I close my letter with these last words: Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you.