



Midtown Messenger

Volume 3

April 5, 2020

Issue 14

How To Be Happy - Set Goals

By: Ronnie Scherffius

The Bible defines happiness very differently from the world. To the world, happiness is dependent upon outward circumstances. The world's standard of happiness is achieved when "desires are gratified by the enjoyment of pleasure without pain." (Webster's Dictionary) The Bible pictures a happy people as those "whose God is the Lord" (Ps. 144:15; cf. Ps. 146:5) and who have obtained salvation (Rom. 4:7-8). Happiness is not avoiding the pains of the world but rather enduring and overcoming them (James 1:12; 5:11).

From a biblical perspective, true happiness is the state of blessed joy, pleasure and satisfaction one has knowing he belongs to God and knowing his sins are forgiven - despite outward circumstances of this world. Thus, one might suggest that a Christian should **never** be "unhappy." That, however, is an unrealistic expectation! The question then is this: "How can one who belongs to the family of God and knows he has victory in Christ be happy in this world despite the outward difficulties that he must endure on a daily basis?" Five suggestions will be offered.

First, to be happy in this world set goals and accomplish them. Having a goal before you will motivate and bring satisfaction. The idea of setting goals is a biblical principle. Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). God long ago determined, "I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up" (Acts 15:16; cf. Amos 9:11-12). Paul also set goals: "I press toward the mark" (Phil. 3:14).

It has been said that promises are made to be broken; some people feel the same toward the goals they set. The biblical principle, however, is to accomplish the goal you set for yourself. At the end of his life Paul could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course" (2 Tim. 4:7). On the cross Jesus announced, "It is finished" (John 19:30). The *key* is not to set goals so lofty they cannot be accomplished. Some say, "Shoot for the moon, if you miss you will still be among the stars." While this may be a good motivational statement, it can also be a very discouraging reality. If I never accomplish my goals it does not matter who surrounds me! The biblical precept of setting goals is to count the cost (Luke 14:27-33). God does not even set goals that are impossible to accomplish — His "goal" is to save man *from* their sin but never *in* their sin!

What are some spiritual goals Christians can set that will help to achieve true happiness? **Read through the Bible.** This is annually a New Year's resolution...that often goes unresolved. The Bible has 1,189 chapters. If one were to read four chapters each day, he could read through the Bible in ten months - two months to spare! One might set a goal of reading the New Testament through multiple times in a year. The New Testament has 260 chapters. If one read five chapters of the New Testament each day, he could read through the New Testament 73 times. One may set a goal of becoming especially familiar with one particular book of the Bible. If, for example, one chose to read the book of First Corinthians through multiple times in a year and read four chapters each day, he would read

through the book every four days or 91 times in a year.

Another worthy goal for a Christian is to **commit Scripture to memory**. The average person can commit to memory three verses of Scripture each day. The book of Proverbs has 915 verses in 31 chapters. If one were diligent and disciplined, he could commit the entire book of Proverbs to memory in one year! One may consider that goal too high. Consider then the book of Ephesians as a more attainable goal. Paul's letter to Ephesus is divided into 155 verses in six chapters. If one chose to commit two verses of the Ephesian letter to memory each day, he could achieve his goal in 73 days. Following the same plan of two verses each day the book of James (108 verses) could be committed to memory in 54 days; the two epistles of Peter (166 verses) in 83 days; the three epistles of John (132 verses) in 66 days; the epistle of Jude (25 verses) in 13 days. The whole of the General Epistles of the New Testament could be committed to memory in less than about seven months — just over half of the year! What a worthy goal! What satisfaction, joy and spiritual strength one would obtain!

Other spiritual goals toward which Christians should strive are daily prayer (for specific people, works, etc.); calling every member of the church weekly; visiting each member of the church annually; writing letters of encouragement to members of the church, leaders of the church, preaching students, missionaries, etc., regularly.

If you want to be happy — set and accomplish spiritual goals!

A Pandemic

We have heard the word 'pandemic' a lot lately. A pandemic condition exists when disease spreads over an entire country or the world. The word Pandemic comes from the Greek, pan meaning, "all", and the word demos meaning, "people." It is not synonymous with epidemic, though both words could be used with reference to the same event. The emphasis in the word epidemic is that the disease is "upon," epi the "people" demos: "A pan-

demic is a widespread epidemic that may affect entire continents or even the world." It describes what we are suffering the world over. As you know, a pandemic is no respecter of persons: young or old, male or female. You can tell it is taken seriously when the NBA and MLB shut down their seasons at the loss of billions of dollars. All of this got me to thinking about the last plague that struck Egypt in the days of Moses. More ink, by far, is employed by God to describe it than any of the nine plagues that precede it. You can read the account for yourself in Exodus 11-13. So, imagine waking up that fateful morning to discover the dead in your household and in your fields. Imagine learning that all of your neighbors suffered the same thing. The life of all firstborn among the Egyptians was taken—man and animal, male and female: "And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where someone was not dead" (Exodus 12:30). Would a quarantine have prevented the tenth plague from taking the firstborn? Would a shelter-in-place order have helped? The text tells us that the final plague had its intended effect. Pharaoh let Israel go. Contrasting the Exodus report of the tenth plague with our current pandemic situation, I see some significant contrasts: 1) The death of the firstborn among both men and animals, was restricted to Egypt and to Egyptians. What we are facing today is worldwide. The COVID-19 is no respecter of persons. 2) The last plague was restricted to the firstborn in Egypt. You must admit that even though this may not have been immediately apparent to the Egyptians (see Exodus 12:33), the target was surgically and strategically specific—unlike the pandemic we face today. There is a certain randomness to the COVID-19. 3) No one among the captive Israelites were harmed by the last plague because they were protected by their observance of the Passover. So, even though the plague struck Egypt (geographical) and the Egyptians (ethnic), it did not affect everyone in Egypt. The pandemic we face is no respecter of geography or ethnicity. If you are looking for a parallel in our times to the pandemic we face, you need look no further than sin. Sin is pandemic in that it is no respecter of persons—all have sinned (Romans 3:23). It is epidemic (upon us all), and pandemic, in that it affects all. It is killing more people than the COVID-19. If there is a difference between the two, the same level of effort to address the problem of sin is, perhaps, nowhere near the level of effort being exerted world-wide to eradicate the COVID-19. And as far as vaccines are concerned, we are still looking for one to contain the COVID-19, while the remedy for sin is the blood of Christ, a remedy that has been available for centuries.

-Selected-

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of April 5, 2020

Sunday Morning:

Announcements:

Scripture Reading:

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread:

Fruit of the Vine:

Offering:

Assist:

Sunday Evening:

Prayer

A.M. Opening:

A.M. Closing:

P.M. Opening:

P.M. Closing:

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.:

Sun. P.M.:

Wednesday:

Ushers:

Wednesday Devotional:

Open/Close Building:

Sound System:

Greeters:

Prepare Communion:

****Per the Men's meeting held Wednesday evening, March 18, 2020, it was decided to suspend all services effective immediately due to the Coronavirus and resume services on Sunday, May 3, 2020 if the CDC guidelines have been lifted. ****

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Please pray for the country during this time of the Corona Virus Pandemic. Yvonne Smith's granddaughter, Emily Barnes, who lives in Del Rio and just had a baby, tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. Paul Purswell's father, Larry, who has tested positive for COVID-19 and has double pneumonia and is not doing well in Houston. Janice FitzSimmons who is at DeTar hospital with throat pain. Steve Randle, who has been suffering from headaches and dizziness but is feeling much better.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Sandy Malone, Parker DeDear, Trisha Foerster, Josiah Rodriguez (2); Jeff Cannady (3)

**Sermons are available on
our website
www.midtowncoc.org
under Resources**

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Janice FitzSimmons
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Veronica Serenil
Clark Withers

SHUT-INS:

Faye Henderson
Charlie Mabe
Sandy Malone

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Minister: Ronnie Scherffius
Secretary: Nina Siegel

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM
Sunday Evening Worship: 5:00PM
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of March 29, 2020

Bible Class.....
A.M. Worship.....
P.M. Worship.....
Wednesday Bible Class.....

Offering week of March 22, 2020.....\$1,465

Offering week of March 29, 2020.....\$1,675

Reading for this week:

"May the LORD therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand."

1 Samuel 24:15

SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli

Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore

Southwest School of Bible Studies - William Pedigo

GO PAPERLESS!

Want the digital version?

Email us at midtowncoc2017@gmail.com

To receive the MidTown Messenger in your inbox
or visit www.midtowncoc.org

MidTown Church of Christ

5901 N. Main

Victoria, TX 77904

(361) 573-0030

midtowncoc2017@gmail.com

