

THE BIBLE VIEW

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How to be Happy

Bill Brinkworth

*“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 **But** his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”*
Psalms 1:1-3

One of the most popular “wisdom” Psalms in the Hebrew’s book of praise is Psalms 1. The first three verses give God’s recipe for happiness.

God’s method is far from what the unsaved world would think would bring joy and less conflict in one’s life. To be “blessed,” or “happy,” as it means in this verse, should involve heeding His advice.

God’s simple guidelines first involve one’s discerning who are the godly and the ungodly. When one has read and understood what God’s Word, the Bible, says and teaches, one will often observe the godly and the ungodly

by their character and actions. Their “fruit” (Eph. 5:9, Gal. 5:22-25), as the Bible often calls their lifestyle, may not honestly reveal if a person is a child of God or not; but it will spotlight if they are living a righteous life and could be a godly influence in your life.

After it is discerned who is living a life not pleasing to God, God commands that we “*walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly*”; do not heed their advice (counsel)! If a popular television personality, who has been married multiple times, gives marital advice it would be wise not to heed it. When an acquaintance, or even a politician, has had multiple instances of not being truthful, it would be safe to ignore anything he promises or says. One that has repeatedly been seen involved in sin would also be one whose advice should not be heeded. If a Christian wants to be happy, it quite often has to do with following godly advice that one certainly will not get from unrighteous sources!

Not only should we not take the ungodly’s advice, a Christian should not even “standeth in the way of sinners.” Do not be around them. Put a distance between you and them. This is why many parents should forbid their children from spending time with playmates that would be bad examples. They should know that any exposure to wrong behavior could expose one to suggestions to do the same. Once a seed of sin or wrong conduct is planted in one’s mind, it is almost impossible to erase it. Not being around those that are doing wrong, may protect one from even being tempted by sin.

The third piece of godly advice involves not even sitting with the scornful. God commands us not to sit down and get comfortable with those that laugh, ridicule, or disdain the things of God. Their scoffing and scorning godly philosophies could alter one's trust and walk with the Lord. Instead of filling one's mind with poisonous scornfulness, God tells us to saturate our minds with what He has preserved for us in His Word.

Trust God's Word. Delight in it, and think on it ("meditate") all the time. When faced with a decision, contemplate, search, and obey what God's Word says to do about the situation. In doing so, one will not be as the unstable, ungrounded, uncertain ungodly.

One that is obedient to what God shows one to do will be "...like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." The happy Christian will have a firm foundation that will be able to endure life's tests and trials. He will not be likely to fail or fall when the going gets rough. When the world around him is confused and unstable, the obedient man will have God's hand of blessing and protection on him and will be strong in adversity and prosper. He will be "blessed"!

Don't Yoke Up!

Bill Brinkworth

One of the principles that will distinguish a strong Christian from a weak one, when practiced, is taught in II Corinthians 6. Not adhering to God's teaching on this doctrine has ruined many Christian lives and testimonies. It is the number one robber of joy for a child of God. The doctrine Paul teaches here is the separation of a Christian from those who are not saved (vs. 14-17). *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" II Corinthian 6:14*

The double-negative "not unequally yoked" can be somewhat confusing to our modern vernacular, but it simply means "do not be yoked together with unbelievers". The yoke spoken of here is referring to the wooden implement that binds two farm animals together. It was common that two oxen or mules would be joined together with this device, so they could plow a field together. We are not to be joined and going in the same direction as the world is going. We should not be plowing the same "field" as they.

We should not be yoked to unbelievers in marriage, business relationships, friendships, or other close relationships. When we are yoked together closely in such a relationship, we often end up going the wrong direction. We are in the world, and we naturally may be in close contact with unsaved. That happens and is a good opportunity to be a witness and an example to them, but

getting into the position that we are going in their direction is what God is warning us about.

A child of God is on the winning side. Why in the world would he want to go in the same direction as the losing side? We have a Leader that will take us in the right direction. We should not be following those that do not know the way. We should be guiding others in the right direction, not following their wrong pathways through life.

The Bible says there are two spiritual sides in this life: God's and the devil's (also called Belial). What can we possibly have in common with an unbeliever's thinking and goals?

“And what concord [agreement, union in opinions, sentiments, views or interests] hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” II Corinthians

“Oil and water do not mix; neither do the saved and the unsaved.

A Worldly Christian

C. H. Spurgeon

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and

despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”
Mat. 6:24

No man can serve God and mammon, because there is not enough life in the heart to serve the two. Alas! Many people try this, and they fail both ways.

I have known a man who has tried to let some of his heart run into the world, and another part he allowed to drip into the church, and the effect has been this; when he came into the church, he was suspected of hypocrisy.

“Why,” they said, “if he were truly obeying the Lord, could he have done yesterday what he did, and then come and profess so much today?” The church looks upon him suspiciously; or if he deceives them, they feel he cannot be trusted because he has not given all his heart to the Lord.

What is the effect of his conduct in the world? Why, his religion is a fetter to him there. Any mention of God or His commandments, especially any expression of guilt, makes the world uncomfortable around him, and they also do not trust him.

The world will not have him, and the church will not have him; he wants to go between the two, and both despise him.

“Ultimate success depends on loving things above more than things below!”

God's People in the Wrong Places

W. J. Morrison

1. A backslidden believer: Abram in Egypt (Gen. 12:10).
2. A silenced witness: Lot in Sodom (Gen. 14:12).
3. A lazy saint: David on the housetop (II Sam. 11:2).
4. A seduced prophet: The man of God in the old prophet's house (I Kings 13:19).
5. A discouraged worker: Elijah under a juniper tree (I Kings 19:4).
6. A disobedient servant: Jonah in the whale (Jonah 2).
7. A miserable disciple: Peter before the fire (Luke 22:55).