

## SOME THINGS THAT MADE ADAM AND EVE HAPPY

### Introduction

- A. Text: **Gen. 2:8,9**.
- B. The Declaration of Independence affirms that among the “unalienable rights” with which we are endowed by our Creator are “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” The pursuit of happiness is a business Americans take very seriously!
- C. But what are the components of happiness — what does it require?
- D. In **Gen. 2:8-25**, the Bible describes an environment where, for a time, there was perfect happiness — and the various aspects of that environment ought to be of more than passing interest to us.
- E. Consider some things present in the Garden of Eden that were very important to the happiness of Adam and Eve — but are more or less neglected in our modern pursuit of happiness.

### I. FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

- A. God is a “plural” being within Himself. We can think of God only in terms of *relationship* and *fellowship*. Cf. **Gen. 1:26**; **Jn. 1:1,2**.
- B. God intended the prime ingredient of Adam and Eve’s happiness to be their fellowship with Him.
  - 1. What must it have been like to walk and talk with God!
  - 2. Cf. **Gen. 3:8**.
- C. Though sin has destroyed the direct fellowship with God that Adam and Eve had, the fellowship with God that is possible through the gospel is still the prime ingredient in human happiness - **1 Jn. 1:1-4**.
- D. Yet even Christians often think of “religion” and “the pursuit of happiness” as two different things.
  - 1. We may even think of religion as *detracting* from our happiness.
  - 2. We hurry through activities that relate to God so we can get on to the things we really want to do.
- E. But when we are “walking with God” (cf. **Gen. 5:24**) . . . *it doesn’t get any better than this*.

### II. FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER HUMAN BEINGS

- A. God saw that it was “not good that man should be alone” (**Gen. 2:18**) — and today we still need fellowship with others of our kind.
- B. This fellowship relates to marriage, but is not limited to it.
- C. Forces of modern life push us into contact with more and more people — but pull us away from significant relationships with any of them!
- D. Most of us would agree that people are more important than things — but does our pursuit of happiness show that we really believe that?
- E. Too often, we pursue happiness at the *expense* of our relationships.
- F. It is a rare person who, on his deathbed, does not wish he had spent more time working on quality relationships with other people, and less time working on money, things, etc.

### III. CONTACT WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF GOD'S CREATION

- A. In an *urban* culture, most of us have less and less contact with nature.
- B. But we need contact with nature — with the earth, the wind, the water; with animals and plants; with the weather; with soil — things God created, rather than manmade things! Cf. **Psa. 111:2**.
- C. There is a primal joy that comes from being in touch with the environment that God made — it is a source of healing and strength, and we neglect it at our own peril. Cf. *This Is My Father's World*.

### IV. WORK

- A. Work does not interfere with happiness — it is a vital part of it! Work itself was not a punishment for sin — work was in the Garden of Eden before sin - **Gen. 2:15**.
- B. "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (**Ac. 20:35**) expresses a basic principle of our nature as beings created in God's image — we were meant to be happy as giving, productive beings.
- C. There are two basic classes of people in the world: *hosts* (producers) and *guests* (consumers) — and it is the hosts who are happiest!
- D. The ability to work effectively and make a productive contribution is a major component of "self-esteem." (Parents who try to build a "positive self-image" in their children by constant praise without teaching them the meaning of work are defeating their goal.)
- E. "The sleep of a laboring man sweet" (**Ecc. 5:12**). Cf. **2:24**.

### V. GOD'S LAW

- A. "Governance" is as essential in the moral realm as it is in the physical - **Jer. 10:23**.
- B. Contrary to popular philosophy, words like *discipline*, *control*, and *boundaries* are not bad words.
- C. Powerful forces must be harnessed and directed — the fire must be kept in the boiler!
- D. *God's law is good* — it is a vital part of what makes our highest happiness possible - **Psa. 19:7-14**.

### Conclusion

- A. What do we think it would take to make us completely happy? (Admittedly, happiness is not our first priority, but in its proper place, what would true happiness in this world require?)
- B. Too often we answer that question in terms of things that were totally absent from Eden, the only environment in history where there was perfect happiness.
- C. Amazing as it seems, there was no money, no mall, and no MasterCard!
- D. It begins to look as if the more important something really is to our happiness the less time we devote to it! Do we spend 98% of our time on things that are 2% important to our happiness?
- E. What are we teaching our children — not by our *words*, but by our *actions* — about where happiness comes from?
- F. *How do we spend our time?*