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## CHRISTIAN HAPPINESS (AN Introduction)

### INTRODUCTION

People have their own definition of happiness

**Illustration :** Quarterback cum ESPN commentator Joe Theismann, allegedly explaining to his soon-to-be-ex second wife why he had an affair: "God wants Joe Theismann to be happy."

**But the Bible says :**

*Proverbs 14 : 12 There is a way that appears to be right,  
but in the end it leads to death.  
13 Even in laughter the heart may ache,  
and rejoicing may end in grief.*

**Note :** In order for us to know what true happiness means, we must get it from the source:

**This is the promise of our Lord Jesus :**

*John 10: 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

**Etymology :** full "perissos" more than necessary; super-added; over and above

*Ephesians 3: 20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

**Note :** Perissos was used there

*Matthew 5: Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, <sup>2</sup> and he began to teach them.*

*He said:*

- <sup>3</sup> *"Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
- <sup>4</sup> *Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.*
- <sup>5</sup> *Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.*
- <sup>6</sup> *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.*
- <sup>7</sup> *Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.*
- <sup>8</sup> *Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.*
- <sup>9</sup> *Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.*
- <sup>10</sup> *Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*<sup>11</sup> "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

## **Pray**

*Matthew 5: Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, <sup>2</sup> and he began to teach them*

### **Who were the "crowds"?**

*Matthew 4: <sup>23</sup> Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup> News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them. <sup>25</sup> Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him*

(show map and explain )

**In short :** These are people that are half-breed Jews, cosmopolitan Jews, pure Jews and Gentiles.

*he went up on a mountainside*

**Why?** To make sure people will hear Him

*and sat down. His disciples came to him, <sup>2</sup> and he began to teach them*

Note : Rabbis during that time when they are teaching, they sit down. It shows their authority when they are teaching

## **I. The goal of Christian happiness is a cut above from the cravings of this world**

**Etymology :** Blessed; "Makarios - happy, blissful,

**Note :** Greeks use this word to describe the state of their gods that is above from the ordinary pursuits of this world.

**The problem of man :** His pursuits are shallow "mababaw ang kaligayahan"

### **Examples**

1. Power - We want to establish our own kingdoms here but what God is offering *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

**Illustration :** Alexander the Great conquered the known world in his day. Having done so, he wept in his tent because, he said, "There are no more worlds to conquer."

2. Fame - We want to be somebody here or connected with a "somebody" but God is offering Himself... *called children of God.*

3. Fortune – We want a piece of land or a piece of something when God is giving us *inherit the earth.*

Note : Part of the persecution of early Christians was the seizing of properties and one of these days these same people will inherit the earth.

4. Travel - We are already happy seeing a beautiful sunset, nice snow but God is saying that we can see the most beautiful sight of all... *they will see God.*

**In short :** The real problem with our pursuit of happiness is we are easily satisfied and think that the things of this world is the ultimate.

**Important Note :** There's nothing wrong with power, fame, fortune, travel or anything but if you think that's the ultimate...you're going to miss a lot.

**Illustration :** I was already so happy with Lido beach when I was a kid but when I saw Boracay during our honeymoon...Lido beach can no longer make me happy. I would rather have Boracay

**Quote :** *it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."* - C.S. Lewis

**In short :** A Christian is grateful for what God has given us here but he seeks the ultimate source of happiness – God Himself.

**Illustration :** 6 weeks before he died, a reporter asked Elvis Presley, "Elvis, when you first started playing music, you said you wanted to be rich, famous and happy. Are you happy?" "I'm lonely as hell" he replied.

Elvis didn't look high enough.

## **II. The goal of Christian happiness contradicts the usual practice of man**

**Illustration :** We know of people when they are angry or stressed, what they do is go shopping. We know of people when they are lonely, goes on an eating binge.

**Quote :** *You cannot fill a spiritual need with a physical substance. – John McArthur*

**Illustration from McArthur :** When you're hungry you don't want a lecture on grace. You want your dinner. And when you're out on the desert and you're dying of thirst you don't want somebody to talk to you about the wonderful mercy of God, you want water. You cannot fill a physical need with a spiritual substance; it's just as ridiculous to think you can fill a spiritual need with a physical substance

**Note :** You are blessed or happy not because you are persecuted, not because you are mourning, not because you are being insulted, not because you are meek. You are happy because of what you are going to have... kingdom of heaven, the earth, see God...and etc

**Example :** The winners of the lotto in Bell, are still waiting for their prizes to be given but for the meantime, they are already feeling happy because even if they have a crappy job or not satisfied with their jobs, they know that they will be receiving something big in the end. But of course, we all know once they have it, then they will realize that's not all there is to life.

**NOW :** Since the world's aim for happiness is not high enough, their way of getting this happiness is also out of whack.

**For example :** They think position or power will give them happiness. they will not of course be "meek" or "poor in spirit" or they think that "purity" can never give you "happiness" as the world lowly knows it.

**Illustration :** "I don't get angry. I get even." Ivana Trump would say, "I don't get angry. I get everything." There's no "meekness" in there

**I love this illustration :** 2 Samuel 16:5-13 Shimei, pelting King David with rocks and throwing dirt at him. The men of David wanted to respond but David asked them not to and to let Shimei pelt him with stones

**Important :** What the world doesn't know is that "Happiness is a blessing.", meaning it's given. God is already offering it to mankind.

**Now :** If it's a gift, how do you get this gift? How do you receive it?

**Answer :** By being poor in spirit, by mourning, by being meek, by hungering for righteousness, by being a peacemaker and etc etc.

### **III. Christian happiness is connected with the person of Christ**

**Note :** The word "blessed" (makarios) is used to describe who the Lord is. It is one of the attributes connected with our Lord Jesus.

*1 Timothy 6: <sup>14</sup> to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup> which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords,*

**Now :** If this is an attribute of Christ, then it must be an attribute that must be seen through His followers – the Christians .

**In short :** These attributes like "blessed are the poor in spirit (humility); blessed are the meek (gentleness in situation – part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit); blessed are the peacemakers ; the merciful...and etc. " are IMPOSSIBLE TO ATTAIN WITHOUT CHRIST'S POWER WORKING IN US!

**Here's the good news:**

*2 Peter 1: <sup>3</sup> His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup> Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

**This is the full gospel :** Sadly, a lot of Christians are only living half a gospel, when the full gospel not only saves us from the fires of hell and enjoy the riches of heaven BUT OUR LORD HIMSELF LIVES IN US SO THAT HIS LIFE WILL BE SEEN THROUGH US. That is the full gospel!!!!

### **CONCLUSION :**

**Why did the Holy Spirit inspired Matthew to write the Beatitudes as the first recorded sermon of our Lord Jesus?**

**Remember :** Over-all context of the book of Matthew is to show Jesus is King and a King has a kingdom. This beatitude is how the people of the kingdom should look like.

Nothing shows that we are in Christ if we live the life that is described by our Lord in the Beatitudes (Matthew Chapters 5 to 7)

The greatest evangelism we can do is when our lives reflect what it is to be part of God's kingdom.

**Illustration :** My father-in-law would always remind me, "Be a walking sermon". He means that the preaching of God's Word, the sharing of the Gospel can only be powerful if they see Christ's life working in us and through us.

*Matthew 4: <sup>12</sup> When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. <sup>13</sup> Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— <sup>14</sup> to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:*

*<sup>15</sup> "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,  
the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles—*

*<sup>16</sup> the people living in darkness*

*have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of the shadow of death  
a light has dawned."<sup>17</sup>*

*<sup>17</sup> From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."*

**Note :** When you are living like this, then they know the Kingdom of heaven is near them since Christ is in you. Live humble (poor in spirit), mournful (repentant), meek (gentle), righteous, merciful, pure (holy), peacemakers (peaceful) and of course loving (Christlike) lives and the message we carry will have more credibility. We are the medium and the message also of Christ's gospel.

**S.D.G.**