

"I'm Happy"

The Beatitudes



Matthew 5:5

Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth. (NKJV)

Eugene Peterson, in *THE MESSAGE*, translates this beatitude – “You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are—no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.”

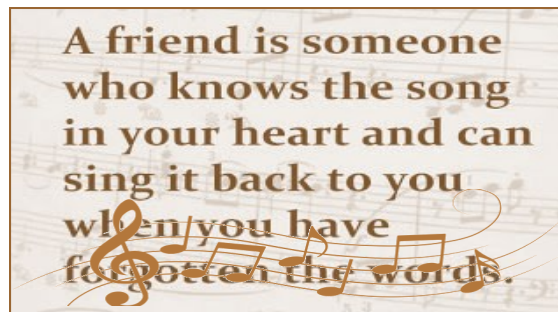
Let’s turn the page and think about that for a few minutes. Sometimes we try to make everyone be like us. Then we realize this would be a terrible world if that were so!!! Are you content with the way you have been made? Or with what you have made of the gifts you were given? We have been given many gifts, some we have never used! Christ gave everybody talents. We have to use them if we are going to be happy.

If we aren’t content with ourselves, why? Only after we realize how much we have been given can we be truly thankful and content. Then we realize that we can’t buy anything to make us

truly happy. We have already been given more than we can comprehend. Many times we think: If I could only be like . . . If I could only have . . . Then I would be happy. But would we?

“When life gives you lemons, make lemonade” has become a very common cliché. Some sources credit it to Dale Carnegie, an American writer who was very positive in his approach. He is best known for his book “How to Win Friends and Influence People.” Another book of his was “How to Stop Worrying and Start Living.” I think Mr. Carnegie was just paraphrasing the beatitude we are studying today. He told people to use the talents they had and they would be happy. A positive attitude is one of the best things we have. I have often heard “You don’t want to ask her how she is; you’ll get an organ recital.” The poor lady must be miserable. If she would be positive, people would be happy to talk with her. No one wants to be around a negative person all the time.

I am sure that all of you, just like me have at times wanted more than you had – whether in money, material, job security, friends, etc. Sometimes the more we have, the more we want. And, sometimes when we get things, we realize that we really don’t want what goes with those “things”!



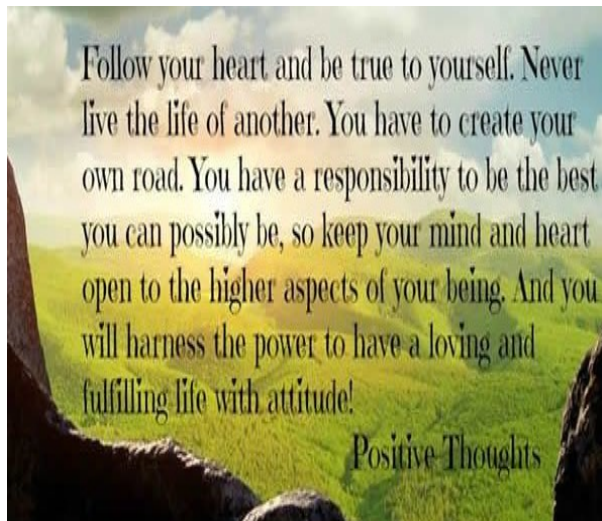
Are the people who have those “things” any happier than we are? Yes, we all need friends. We need a certain amount of goods - “things.” But will more make us happier? We are told in Phil 4:11 “*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*” And again in Hebrews 13:5 “*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*”

Regardless of what we have or what we lose, we will never be forsaken by God. That cannot be bought. So do we have everything? The other day I happened to talk with a woman who is on her second bout with cancer. She was really down, and her husband noticed how upbeat my husband was. I told them he had been fighting cancer for ten years. Her mouth dropped and then she looked away. Her husband continued to ask “How can you people be so upbeat. My wife really gets down.” As we continued to talk I asked them if they had a church family to support them.

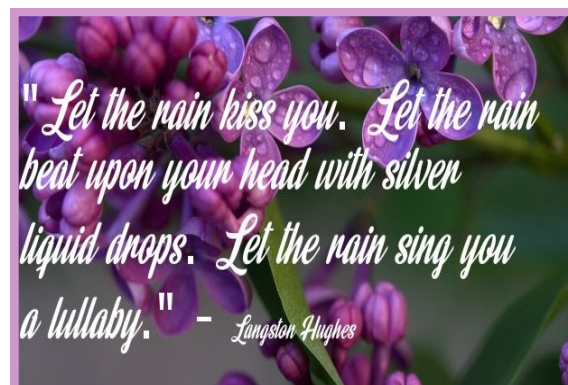
“The positive thinker sees the invisible, feels the intangible, and achieves the impossible.”
Winston Churchill

They told me they never went to church and didn't really see the need for it. Their friends who went to church said they were praying for them, but it didn't seem to be helping. I asked her about her treatment and found that she had been much worse off than she is now. For a while she had a lot of pain and couldn't walk. Now the pain was gone, she was walking and able to eat what she wanted. As I left her after my husband was finished with his blood work, I suggested that they consider going to church. They would find others who had similar situations and others who would truly pray for them. I said "You have a God who loves you and who cares for you, but you need to talk with Him, and He will help you. It may not always be in the way you want, but He is there and He loves you." I hope I made a difference. I'll never know, but that is our obligation to help people realize how much they have.

I must add that my husband had a very strong faith and a great belief in his "Great Physician" and knew he would be perfect again whether here or in Heaven.



Christ faced this attitude in Peter. Peter always wanted more. That can be a very good virtue, but it may also sometimes lead to problems. Peter saw that Christ was walking on the water. He wanted to do it too. Peter said "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." Christ told Him to come. Peter got out of the boat and was walking on the water towards Christ and then the old doubt crept in and he began to sink. Peter had problems similar to this many times, but Christ was always there for him. We can rely on God because He is always there for us too, but we also have to do our part.

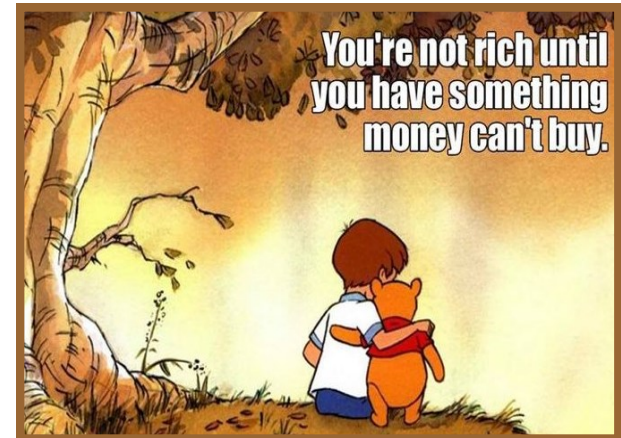


Prayer: Dear Lord, many times we want and we pray for things we don't understand. In Your wisdom You have given us everything we need, and more. Help us to realize that we need to pray for Your will and know that You know best for us today, tomorrow, and always. Amen.

1. Are we supposed to be content with who we are today?
2. How can we learn to be happy where we are today?
3. Is it up to us to make some changes?
4. How can we understand the unimportance of not having all the earthly things?
5. How can we help others to be content with where they are?

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"But the most beautiful things in life are not just things. They're people, and places, memories and pictures. They're feelings and moments and smiles and laughter"