

His attractiveness, preciousness, wonder, love, and trustworthiness, too. His love is at the heart of everything He permits in our lives. This wonderful assurance makes it possible for us to trust Him and be happy in a sinning, hurting world.

Our position in Him, under the blood, accepted in the beloved, is the basis of all happiness. Live contentedly in this wonderfully complete relationship with Him. Trust His love and power working every circumstance of your life together for your eternal good. Gladly confess and forsake your sins as He reveals them to you. Rest in your place in Him, His powerful presence in you. Live happily in Him.

### Something More

We need to learn to hear His voice and follow it. This reality cannot be escaped, as much as we might wish to do so. Until we long so much to please Him that we want to do what He wants us to do without hesitation, we are simply not going to be as happy, content, and free as we can be. No cost should seem to us too great if only it gives our great and loving God pleasure. Rather it should seem a rich and rare privilege.

We will never achieve this position, or any other place, perfectly in this life. But to get closer to wanting only to please Him, we need to let Him convince us in our heart of hearts that pleasing Him not only makes Him happy, it ultimately is the only thing that will make us happy and free. Let Him teach you to value a clear conscience, His approval, and His pleasure more than all the seductive enticements the world, the flesh, and the devil can offer.

### A Nagging Conscience

*“Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith: for whatever is not from faith is sin.”* Romans 14:22-23

*“For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.”*

1 John 3:20-21

We have already discussed the need of listening to the dictates of our conscience. But a part of the divine reality is that we are still depraved sinners in spite of our redemption. So, we do offend the Spirit and our consciences.

Then, too, there is the reality that sometimes we have feelings of guilt we do not need to have. If these problems are not dealt with, the ability to live contentedly in the Lord

will be seriously impaired. At the same time, we must not deal with them in self-dependence or they will become a source of bondage, causing rest, peace, and contentment to flee.

A dear lady phoned me to get my approval for not having private devotions the days she worked twelve hour shifts! She knew better, but she still felt guilty. And God stooped to meet her in her folly through the assurances of this poor servant.

Sometimes God is extra kind. I thought of taking my wife, daughter, and grand-daughter to lunch. My conscience nagged that I probably shouldn't spend the time or money. Just then I opened an envelope that contained a \$25 check with a note which read simply: "Isn't it time for a breather, even if it's only a lunch out together for you and your wife, with the enclosed." We had a ball together at the cafeteria restaurant right above Niagara Falls. That love gift covered all the costs!

My thank you note telling her the story arrived just in time to show her the Lord again and lift her out of discouragement. She wrote back to tell me how God had unexpectedly intervened to ask her to send me that \$25.

He doesn't always work so dramatically to relieve us of excessive conscientiousness or unnecessary unhappiness. Still, I thank Him that He knows all things, is greater than them all, and yet cares about every part of our lives.

### He Knows Where I Am

*“God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.”*

1 John 3:20

God knows not just my lack of conformity to His perfection and my uncertainty and self-condemnation, but also that I live under His blood, united to Him in fellowship and love, despite all my imperfections. He knows that His grace alone first gave me acceptance, a right standing with Him. He knows that it will be ever and always His grace alone that will give me right standing with Him into eternity.

In this assurance I can live in happiness and contentment in Him, without being the least content with my imperfections. I can live at peace without being pretentious about my supposed achievements or defensive about my sins and failures. All I need do is abide in Him who is my sanctification as He is my redemption, righteousness, and wisdom.

*Transformed Living Messages by Pastor Marr*  
ChristLife

PO Box 1033, Niagara Falls, NY 14304

Ph: (716) 622-7320

E-mail: [Christlife@Christ-like.net](mailto:Christlife@Christ-like.net)

Visit us at [www.Christ-like.net](http://www.Christ-like.net)



By: Pastor Ron Marr

*“Blessed [happy] are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.”*

Matthew 5:6

Recently as I was reading a new book that addressed the topic of the Christ-centered life, I recognized my lack and need once again. Unexpectedly the Lord told me, “Be happy.”

In the past, I had been almost afraid of being happy. Erroneously looking at all of life's negative circumstances, I sometimes feared that it was God's duty and responsibility to hurt me. The idea of His wanting to make me happy was quite foreign.

Taught as a child that happiness was of the world and that only inner joy was of the Lord, I found my distorted thinking reinforced in Bible school. There I was instructed that happiness depends on external happenings, but only the joy of the Lord is our right and our strength.

The problem with all that high-sounding spiritual philosophy is that, while we understand happiness, the concept of joy is illusive. Joy somehow seems distant and ethereal, or perhaps too theological. And when anything sounds theological, it seems to many of us also to be unobtainable.

But the joy or happiness of the Lord is our strength. I would like to live today and every day in happiness, wouldn't you?

### God's Kind of Happiness

God's happiness is not continual joking and laughing. It is not a constant high or some kind of euphoria. It is not a jovial temperament or a bubbly personality. It isn't even primarily a feeling.

This kind of joy is truth. His joy is the fact of the reality of

# GOD WANTS YOU TO BE HAPPY

Christ in me, my all-sufficient supply, and I in Him, where I can rest confidently in Him and His supply. It is the fact of sins forgiven, a clear conscience, of being in God's family, and of being at home in Him.

True happiness is not the emotions, but the reality. Happy feelings may accompany or result from the realities; but if not, the real underlying joy can still be there based on the realities, even without the effervescent feelings.

This joy or happiness is freedom from all kinds of bondages. It is thankfulness, gratitude to God for all His kindnesses, and being well-pleased with what God has provided. A peace of heart that isn't just a transient feeling leads to hope and anticipation of what God has in store for us. The inner contentment, gladness, and delight in the Lord is based on who He really is, not on our changing circumstances or metabolism. The only way we can have this kind of happiness is knowing and living in God.

We live in God, so we live in reality. Christ is in us, our all-sufficiency; we are in Him where we can rest confidently in His victory. This is fact. This is reality. Not only do we live in Him, but also we live under the constantly cleansing and freeing work of His blood. This, too, is fact and reality.

## Free from a Condemning Conscience

Now, how do these divine realities practically relate to our freedom from a condemning conscience, and so to the realization of our happiness in the Lord? Can we be happy in spite of our inner depravity and our outer sin, weakness, and failure? How can we look to Him freely and dwell in Him at liberty so long as we are beset by sin? How can we be open and free, content and happy in our relationship with Him while we have an accusing conscience? How can we be free to live at liberty in Him and He in us?

Only through God's intervention by the blood of Christ and our full reliance on His blood sacrifice on our behalf, and through His finished work on the cross and His gracious application of it to our lives, are we "accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6). Not through our achievements, our perfection, or our lack of sin and failure, but through the blood of Christ are we "made near" (Ephesians 2:13). By appealing to the efficacy of His own blood sacrifice for us, Christ Jesus, sitting at the right hand of the Father, intercedes for us. Praise God, He can never be denied.

Whenever the accuser of the brethren appears telling us we are not acceptable to our God, we need only point to the

blood. In it is the assurance of our acceptance, however unworthy of it we may be in ourselves.

## Relying on the Efficacy of the Blood

Our place in Him and He in us, our union with Him that provides the free flow of His life in ours, is made possible by the finished work of Christ on the cross. We reckon His righteousness imputed to us, our death to sin, our union with Him, and His empowering life in us as all freely ours through His shed blood. We count on its efficacy for us and in us.

As we lay ourselves down in Him and His righteousness, we rest contentedly, happily there. We dare do nothing else. Certainly we dare not trust ourselves, for we have no righteousness of our own. We have nothing else to place our trust in except Him.

Looking to the Lord Jesus, we learn to commune intimately with Him and the Father. We do so without undue concern for our nature and acts of sin, recognizing that "if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses [keeps on cleansing] us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). This walking in the light that guarantees our fellowship is not walking in some kind of perfection. It is walking in Him who is light. It is walking in confidence in Him and His blood, in our position united with Him, and in His righteousness so freely credited to us.

Why has He provided so amply for us poor sinners? "That your joy [happiness] may be full" (1 John 1:4). He wants us to be happy! Moreover He has provided fully for it in Himself and His shed blood.

## How To Be Happy

*"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* 1 John 1:5-9

How we revel in His provision of Himself and with Him all the righteousness we need so we can be accepted in the beloved through the blood of His cross. But it is necessary that we both see our awful sinful depravity and recognize our acts of sin in order for the blood to be precious.

In addition to pointing to the blood and abiding under it to be safe from the accuser of the brethren, we need to let it be applied to our ongoing sin. When Peter offered to let the Lord wash him all over, Jesus told him that had already been done at his initial sal-

vation. Now all he needed was to have his feet washed to be free from the contamination of the day.

This describes our need, too. We've been washed in His blood, redeemed, and made new. More than that, as we walk in Him and His light, the blood just keeps on washing away the sins of which we are unaware.

The Spirit also reveals specific sins to us so that we might willingly confess and forsake them. Any living with known but unconfessed sin leaves that area of our lives uncleansed. Let us be careful to walk in the light of His truth, quickly confessing our sins to God, and when appropriate, to men. Let's be ready to make restitution where that is indicated, and walk on with God and men with an open heart and countenance. Nothing less will allow us to be really happy.

## Living in Reality

Any living in the darkness of falsity and pretense denies the necessity of the cleansing of the blood through which we are "made near." It denies us real freedom and happiness. But Jesus told us, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

To live in darkness is to live in sin, but also it is to live in any untruth, any unreality, any pretense, anything other than that which actually is. To live in unreality is to live in slavery to a make-believe world that doesn't exist. That kind of insanity is only made possible by sin.

Of course, it's bound to result in unhappiness. If we would be content, happy, and free in Him, there can be no pretense, no self-defense, no hiding from the unattractive truth. We need to agree with God about our position in Him and His righteousness under the blood, as we do about everything else.

In reality, our wondrously free and gloriously dynamic position in Him and under His blood is our entrance to happiness in Him. Our happiness isn't in a giddy fantasy that all is well with the world. Rather, it is in Him alone and His provision for us in our sin and need.

We need freely to acknowledge both the utter depravity of the old man and our acts of sin, carelessness, lovelessness, selfishness, and failure. We need to remember these things spawned our unhappiness in the first place, and that they grieve God's loving heart.

Though we don't deserve it, He draws us in love as only He can. As we look to Him in response to His drawing, He reveals ourselves in all our sin and sinfulness. At the same time He reveals Himself both in His ample supply, and in