

Twelve Rules For Life

Deep down, happiness is the object we crave most. From the size of the entertainment industry in America, one could conclude that we are in desperate need of happiness. It is the “end all of end alls.”

We try to get happiness through entertainment. We pay someone to make jokes, tell stories, perform dramatic actions, sing songs. We buy the vitality of another’s imagination to divert and enliven our own poor lives. The entertainment industry in America is a sign of the depletion of joy. But that kind of joy never penetrates our lives. The effects are extremely temporary. When we run out of money, the happiness trickles away. Happiness cannot be commanded, purchased or arranged.

You do not need “pop psychology” or a disingenuous, syrupy-sweet attitude to show your satisfaction with life. The following points will produce a true, deep, long-lasting happiness that is built on the word of God:

1. Count your many blessings, not your many troubles (Matthew 6:25-32; James 1:17).
2. Live only one day at a time (Matthew 6:34; James 4:13-15).
3. Learn to say, “I love you” to those near and dear to you (Romans 13:10; Ephesians 5:25, 33).
4. Be a giver and not always a getter (Acts 20:35; Ephesians 4:28).
5. Look for good in everyone (Matthew 7:12; 1 Corinthians 13:7; Ephesians 4:29-32).
6. Pray without ceasing (Luke 18:1-8; 1 Thessalonians 5:17).
7. Do a good deed every day, even for those you do not like (Acts 10:38; Galatians 6:10).
8. Set your priorities on serving the Lord (Matthew 6:33; James 4:14).
9. Fill your life and mind with good thoughts (Philippians 4:8).
10. Laugh and cry with others (Proverbs 17:22; Romans 12:15).
11. Rejoice and be happy in the Lord always (Philippians 4:4).
12. Let Christ rule in your heart through faith (Ephesians 3:17; Philippians 4:13; Colossians 1:27).

Jesus came to give people joy. In Luke 2:10, the angels appeared to the shepherds and told them, “Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people” (cp. John 10:10). Happy people have their roots in Jesus Christ (John 13:17). We are not talking about an escape from sorrow. Pain and hardship still come, but they are unable to drive out the happiness of someone who is redeemed by the blood of the Lamb (1 Peter 1:18-19).

God needs people who are going to live out these principles. True happiness and satisfaction in life are not requirements of being a Christian, they are consequences. Psalm 128:1 says, “Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.”

The intent of gospel preaching is to change people's lives. You can change yours today. If you have yet to submit to Jesus in the obedience of faith, you need to do that today (2 Corinthians 6:2; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9). If you have not allowed him to rule in your heart and have dethroned Him, you need to repent, confess, and pray that you may be forgiven (Acts 8:22).

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