

How to be Happy

By Mike Cocoris

Ron Hafer:

--Listen, I know you're going to enjoy Mike Cocoris as he opens the word of God. Uh, done a lot of evangelism, uh he calls himself an itinerant preacher who has now planted firmly in the downtown area at Church of the Open Door. His people love him, we've enjoyed him before. And I know you're going to enjoy him along with me as he opens God's word. Michael Cocoris, let's greet him warmly shall we?

[Audience applauds]

Mike Cocoris:

A friend of mine who has traveled a great deal around the United States said to me one day, "As I have traveled, I have asked people all over the country, what do you want more than anything else in life?" Now, as you can imagine, he received all kinds of answers. But he said to me, "There is one answer I have received more than any other. It seems to me," he said, "that most people in the United States would settle for just being happy." Would you agree with that? I would. I would say that uh more than wanting to walk on the moon, or be president, or even have a million dollars, most of the people I know would settle for just being happy. The paradox is that while that's what most people want, I think most would say they do not have it. Oh, it's not that they don't make it their goal or strive toward it. It's like the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. They make that their aim. The only problem is when they get to their pot, they discover that it's empty.

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It's like Ponce de Leon looking for a fountain of youth in Florida. They're looking for a fountain of happiness. And when they get there, they discover it's not there. And all they hear are stories about it being around the corner. In the meantime, they simply find stories in sand and swamps. So how do you arrive at that elusive dream called happiness? What would it take for a person to really be as happy as they could possibly be, this side of heaven? If this were a smaller group and we could rap, I think it might be fun to pass out three by five cards and have you write on the card what you think it would take for you to be happy in the next 30 days. Then have you stand and tell us what's written on your card. We can't do that, of course. The group is too big. But what would you jot down on your card? Some of you are smiling. Think she'd say yes?

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

I've come to a conclusion as to what I think is rock bottom. And while I will be quick to confess that there may be other things involved, I would like to share with you what I believe is as critical and crucial to a happy life as anything else I know of. I have practiced for a number of years what I'd like to share with you this morning. I first found it when I was a student in seminary. I had a course from a man named Dr. Unger. And uh, he gave us an assignment to write a commentary on a passage in the Old Testament. I chose the passage, the one we're going to look at in just a moment, to write my commentary on. I did it for two reasons. Number one, it was a psalm and it didn't have a context, so I didn't have to worry about the chapter before or the chapter after. And secondly, it was short. But in the process of grappling with that passage of scripture, I learned something that has marked my life and my ministry. And I'd like to share it with you. Will you turn with me to Psalm one?

Some of you have this passage committed to memory, but I'd like for you to look at it with us again. The Psalmist says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law doth he meditate day and night. He should be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he do, it shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous. But the way of the ungodly shall perish." Many have suggested that this passage is divided naturally into two parts. In the first three verses, the Psalmist talks about the blessed man. In the last three, he talks about an ungodly man. We're only going to have time this morning to look at the first several verses.

But I would like to suggest that those opening verses of this passage tell us how to be happy. Now, you're going to look at that passage and say, "I don't know how you got that out of that passage at all. I didn't see the word happy in that passage one single time! How can you say this passage is talking about happiness?" And the answer is the first word in the first verse. It is translated blessed. Now, there are two different Hebrew words that can be translated blessed. One means, literally, to be blessed, and the other more accurately should be translated happy. And it just so happens that it's the second of those two that's used here. And furthermore, it's written in the Hebrew text in such a way that it should probably be translated something like this, "Oh, how completely happy is the man." This passage is talking about the happy man from God's point of view. What the Psalmist does is rather simple. He first tells us what the happy man does

not do, that's verse one. Then he tells us what the happy man does do, that's verse two. And he concludes this section by giving us an illustration, that's verse three.

So very simply, I'd like for us to look this morning at what the happy man does not do, and what the happy man does do. Let's begin with what he does not do, that's verse one. And that's a full assignment all by itself. Let me begin verse one by summarizing it this way. I think that verse one is saying the happy man rejects something. He rejects what I'm going to call the way of the wicked. He says, "Blessed is the man that does not walk in the council of the ungodly." The happy man does not walk in the advice that he gets from people that do not know the Lord. Or in counsel. It can be translated advice. It was also used of the purpose or the plan for something. So perhaps the implication of this phrase is that the really happy man does not take the purpose or the plan for how to live his life from someone that does not know God. Let me say that he rejects the suggestions, then, for how to live his life, if the source of those suggestions comes from someone who does not know the Lord.

As you have already discovered, the world is full of people who want to tell you what to do and how to live. Some of the advice is good, and some is bad. The suggestion of the Psalmist is that you not only consider the advice itself, but you may ponder the source of the advice as well, that the suggestion may be in and of itself innocent, but if it comes from someone who does not know God, that could ultimately be a problem. The really happy man then is careful who he listens to. He does not take suggestions for how to live his life from someone that doesn't know God in an intimate way. But that's the beginning. There is more. He says in verse two, "Nor does he stand in the way of sinners." The word way simply means path or road, we would probably say today

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freeway, which is another way of saying the really happy man does not go down the road of sin. Well, that's rather interesting, because I think there are young people, particularly students today, who would say that if you really want to be happy, what you have to do is sin a little. I mean, after all, where it's at is popping pills, or getting drunk, having an affair. I mean, that's fun! Now, there is some truth to that. I mean, sin is fun.

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

Oh, it's true. The devil's not stupid! If he made it painful, nobody would do it!

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

Even the Bible recognizes there's fun in sin, it talks about the pleasures of sin. It's just that the Bible recognizes that those pleasures are short lived. He calls them the pleasures of sin for a season. You see, the world says there's kicks! Go out and have kicks! The Bible says, beware, some of those kicks kick back. Now, the really happy man has learned all of that and he has rejected the suggestions and the sin from people who don't know God. There's one other thing in verse three, or verse one we need to note, he says, "Nor does he sit in the seat of the scornful." Now, you say, you're surely not going to suggest that there are scorners in the student body of Biola University! And if there are, they don't come to the Bible conference. Well, there may not be any scorners sitting here this mornin. But, it is potentially possible that every one of us could become a scorner. We could get to the place where we actually would make light of spiritual things. You see, as many have pointed out, there is a progression in this verse. You start out

walking, then you sit, and then--well first you stand, and then you sit. So that you don't start out scorning. You end up scorning.

Sort of like a lady who's uh shopping in the mall. She begins by walking down the mall, minding their own business. And she passes a store and there's a display of shoes in the window and she stops, and she pauses, and she looks at the shoes, and-and she thinks, well, it wouldn't hurt to try them on. And she goes in and she sits down, and a nice, tall, dark, handsome salesman, comes over and says, "Oh, ma'am."

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

"Just made for your foot!" And she buys. She's over at the counter, shelling out her shekels. Now the progression was, she was walking. Then she stopped and she stood, and she saw it and she bought. And that's the progression. You begin by bending your ear a little toward the un-the man that doesn't know God, and if you start to do that, the next thing that might happen, very often does happen, is you start participating in his sin. And if that ever happens, then, you get next to someone that really knows the Lord, their very presence becomes a source of irritation to you. And rather than getting things right, some turn and scorn that which is right. So there might not be any scorers here this morning, but some of us could become scorers. By the way, let me just say in passing, uh, you will never be happy being a scorer. Anyone who has to get his happiness out of making someone else unhappy is a miserable wretch. He is not happy himself. So that is not the path to happiness.

So the Psalmist begins by saying, the really happy man rejects the way of the wicked. He rejects his suggestions. He rejects his sin. He rejects his scorn. And someone is going to say, that's all pretty negative. And I agree, and I am sure that the Psalmist is aware. So what is the positive side? What do you do in order to be happy? That's verse two. He says, "But, his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night." If verse one is telling us that you reject the way of the wicked, verse two is telling us that you receive the way of the word. The real key to this passage is verse two, it is receiving the Word of God. The Psalmist uses two words to describe that. He says, "His delight is in law of the Lord." The Hebrew word is literally his pleasure. Let me ask you a question. Is the Bible your delight? Is it your pleasure? For those of us who know the Lord, the Bible can become a duty instead of a delight. Reading the Bible can become as dull and dry as eating cereal without milk. Is the Bible a drudgery? Or is it a delight?

To the really happy man, the Bible has become a delight. It's like a banana split to a small boy. It's like a cool pool on a hot afternoon to a teenage fella. It is his delight. It is his pleasure. How can you ever get to the place where you delight in the Bible? Some look at the book and say it's ancient history. Everybody knows history is dull stuff. Or worse yet, it's a religious book, and that's as boring as you can get. How can you delight in the word of God? Well, if all you see is a book of history, and if all you see is religious regulations, obviously the Bible will not be a delight. But you see, if you begin to understand what this book is about, you'll delight in it alright. Frankly, I don't think you'll delight in this book unless you know its author. I mean, that's the real key to delighting in some written material. You know who wrote it. You go to the

mailbox and you get this pile of mail, you rip through it. First one's a dud and you file it for the thirteenth. Another is a, you know, trying to get you to buy something, you throw that one aside.

And all of a sudden you get to this letter and you rip into it, and read page one, you read page two, and you read page three, and you go back and read page one, read page two. Now, what's the difference between that piece and that first piece? Simple, you know who wrote that one!

And you can't wait to hear from them! Well, there's a sense in which when you know the Author of this book, you want to delight in it because you want to hear from Him. I think there may be more to it than that. I think your view of the Bible may determine your thirst for it. If all of you view the Bible is, if your view of the Bible is that it's a book of doctrine, or do's and don'ts, that can be dry stuff. It shouldn't be, but it can be. But if you see that what God is really doing is teaching us how to handle life, that just about every kind of a conceivable situation is covered in this book, either by direct statement or by example, or by principle. Then you will begin to delight in the Word of God. It becomes the textbook on how to handle the test of life, and that makes it enjoyable indeed.

But that's only the beginning. The real key is in verse two when he says, "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law, doth he meditate day and night." Receiving the word means delighting in it and meditating in it. Now, what is meditation? Boy, is that a lost art these days. I've heard, I don't know how many, messages on this passage, and I've heard people say this means that you ought to read your Bible. Now, please do not misunderstand me, I believe you ought to read your Bible. But I don't think that's what this passage is talking about. I've heard people talk about this passage and say that you should study your Bible. And again, I think you

ought to study your Bible. But again, I don't think that's what it's talking about. I think the most common suggestion I've heard is that you should memorize the scripture. And obviously, that's a great idea. "Thy word have I hid in my heart" is an excellent piece of advice. But that, I do not think, is what meditation is. As a matter of fact, if you just look at the verse, you'll see. For he says, "In His law doth he meditate day and night."

Now, day and night is a Jewish expression. It refers to all the wakened hours of the day. Their day began at 6:00 in the morning, their night began at 6:00 in the evening. So what the psalmist is saying is you need to meditate in the word of God, and that's something that goes on all day long, all the time that you're awake. So this is not something that you can do sitting in a chair or sitting at a desk. This is something that goes on all day long. It assumes that you've sat and read, or studied, or maybe even memorized. Meditation is that which takes place after you have hid the word. You see, meditation is taking that which you've hid in your heart or in your head, and putting it back in your thinking process and rolling it over, and over, and over, and over, and over in your mind, bombarding it with questions, chewing it, if you will. Constantly thinking about it. Let me illustrate. Um, I did not grow up in a rural area, I grew up in a city. Always lived in rather large places, large cities. So I don't know a great deal about farm life, but I've spoken in some rural churches and I've had farmers explain to me that cows have four stomachs.

As I understand the process, she grazes in the grass and stores it in stomach, number one. Then she lies down under a tree, she takes it out of stomach number one, she puts it back in her mouth, and she gives it this--

[Mike Cocoris makes chewing sound]

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

That's meditation. You see, it assumes that you started in stomach number one and you take it out and you chew it, so that you can digest it bit by bit. That you think about the word of God all the time. Now, the truth of the matter is, the experts tell us that you cannot concentrate on anything more than about seven seconds. As a matter of fact, while I've been speaking this morning, you have been thinking about what happened this morning before the session, or what's going to happen this afternoon--would you quit doing that? You're supposed to be listening to me!

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

Caught you! Right? It's just the natural native function of the human mind to wander. Your mind wanders off to something else, even when you're concentrating, or trying to. Even when you're totally absorbed in what you are studying, your mind wanders off. I call those moments of meditation. Now, if you will tell me what your mind wanders to, I will tell you a great deal of what you are like. What do you think about when your mind wanders off from what you're doing at the moment? I can just imagine some teenage girl thing. "Himmm hahahaha."

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

Well, that's the kind of thing we're talking about! And what the Psalmist is saying, is that when your mind wanders over to the word, that is when you're on your way to a happy life. A moment ago, I asked you, what would you jot down on your three by five card? What would you say it would take to make you happy in the next 30 days? I wonder how many people would have written on that three by five card to meditate in the word of God day and night. I'm going to tell you something, before I found this passage, I never would have said that. Not in a hundred years. You mean to tell me that if I walk around thinking about the Bible, I'm going to be happy? I can just see it now. I mean, you walk around thinking about the Bible? Your mind is stuck up in the clouds? You'll start speaking King James English?

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

I mean, would you please explain to me how thinking about the Bible all day long is going to make a person happy? Frankly, the Psalmist doesn't even bother. He just says that's the way it is. "Blessed is the man," oh how completely happy is the man, "who is meditating in the word of God day and night." That's all he says. Well, how does that work? This passage doesn't tell us, but I believe there are suggestions and hints, clues, tucked away in the rest of the scripture, and I would like to pause for just a moment and suggest at least two of them to you. Jot them down. Look at them later. I'll quote them for the present. The first is Joshua 1:8. That verse says, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth." Interesting. "But thou shalt meditate there in day and night that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein." Now, Joshua 1:8 is talking about meditation, just like Psalm 1:2, only Joshua 1:8 goes one step further than Psalm 1:2. Joshua 1:8 says that if you meditate in the word of God, the purpose of that is that you may

observe to do. That leads me to suggest that meditation of the word of God, when properly done, leads to obedience to the word of God.

Now, that's the reason meditation in the word of God leads to happiness, because meditation produces obedience. You see, what I think very often happens, especially to young Christians, new in the faith, is they hear the word, but they haven't thought about it. They don't really understand it. They go charging out from church, they are confronted with the situation. They- they don't really know what God says about how to handle that situation. And so they succumb to it before they know it, and they have failed to obey God. The key to obedience is meditation. If you are thinking through the word of God, it's concepts, it's principles, then when you are confronted with a situation, you will have already have thought ahead of time what God says about that particular situation, and you will be prepared to do what God says in it. So meditating on the word of God day and night prepares you for obedience to the word of God at any given moment of the day. And that's why the psalmist can say meditation in the word of God leads to a happy life.

Let me put it like this. You've tried it your way. Did it work? My experience is when I did it my way, I might have had fun at the moment, but if it left God out of the situation, it produced conflict in the end. Well, then why not do it His way? Saw a little sign on a Coke machine once that sums up the whole thing. When all else fails, try reading the directions. Now, you've tried it your way, and it didn't work. So why not read the directions? See, a moment ago I said that this isn't just a book of history. It isn't just a book of religious do's and don'ts. This book was written by God to tell us how to handle life! I mean, it's like buying a huge, complicated piece of

machinery and the designer and manufacturer issues an all owner and operator's manual to tell you how to make this thing run smoothly. Well, God has given us an operator's manual. You violate this book and there's gonna be confusion and conflict. And you do what this book says, and there will be harmony and happiness in your life. So the Psalmist can say that meditation in the word of God day and night leads to a happy life for the simple reason that meditation in the word of God leads to an obedient life.

But there's one other little clue tucked away in the Old Testament. Jot down in your note, Psalm 26:3. Again, I'll quote the verse, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee. Because he trusteth in Thee." Now Psalm 26:3 is talking about meditation. "His mind is stayed on Thee." It's just that it goes one step beyond and says, "Because he trust in Thee!" Let me ask you a question, how would you like to have more faith? How many of you would like to have more faith? Raise your hand. Would you like to have more faith? How do you get more faith? Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. You want more faith? You've got to have more word. It is as we read the word, and hear what God has to say, and see how God worked in the past, that we can believe Him for the present and trust Him in the future. And it is as we trust Him that we have the power to do what He said to in His word. It is not just mechanical obedience to the word of God, it is that the word of God tells us what to do, and the Spirit of God tells us--gives us, I should say, the power to do it.

So as I mix obedience with the word, and faith with the Spirit of God, I am able to do what God says because He gives me the power. Oh, hear me this morning. I believe all the way down to my little toe, that the real way to be happy in life is to meditate in this book day and night. I said I've

practiced it for years. I don't mean to imply I've done it perfectly. I've not obeyed the book. I've not trusted the Lord at times. But I'm convinced this is it for the times that I have done it. It's all summed up in a song you've sung many times. "Trust and obey. For there is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey." And what Psalm one is telling us is that the key to faith and the key to obedience is meditation in the word of God day and night. So I would like to suggest this morning, that what it takes to be happy. Is ultimately to meditate on the word of God, day and night. Now, there's just one other question that we can ask. Somebody might just say, "Oh, wonderful. Well, what kind of happiness would that be? I mean, I can just imagine walking around thinking about the Bible all day long. I mean, you'd stick your head so far up in the clouds, you wouldn't be any earthly good! You're liable to trip over something down here. I mean, what would you-what would you be like if you started meditating in the word of God day and night?"

Well, it seems to me that that's what the psalm-the Psalmist tells us in the very next verse. He gives us an illustration in verse three, he says, "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his leaf also shall not wither. And whatsoever he do it shall prosper." Many have suggested that the water in verse three, the river of water, is like the word of God and the believer is the tree. So when the tree is planted next to the river instead of in the desert, this is what happens. In the first place, he's planted. When you meditate in the word of God day and night, you will be stable. For one thing, you'll know what you believe and why. I knew a young man once who was about as stable as Jello. And he latched on to this concept of meditating on the word of God day and night, and he ended up as being as firm as a planted tree beside a river, for the simple reason he knew what he believed and why. So you'll be

stable. He says in verse three, "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season." You'll not only be stable, you'll be fruitful.

By the way, fruit is not that which is produced for the benefit of the tree. Fruit is the excess, produced for the benefit of someone else. So what this passage is saying is that you will be fruitful, meaning you will be worthwhile in someone else's life! You'll have a ministry to them, there'll be excess that you can produce for their benefit. A pastor once told me that he had a youth pastor who came to work with the young people, but all of the older people in the congregation started to go see him for counselling. The pastor got a little nervous, and he-and he said to the youth pastor, "Well, what-what goes on? Why are all these old people coming to see you?" And um, the youth pastor said, "I don't know." He said, "Well, I think what happened was this. A number of years ago, somebody challenged me to read one chapter in Proverbs every day." And that way you read Proverbs through in a month. And he said, "I've done that for years now." And he said, "When I first came, one of the parents came to see me, and I sat, and I listened to what they were saying. And as I listened, a proverb came to mind, and I simply turned to the book of Proverbs, and I I showed him what it said, and it really helped them."

"And they went out and told somebody else, and they came back and I sat and listened, and I thought, what am I going to tell him? And-and-and I thought of a proverb as he was talking. I showed him the proverb, and it helped him. And that's the way it got started." You see, he had meditated in the word of God, now he was being fruitful, worthwhile to someone else. Isn't that what you really want? Isn't that what a lot of young people want? Sure it is. It's to be a value to people, not just be a drain. Well, the Psalmist says the key to that is meditating in the word of

God so you'll have something to minister to people. There's more. He says in verse three, "His leaf also shall not wither." And I had to meditate on that one. What is a leaf in this situation?

Well, it seems to me that leaves are that portion of the tree, which gives it its beauty. Perhaps he is saying that you will be attractive instead of repelling. I mean, after all, look at a tree without its leaves. In the wintertime, all the leaves are gone. Those big bare branches are hanging out. When the full moon comes out, comes up behind it, the thing almost looks spooky.

Well, wait a while. Spring'll come, and out will crop the leaves and some poet will write a poem about a tree. I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree. Now, I bet you he didn't write that in the wintertime. He wrote that in the spring or the fall. Now, a believer who is planted by the river of the word will grow a beautiful crop of leaves, and people will admire his beauty and be attracted to him. Let me put it like this, did you ever meet an old grouch? One quick lesson on how to grow up to be an old grouch, stay as far away from God and His word as you can possibly get, and it's almost assured that you grow up to be an old grouch. But now let me tell you something. Some of the most gorgeous, beautiful women I've ever seen were 80 years old. Their body had wrinkled, but their leaf hadn't withered.

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

I remember speaking once in Pennsylvania, and an elderly woman came hobbling down the aisle, she had to have a walker to move, and she got to standing before me and she said, "Sonny,"

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

"That was tremendous!" And that woman just radiated! You know that old part of a Southern expression, I just felt like reaching out and hugging her neck!

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

The pastor said, "You'd never believe that lady, you-if I told you what she does, you wouldn't believe it. That woman has studied her Bible, meditates in the Word, and every Sunday as hard it is for her to get around, she goes down to the jail and visit the prison." And she just radiated, her leaf hadn't withered. There's one more thing in verse three, it says, "And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." You'll be successful! Now, the problem with that is to say that you'll be successful to an American audience immediately brings to mind money.

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

Obviously, that's not exactly what the Bible is talking about. Our school system teaches people how to make a living. The Bible teaches people how to live. There are men I've met who were successful at making money and miserable failures as being a human being. They were successful businessmen, they were failures at being a father and a husband. Now, if you meditate in the word of God day and night, you may not make a million, but you'll be worth it. And the people who know you will value you, more than if you had a million. You'll prosper in what counts in life. Living, now. What I think the Psalmist is saying, is that if you meditate in the word of God, this is the kind of person you will be like. You will be stable, you will be fruitful,

you will be attractive, and you will be successful. It is not that you will have your head stuck up in the clouds so far you'll be no earthly good. The reality is you will have your head stuck up in the clouds so far that for a change you will be earthly good! And that comes from meditate in the word of God, day and night.

So without fear of embarrassment. I'm going to suggest this morning that the key to a happy life is meditating in the word of God, day and night. If there are any doubts left, let me offer one other bit of proof for my claim. There is a proverb which says, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." What you think about all day long is what you are. Did you ever have a fight with your parents? Don't look so pious.

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

Did you ever have a fight with your roommate? Early in the day, before you left for class, and all day long you thought about it and the more you thought about it, the madder you got.

[Audience laughs]

Mike Cocoris:

And it affected your mood, and after a while, you just snapped at somebody and it affected your words, and it was liable to affect your actions. And when you got back to your parents, or your roommate, and you got in each other's presence, you snapped at each other. You see, your mind is like a plowed field, friend. You plant potatoes and you'll reap potatoes, you plant corn and you'll reap corn, and you plant garbage and you'll reap trash. But don't you see, it works the other

way! Believe it's one verse that says, "If you plant the seed of the word in the soil of the soul, you will reap the fruit of the Spirit." So that if you practice a forgiving spirit, and conflicts may arise but you can practice forgiveness, and then you are free, free indeed! Free to meditate in the word of God all day long. And as you concentrate, and meditate, and obey the word of God by depending upon the Spirit of God, then there will be produced in your life love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control. I say again, the key, the key to a happy life is what you think about all day long.

If I could add anything to this, I would add one other thing, and it is this. I believe there are two points in your day that are most critical. It is when you go to sleep at night, and when you get up in the morning. There are references in the Psalms about meditating on your bed, and I do not think that's an accident. If you go to bed and take the problem with you, you'll find it tough to go to sleep. But if you go to bed, take all those cares and cast them on Him, and then take the concepts of His word, you can fall off to sleep in peace. And that's what I recommend you do. And when you get up in the morning, make sure that the first thing you do is talk to Him, and think about Him, and His word. Perhaps those are the two critical points. And then throughout the day, you can think about the word of God. I read a story once of a young man who, I'm sorry, an older man, who owned a rather large ranch out west, and he had two sons. There was not much water around. They lived in a rather dried, desolate part of the West. There were no large bodies of water around, to be sure.

But when both of his sons graduated from high school, they immediately joined the Navy. And he always wondered how two boys could grow up in the West, in flat country, with no large

bodies of water around, and join the Navy. One day the man's brother came by, who was a psychologist, and they got to talking about this, and the psychologist said, "Show me their bedroom." They went up and looked. Both the boys shared a room. Then the brother said, "Lay down like you're going to bed. Now get up. Now, what is the last thing you would see if you fell off to sleep, and what is the first thing that you would see when you got up in the morning?" The father said, "Why, it's simple. It's that picture on the wall." Which was the picture of the sea, and the ship. You see, my friend, if you think about the sea, you will become a sailor. Think about that. Let's pray.

Our Father, we thank You first and foremost for Your Son. We thank You that You have saved us from sin, and brought us to Yourself. Father we confess that Your thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Your ways are higher than our ways. So we pray that You would teach us to think like You do, to think Your thoughts after You, so that our ways will be affected. Father teach us to meditate in Your word so that we can have our minds renewed, and thereby our lives transformed. I pray that You will speak to people listening to me this morning, that as a result of this session, some in this room will begin a life meditating in Your word day and night. In Christ's name, and for His sake, I ask Him. Amen.