

Most Universal Desire

No. 11

Introduction.

- I. If I were to ask what is the most universal desire, I am sure I would receive many different answers.
 - A. Some would say **riches**. Some would say **fame**. Others would say **education**. Others would say **popularity** or **pleasure**.
 - B. These are desires of billions of people, but I do not believe any of these things are the most universal desire. They are only a means to an end.
 - C. **The most universal desire is happiness**. Every man, woman, and child desires to be happy.
- II. Even though every person has an intense desire to be happy, we are living in an age of sadness and anxiety.
 - A. The masses of the world are not truly happy. **Hospital beds** are filled with patients suffering with mental and emotional problems. Millions who walk the streets are far from being happy and have to take tranquilizers to keep them going during the day and sleeping pills to put them to sleep at night. Many of these people are on the verge of suicide and some will take their lives today in an attempt to escape their unhappiness.
 - B. This being so we need to discuss some rule for happiness.
- III. Before we consider these rules let us clearly establish the fact that **God wants man to be happy and enjoy life**.
 - A. There are many people who are under the false impression that God wants man to be sad and gloomy, but nothing could be farther from the truth. (Psa. 144:15b; Prov. 17:22; Jn. 16:13; Phil. 4:4; 1 Pet. 3:10).
 - B. These scriptures clearly establish the fact that God wants man to be happy. He does not want man to be miserable and go about with a frown on his face. He wants man to have a rich, full, abundant life. (Jn. 10:10).
 - C. With this thought in mind, let's consider some rules the scriptures lay down for happiness.
- I. **Adjust To The Unchangeable** - One rule is to adjust to the unchangeable in our lives.
 - A. Every one of us is surrounded by **two kinds of circumstances**. There are some things we can and should change. There are other things that are unchangeable that we must learn to live with if we are going to be happy.
 1. One time **a man came to a preacher's office** and talked to him about his problem. After listening to the man, the preacher put his finger on his problem by saying, "Aren't you worried because you are getting old?" The man bowed his head and said, "I suppose that is what is wrong with me."
 2. This man was unhappy because he had not learned to adjust to the unchangeable. He could not accept the fact he was getting old and the only way to avoid growing old was to die young.

B. In contrast to this man many others have found happiness they learned this basic rule of life.

1. **Paul** is a good example. (Phil. 4:11-12).

a. Paul was saying in essence that he had learned to adjust to all things.

b. He was happy when he was hungry and when he was full, when he was in prison and when he was out of prison, when he was suffering and when he was free of suffering.

2. Another example is **Fanny J. Crosby**, the famous hymn writer. As many of you know, she became blind at six weeks of age. She did not, however, let this handicap destroy her happiness. She said, "I am the happiest soul living. If I had not been deprived of my sight, I would never have received so good an education, nor cultivated so fine a memory, nor have been able to do good to so many people." She was happy because she had learned to adjust to the unchangeable.

3. Once a **woman, who had suffered for months with a painful illness**, smiled and said concerning the robin, "I love him because he sings in the rain." That is what we need to do. We need to learn to sing in the rain. We need to adjust to the unchangeable in our lives.

II. **Live One Day At A Time** - A second rule that leads to happiness is to live one day at a time. (Prov. 27:1; Matt. 6:34).

A. Life is miserable and even unbearable for many people because they do not follow this important rule of life.

1. Many are unhappy today because they constantly **worry about the past**.

a. They have done some wrong in the past and instead of accepting God's forgiveness and forgetting the wrong they let it destroy their happiness.

b. Paul made some mistakes in his life and some bad ones, but he did not allow them to destroy his happiness and usefulness to God. (Phil. 3:13, 14).

PHI 3:13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,

PHI 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

c. We should have the attitude of Paul. We should forget what lies behind and press on for the prize that is in Christ Jesus. We should learn to pray at the end of the day.

"Father, thou gave me this day. I have done the best I could with it. If I have made mistakes, forgive me. And if I have won victories, I humbly give thee thanks. It was gracious of thee to give me this day. But, Father, for good or bad the day is over and I am through with it and I giving it back to thee. In Christ's name. Amen."

2. Others cannot enjoy today because they are **always thinking about tomorrow**.

a. The **junior high school student** is unhappy because he does not have a driver's license. The **high school student** is unhappy because he is not his own boss. The **college student** is unhappy because he does not have his degree or a job. But, he knows as soon as he get his degree, a wife, a job, and a FHA mortgage he will be happy. The **young married couple**, fresh out of college, is unhappy because they must work and are deep in debt. They look forward to the time when they can retire and take it easy.

b. And on it goes and goes. Tomorrow we are going to be happy.

B. The only way to be happy is to live one day at a time.

1. By this I do not mean that one should never make any plans for the future because the scriptures do not teach this. But I mean that we should live each day to its fullest and let tomorrow take care of itself.

2. Someone has written those lines.

Tomorrow's bridge as I look ahead
Is a rickety thing to view;
Its piers are crumbled, its rails are down;
Its floors would not let me through.

The chasm it spans is dark and deep,
And the waters foam and fret;
I have crossed that bridge a thousand times,
Though I have never reach it yet.

It has crashed beneath to let me through,
Although it is miles away;
But, strange, the bridges that I have crossed
Have all been safe today.

Perhaps I shall find when I reach the one
That lies in the distant blue,
Some hand may have mended its rickety floor,
And its piers may be staunch and new.

And I can pass over, light-hearted, free;
As a bird on the buoyant air;
Forgive me, God, for my fearful heart,
My anxious and foolish care.

III. Get Right With God - A third rule for happiness is to get right with God.

A. In the book of Ecclesiastes Solomon tells us his quest for happiness.

1. He tried to find happiness through material possessions, wisdom, pleasure, and in many other ways but he failed to find the inner happiness and serenity he was seeking.

2. He finally came to the conclusion that all is vanity, useless without God. He summed up his quest

by saying. (Eccles. 12:13).

B. Solomon realized that happiness is an inside job. It comes from being right with God.

1. Quite often I talk with different people who are miserable in this life. As you talk to them you soon realize that much of their unhappiness comes from the fact that their life is not right with God. They know deep down inside that if they were to die that they would go to hell.
2. The only way to have genuine happiness is to make sure your life is right with God. This will bring an inner peace that surpasses all understanding. The Christian can close his eyes at night and say, "It is well with my soul." Would you like to be able to say that? If so, get right with God.

IV. **Trust God** - A fourth rule for happiness is to put one's trust in God.

A. The one who completely trusts God is happy because he knows that God will take care of his needs.

B. Once Jesus said. (Matt. 6:25-33).

1. Oh, how we need these words today.
2. We need to trust God more. The more we trust God the happier we will be.

V. **Live For Others** - A fifth rule for happiness is living for others.

A. The happiest people in the world are those who live for others. I have never met a selfish person who was genuinely happy. He or she may appear happy, but deep down inside life is miserable.

B. We need to adopt the praiseworthy **philosophy of the laundress** who was busy singing because of the joy in her heart. When she was asked, "Where did you find so much happiness?" She replied, "I didn't find it mistah, I made it." Her loving glance at her children told the story of her happiness.

C. Paul knew happiness because he was living for Christ and others. (Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21).

Conclusion.

- I. Paul found happiness by living for Christ. You can find this same happiness if you will give your life to Jesus.
- II. Will you totally surrender your life to Jesus? Make Jesus the Lord of your life. Turn from your sins and come and be baptized into Christ and live each day for Him. Come as we stand and sing.