

WHAT IS HAPPINESS?

JOHN 16:33

INTRODUCTION:

1. Happiness is a choice. (Prov. 15.13,15; 17.22)
2. What is the key to happiness? (Prov. 3.13; 14.21; 16.20; 28.14)
3. On four occasions, Jesus give us the key to happiness by the statement, *"be of good cheer"*. (John 16.33)

I. HAPPINESS IS FOUND IN FORGIVENESS

- A. **MATTHEW 9:2:** *"He said to the paralytic, 'Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.'"*
- B. Giving thought to my forgiveness will bring me joy.
 1. Forgiveness is freedom from past sins. (Acts 2.38)
 2. Forgiveness is returning after falling away. (Acts 8.22)

II. HAPPINESS IS FOUND IN FAITH

- A. **MATTHEW 9:22:** *"He saw her He said, 'Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.'"*
- B. Having faith in God will bring me happiness.
 1. What is the basis of happiness? (Mark 11.22)
 2. Having been saved by the gospel, we live a life of faith and trust in God. (Rom. 1.16,17; 2 Cor.5.7)

III. HAPPINESS IS FOUND IN FELLOWSHIP

- A. **MATTHEW 14:27:** *"But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.'"*
 1. After sending away the five thousand, Jesus put the disciples on a boat and went to pray. (vs. 22,23)
 2. In the middle of the sea, the disciples saw Jesus approach them and were afraid. (vs. 24-27)
- B. Having a relationship with Christ will bring me happiness.
 1. It is our fellowship with Christ and not our circumstances that make us happy. (1 John 1.3,4)
 2. We have a Savior who cares. (1 John 2.1; Heb. 7.25)

CONCLUSION: Mark 10.49: Jesus is calling you.

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AUGUST 30, 2026

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"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"
-Mark 16.15

August 30, 2026

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:00 PM

Let God Speak

People today are so quick to assert their own thoughts and feelings. Search social media and you will find comments of individuals speaking their own opinions on everything from politics to religion, to the best way to cook a ham. But when it comes to the will of God, we need to refrain from injecting our own opinions, stop seeking the opinions of others, and simply let the word of God speak.

It was on an unknown mountain we refer to as the "Mount of Transfiguration" that Jesus was with His disciples. Suddenly, Jesus was transfigured, and appearing with Him were Moses and Elijah. Immediately, Peter suggested that they make three tabernacles, one for each of them. Why did Peter make such a suggestion? In Mark's account, it says that he said this *"because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid"* (Mark 9.6). Perhaps that is one of the reasons why God spoke from the cloud and said, *"This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"* (Mark 9.7).

Sometimes, we are lost and afraid. Sometimes we just don't know the answer. When we find ourselves in a struggle and we don't know which way to turn, we might brainstorm solutions. We might interject our opinions on the best course of action. We might seek the counsel of those who have no interest in God (Ps. 1.1). But perhaps the best way to handle the challenges of life is to stop talking, stop listening to the counsel of others, and start listening to Jesus. Turn to the Bible and let the Bible be your answer. It is this inspired book that is *"a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path."*

CLP

JESUS: THE ONLY PATH TO SALVATION

Acts 15:11

INTRODUCTION:

1. What did the witnesses say about Jesus? (Acts 1.8).
2. The evangelistic efforts of Paul and Barnabas came to a halt.
3. Salvation is not through Jesus coupled with the opinions of men. It is only through Christ and His word. (Rom. 8.1)

I. DISSENSION

- A. There was a dissension in the church. (Acts 15.1-5)
- B. The words that describe their dissension.
 1. **Acts 15.2:** “Dissension” to question together.
 2. **Acts 15.2:** “Dispute” to stand. Stand your ground.
 3. **Acts 15.19:** “Trouble” to stir up mob violence.
 4. **Acts 15.24:** “Trouble” to agitate.

II. DISCUSSION

- A. Peter offered examples.
 1. **Acts 15.6-8:** Peter referenced the house of Cornelius.
 2. **Acts 15.9-11:** God never required circumcision.
- B. Paul and Barnabas offered inferences.
 1. **Acts 15.12:** “*miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles.*”
 2. Point inferred: God saved Gentiles without circumcision.
- C. James offered scripture. (Acts 15.13-21)

III. DECISION

- A. The decision was based on example, inference, and scripture. (Acts 15.22-41)
- B. “*It seemed good to us.*” (Acts 15.25,28)

II. DIVISION

- A. There was sharp contention.
 1. **Acts 15.37:** Barnabas was “determined”
 2. **Acts 15.38:** Paul “*insisted*”
- B. Not a matter of doctrine, but opinion.
 1. Mishandling opinion caused division. (Acts 15.39-41)
 2. Handling opinion properly caused unity. (Acts 15.31,32)

CONCLUSION: What did Jesus mean to them? He was the sole source of salvation. (Acts 15.11)

Is the Church the New Israel?

The other day, I was watching a YouTube video of a preacher on stage at a college campus. Someone from the audience asked him if the church was the New Israel. His answer surprised me. He scoffed at the notion and appealed to Romans 9 to show that physical Israel was still God’s people, and ultimately, He will save all Israelites at the end. But when you carefully examine Romans 9, you find a different answer.

First, there is a condition. In the first five verses of Romans 9, Paul wrote how he felt about Israel. He wrote that he had “*great sorrow and continual grief in his heart*” (Rom. 9.2). His feeling for them were so deep that he was willing to be “*accursed from Christ for my brethren*” (Rom. 9.3). This was the biological descendants of Abraham described in the text as Israel “*according to the flesh*” (Rom. 9.3,4). These were the people who had the law, the service of God (priesthood), the promises, and the people through whom Christ came (Rom. 9.4,5). But they rejected Jesus as the Christ, and were thus lost.

Second, there is a certainty. The statement is made in verse 6, “*But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect*” (Rom. 9.6). If you go back through the Old Testament, you will repeatedly find promises made that Israel would be saved. Passages like Isaiah 45.17, Ezekiel 36.24-28; Zechariah 10.12 tell of Israel being saved and restored to God’s favor. The Israelites interpreted these passages to refer to the physical restoration of the Jewish nation. Even the disciples held such expectations (Acts 1.6). Since Israel was lost, many concluded that God failed in His promise. But the promises of God are certain.

Third, there is a clarification. How is it possible that God kept His promise to save Israel when Israel is lost? Paul answers that in the next verse. He writes, “*For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham*” (Rom. 9.6,7). The true children of Israel were not those born of Abraham physically, but those born out of Abraham spiritually. That’s why verse 8 continues to say that “*those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.*”

If not all Israel is Israel, and Israel of the flesh are not the children of God, who is Israel? Who are those who are of the seed of Abraham? Those individuals are later identified in the book of Galatians. Those who are of the seed of Abraham and the true Israel are those who believe and are baptized into Christ (Gal. 3.26-28) If you obeyed the gospel and are in Christ, “*then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise*” (Gal. 3.29).

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