

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”-Psalm 119:105

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“God Wants Me To Be Happy”

Rodney Pitts

One of the greatest deceptions the Devil has used to enslave the hearts of mankind is the idea that “God wants me to be happy.” Now, before you get all upset and brand me as an evildoer and a false teacher, hear me out. When I say this is a deception, I am not saying that God wants His people to be sad. Of course He doesn’t. Jesus, in the parable of the talents, told about those who used their talents faithfully entering “into the joy of your lord” (Matt. 25:21, 23). Paul also spoke of how God will fill us with “all joy and peace in believing” and that we should “rejoice in the Lord always” (Rom. 15:13; Phil. 4:4).

So, why would I say that the idea of “God wants me to be happy” is a lie? The reason is that this statement, for most everyone that uses it, is said in order to try and justify continuing in some particular sin which brings them “happiness” despite what God’s word has to say about it! Take for instance when people are told the truth about God’s will on marriage and divorce. All you have to do is read Matthew 19:9, which states: “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery,” and people who have not followed God’s will in this area are quick to defend their unscriptural marriage with the idea that “God wants me to be happy!” In other words, they are claiming that “God wants me to be happy” even if it means violating His revealed will in order to do it. Where has God ever said that?

Let me clearly say that the idea that God has guaranteed to all believers that their physical circumstances in this life should always “make them happy” is simply false. God has never said this, nor do the examples of the lives of Christians in the New Testament prove it. Consider Peter and John. These men were threatened and “beaten” simply for preaching the truth about Jesus Christ (Acts 4:21; 5:40). Or, consider Stephen. Here is a

young man who stood for the truth and it cost him his life, being stoned to death by a wicked and angry mob (Acts 7:57-60). Or, finally, consider Paul. In 2 Corinthians Paul speaks of being in prison, being beaten five times with thirty-nine stripes, beaten with rods three times, being stoned, shipwrecked, in perils of robbers and the Jews, in weariness, toil, hunger and thirst, all for the cause of Christ (2 Cor. 11:24-28). You can rightfully say that these brethren faced all these miserable situations because they knew for certain that “God wants me to obey,” even if it means that I must be physically miserable or even die! That, my friend, is the truth about what God desires.

In conclusion, let me say that I do not believe that New Testament Christians, even the ones who had to suffer immense pain for the cause of Christ, lived their lives in sorrow and unhappiness. From all indications, these people lived with hope — an outlook of great expectation for the life hereafter. This is seen in the fact that even when suffering at the hands of evil men, Christians like Paul and Silas were able to sing praises to God (Acts 16:25). Peter, whom history tells us died a very horrific death because of his faith, wrote: “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified” (1 Pet. 4:12-14). No, the men and women of the New Testament were not miserable. Their happiness and hope were not dependent upon their physical circumstances. They were laying up their treasures in heaven and not on this earth (Matt. 6:19-20).

Where are you laying up your treasures? If you are defending your present sin by the idea that “God wants me to be happy,” you have chosen to lay up treasures here on this earth. If that be the case, you need to repent, put your faith in God, and live for the life to come.

“Hear me, O Lord, for Your lovingkindness is good; turn to me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies. Do not hide Your face from Your servant.”—Psalm 69:16-17a

Lakeviewchurch of Christ
132 New Shackle Island Road
P.O. Box 514
Hendersonville TN 37077
(615) 824-1376

Bible Call: 824-1310
www.BibleSaints.com

Troy Nicholson
trojenn@bigzoo.net

"This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it"
(Psalm 118:24).