



WHERE IS HAPPINESS HIDING?

by Vincent M. Newfield

HAPPINESS—just about every human being wants it. But for most people, the happiness they experience is fleeting. Like the shifting winds of fall and spring, changing circumstances always seem to prevent true happiness from finding a home in their hearts. What's the key to experiencing a life of *true happiness*? It may not be what you'd expect.

Where is true happiness found? It's not found in having a mountain of material possessions, a huge house, famous friends, or mounds of money—the places in which many people search. Ecclesiastes 5:10 NLT declares, *those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness!* On the contrary, true happiness can only be found in *humility*—living life as a servant of God and others.

According to Noah Webster, *humility* is “freedom from pride and arrogance; humbleness of mind; a modest estimation of one's self worth; a deep sense of unworthiness in the sight of God and a submission to His divine will.”¹ The meaning of humility can be summed up in one word—self-lessness. While *pride lands you flat on our face, humility prepares you for honors* (Proverbs 29:23 The Message).

Without question, pride and selfishness go hand in hand like peanut butter and jelly, red beans and rice, and garbage and stink. A person who is prideful has his eyes cemented on himself. I don't know about you, but when I am operating in pride, I am often impatient, rude, harsh, angry, jealous, and sometimes just downright mean. In this sad state, happiness is nowhere to be found. My only exit from this miserable existence is to humble myself before God, repent of my pride, and ask Him to forgive me.

“Humility, the place of entire dependence on God, is, from the very nature of things, the first duty and highest virtue of man. It is the root of every virtue. And so pride, or the loss of this humility, is the root of every sin and evil.”² —Andrew Murray

What does a humble servant look like? There is no greater example than Jesus Himself—*Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death...* (Philippians 2:6-8 NIV). Verse 5 instructs us to, *Let this same attitude and purpose and [humble] mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus: [Let Him be your example in humility.]*

You and I will never experience true happiness if all we think and talk about is ourselves; we will live shallow, miserable lives if the only person we seek to serve and protect is us. Think about it. Who do you enjoy being around: a person who is “stuck on themselves” and constantly conversing about who *they* know, what *they* do, and how much *they* have? Or someone who is kind, considerate and more interested in what is going on in your life than their own? Clearly, it's the humble person we admire and desire to be around.

How do we develop a heart of humility? By staying connected to Christ. He said, *Wear my yoke—for it fits perfectly—and let me teach you; for I am gentle and humble, and you shall find rest for your souls; for I give you only light burdens* (Matthew 11:29,30 TLB). Jesus teaches us how to be a servant and walk in humility. He took on the job of the lowliest servant in society and washed the feet of His disciples—even

Judas, the one who betrayed Him (see John 13:1-17). And because Jesus humbled Himself, God exalted Him above all (see Philippians 2:8-11). In the same way, as we clothe ourselves with humility and become servants of God and one another, God will exalt us in due time (see 1 Peter 5:5,6).

Remember, *true humility and fear of the Lord lead to riches, honor, and long life* (Proverbs 22:4 NLT). God has a powerful plan for you—a good plan filled with hope and promise. Take the challenge and become a student of the greatest servant that ever lived—Jesus Christ. He will show you how *...to do justly, and to love kindness and mercy, and to humble yourself and walk humbly with your God* (Micah 6:8). All you have to do is ask. Just get alone with God and pray a simple prayer like this: *Father, forgive me for being prideful. Develop in me a heart of humility and a reverential fear of You. Let me never forget all that You have forgiven me of and all that You have saved me from. Help me to serve you and others with a grateful, humble heart. In Jesus' name, Amen!*

(1) Adapted from Noah Webster's 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language*. (2) Andrew Murray, *Humility* (CLC Publications: Fort Washington, PA, 1997) p. 12.

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