

What Price Will You Pay for Happiness?

I believe there are millions of unhappy people in the world for a multitude of different reasons. However, this paper is for Christians. What does a Christian do if they are unhappy with their life?

This is an important question and must be handled very carefully because anything that a person does will affect other people around them.

Sometimes we can fix a happiness problem without hurting someone else. For example:

- If it is a job—change jobs. Now sometimes this can have a financial impact on other people and that needs to be considered.
- If it is friends—change friends. At first, they may not understand, but some “friends” need to be “unfriended” if they are negative influences.
- If it is location—move. Again, this can have an impact on other people that needs to be considered.
- If it is being in a rut—take a vacation. Sometimes it helps to just get away for a little while and get perspective.

The examples above are changes that hopefully can be made without hurting anyone else.

Sometimes we cannot fix a happiness problem without hurting someone else. For example:

- If it is a marriage--tread very carefully because this personally affects other people. I would recommend making a list of the reasons why the marriage is unhappy:
 - Is the spouse verbally or physically abusive?
 - Is the spouse an alcoholic or a drug addict?
 - Does the spouse refuse to work to support the family?
 - Does the spouse commit adultery?
 - Is the spouse involved in criminal activity?
 - Is the spouse hurting the children?
 - Does the spouse force immorality on the family?

These examples are serious and involve the spouse breaking the marriage vows and physically endangering the family. Getting out of the situation is crucial but it is not the purpose of this paper to discuss how.

If all the answers to the questions above were no, then I have to wonder whether the problem is really the spouse. What kind of reasons are on the list? How important are they? What price will others have to pay if the marriage ends? If leaving the marriage is the only solution to unhappiness—beware!

Here is a sample list of the price others will pay if the marriage ends:

- The spouse is going to be heartbroken and unless the marriage ends because of fornication, that spouse was just sentenced to a life of loneliness and abstinence. The damage to their self-esteem will be significant because they will always wonder why they were not worthy of love.
- The children will be heartbroken. They will wonder why their parents do not live together anymore or love each other anymore. They will wonder if it was their fault. They will not understand why they are carted back and forth between different houses. They will not be raised in a safe godly home by one mother and one father in the nurture and admonition of the Lord as God intended. Statistics show they will be more likely to divorce as adults and never become faithful Christians.
- Friends and family will be heartbroken to see another marriage fail.

Sometimes the price for personal happiness is too high. Many in the world will do anything to make themselves happy regardless of who it hurts but as Christians, we should not be selfish. We should not sacrifice others around us for our own happiness. That would be hard to live with. Can a person really be happy knowing they broke up a family?

If a Christian is living in a situation they cannot get out of (like my friend Lucinda who is in prison for 40 years) or should not get out of (like a marriage with children), then make the most of it. Enjoy the little moments. Enjoy the little things. Enjoy watching the children grow and flourish. People make their own happiness. A person can blame others for not being happy but that may be an excuse. As I have gotten older, I have realized that true happiness is not something tangible that I can pursue. It is a mindset. True happiness will only be found in true Christianity. I can feel content with who I am and know I am going to Heaven when I die— regardless of what happens in this life. How much happier can I get than that? *Happiness is a byproduct of righteousness.*