

Ouachita Baptist University

## Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

---

Vaught Sermon Notes: Ephesians

W.O. Vaught Archive

---

4-7-1977

### The Only One Way to Arrive at Permanent Happiness

W. O. Vaught

*Ouachita Baptist University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn\\_ephesians](https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_ephesians)



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), and the [Liturgy and Worship Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Vaught, W. O., "The Only One Way to Arrive at Permanent Happiness" (1977). *Vaught Sermon Notes: Ephesians*. 60.

[https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn\\_ephesians/60](https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_ephesians/60)

This Sermon Notes is brought to you for free and open access by the W.O. Vaught Archive at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Vaught Sermon Notes: Ephesians by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact [mortensona@obu.edu](mailto:mortensona@obu.edu).

## THE ONLY ONE WAY TO ARRIVE AT PERMANENT HAPPINESS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS  
NUMBER 75  
EPHESIANS 6:14

Dr. W. O. Vaught, Jr.  
Immanuel Baptist Church  
Little Rock, Arkansas

EPHESIANS 6:14 "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;"

Tonight we will conclude the study of this amazing verse. This is one of the greatest statements ever put into language. Paul was reared in Tarsus and from his earliest youth, he saw Roman soldiers. Often as a youth, he would see the soldiers march by and he would admire their dress and equipment. Many years later when he was a prisoner in Rome, a Roman soldier guarded him all the time. As Paul wrote this passage, we have before us for study, he would look up and see the Roman soldier standing there. With Paul's great imagination, he would quickly think of the analogy between the soldier's equipment and the Christian soldier's equipment. Paul would see the colorful plume, the ornate breastplate, the interesting belt to which was attached the soldier's equipment. He would see the short Roman skirt and the scarlet tunic and the two-edged sword. Last week we studied the breastplate, and we saw how this refers to the edification structure within the soul. But before we leave this breastplate, there is one more phase of the Christian's equipment we want to examine. Before we move on to the study of the feet and the equipment for the feet, "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," we want to amplify the meaning of the Relaxed Mental Attitude which always results in Inner Happiness and a Mastery Of The Details Of Life. Therefore, before we move on we want to study the doctrine of happiness.

### THE AMAZING DOCTRINE OF HAPPINESS

A relaxed mental attitude and inner happiness and a mastery of the details of life all run together, and one leads to the other. They go together like a horse and carriage and like love and marriage. Now this message has a universal appeal for every normal person in the world wants to be happy. Isn't it amazing to see how much of our daily activity centers around our desire for happiness? God's whole objective in eternity past as he thought about us was this--HE WANTS ALL OF HIS HUMAN CREATURES TO BE HAPPY, TO BE PERFECTLY HAPPY, ALL THE TIME. Even when death comes or disappointment comes or catastrophe comes he wants us to have that overcoming inner victory within. Now isn't it amazing how many people there are who believe you can't be happy at church? They come to church and wear a sad, holy, pious look and park all their happiness outside until they are done with worship in the church.

#### Unbelievers Often Appear To Be Happy

It may be that you have observed that quite often unbelievers appear to be happy. In fact, they will tell you they are happy. But if you keep observing them, you will soon discover that their happiness is short-lived and superficial. No one can long be happy apart from an experience of salvation through Jesus Christ, and apart from a growing knowledge of the Word of God. The happiness of the unbeliever is fleeting and transient.

I. GOD IS NOT ONLY PERFECT BUT POSSESSES PERFECT HAPPINESS.

This is happiness as it is related to the character of God. God has always maintained his own perfect happiness. Now that may come as a shock to you, but God has seen a lot of miserable things. God saw the failure of Adam and Eve in the Garden, he saw the murder of Abel, he saw the wickedness of the human race and the awful destruction at the flood. He has seen every war and the horrible slaughter of war. None of these things has ever been hidden from the eye of God. You would think that because of all this, God would have been dissolutioned by now. But remember, in spite of all these horrible things, God has a perfect character and a perfect happiness to go with this perfect character. God has been happy for millions of years, and he isn't unhappy now. (When you read in the Bible about God being displeased or angry these are anthropomorphisms, putting into human terms these attitudes, so we can understand what is going on in the mind of God.) God is perfectly satisfied with his plan of grace, and all true happiness is the fruit of his grace.

II. HAPPINESS IS RELATED TO GOD'S PLAN.

In eternity past God desired to share his happiness with every member of the human race. But this is only possible through salvation and the daily appropriation of the assets God has available for every believer.

NEHEMIAH 8:10 "Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

In eternity past, God came up with a plan that would make it possible for him to share his happiness with you and still be true to his own character. Grace found a way, and grace starts at the cross. So this happiness starts with God and is a gift from God. God had to have a plan so he could provide this happiness for all his children. We can't manufacture that happiness ourselves, it comes from the plan of God. Our human volition is involved here, and happiness must flow in through our human volition, but once it arrives, it is a grace gift from God. Happiness is possible only through the plan of God.

III. ALL TRUE HAPPINESS IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE PRINCIPLE OF GRACE.

In eternity past, God found a way, by grace, to share his happiness with believers in time. That's why salvation is by grace. Happiness comes through Bible doctrine and has to be learned.

1 JOHN 1:4 "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

The word for divine happiness is "joy."

IV. THIS HAPPINESS IS CONFINED TO THE PLAN OF GOD.

Man enters this plan through faith in Jesus Christ.

JOHN 20:31 "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

ACTS 16:31 "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

Being saved means this happiness is potential, not necessarily a reality. Believing in Jesus Christ does not bring instant and permanent happiness. Being saved does not bring automatic happiness. I don't want to mislead you at this point. Happiness is only potential when you become a Christian. Don't for once think that all you have to do to become happy is to go and "get saved." Some people think that if they get saved they can walk out of the church and be happy forever. That is not true. Believing in Christ gives you eternal life. Believing in Christ enters you into the plan of God. Believing in Christ makes you a child of God forever. But some of the most miserable people in the world are believers and also some of the happiest people in the world are believers. But don't ever get the false conception that faith in Christ guarantees automatic happiness. It's potential, but not necessarily a reality. Perfect happiness only becomes a reality in the mind of the Christian when he lives by grace every day, wears the breastplate of righteousness, which is the edification complex in the soul. You have to know Bible doctrine and live by it in order to be happy.

1 JOHN 1:4 "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

V. THERE IS SUCH A THING AS ULTIMATE HAPPINESS.

Ultimate happiness is found when you live on that top floor of the edification complex of the soul.

JOHN 17:17 "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth  
Ultimate happiness comes through the sanctification of the truth in you.

VI. HUMAN HAPPINESS EXISTS IN THE HUMAN RACE.

Many times unbelievers are very happy. For just a moment suppose all believers were happy. Well, right off you can see that lots of them would get converted just so they could be happy. But that is an unworthy motive for salvation. Salvation would then turn into a selfish thing. But a lot of unbelievers are very happy. For one thing, they are not deeply involved in the angelic conflict and there isn't any battle actually going on in their lives. They just let nature take its course and are comparatively happy.

Now what is the reality of this situation? Without any thought of Christ and his cross, these unbelievers are happy some of the time, but it is a relative happiness. Then some unbelievers are miserable all the time and are never happy. Those unbelievers who are happy live relaxed many times, are happy-go-lucky kind of people, and don't let anything worry them.

Now, for a moment, look on the other hand at the believers. Some of them are happy and some are unhappy. So we have to conclude that salvation is not the major factor in happiness or unhappiness.



A false approach.

So much of Christianity presents its message in this way--  
 "Now, dear brother, if you want to be happy, you accept Christ as Saviour. Just join the church and read the Bible and pray every day and witness every day and you will be happy." The only trouble with that Madison Avenue kind of approach is--  
 "IT AIN'T SO!" Accepting Christ in order to be happy is a false issue. Happiness doesn't come that way.

So remember this--in the Devil's world, there is such a thing as human happiness. But it isn't permanent, and often it is built on circumstances and superficial things.

Quite often money and achievement and success will bring temporary happiness, but it is never permanent. Now there is nothing wrong in success and achievement, but remember, they do not bring permanent happiness. But if you build the inner fortification in your soul and daily breathe in the Word of God, then you can be happy and nothing can take that happiness from you.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this point then is this--Christians are happy or unhappy and unbelievers are happy or unhappy. But permanent and abiding happiness can only be found in the Christian way of life. The happiness of the unbeliever is always a pseudo-happiness, superficial and deceptive.

VII. GOD HAS DESIGNED A HAPPINESS FOR THE BELIEVER WHICH IS PERMANENT AND SATISFYING.

This only comes through living out Bible doctrine.

JOHN 17:13 "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

JOHN 17:17 "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

Learn doctrine and with every little bit of knowledge your capacity for happiness will increase. This is the happiness that will sustain you in the most difficult circumstances.

1 JOHN 1:4 "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

VIII. GOD ALWAYS PROVIDES HAPPINESS ABUNDANTLY.

The noun in Hebrew is "ashere" and the noun in Greek is "makarioin" and both are plural and should be translated "Happinesses." The reason for this is that God always gives more than we can expect or ask for. Our resources for happiness as Christians are inexhaustible. This is true for two reasons--

1st--because we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

GALATIANS 5:22 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,"

2nd--Because doctrine edifies the soul.

JOHN 17:13 "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

The plural is used to let us know that for the Christian there are far more than one source of happiness in the Christian life.  
THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT PLUS DOCTRINE EQUALS HAPPINESS.

IX. THE MAIL ORDER HOUSE WHERE THIS HAPPINESS IS AVAILABLE IS THE BIBLE.

JAMES 1:25 "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

JEREMIAH 15:16 "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."

MATTHEW 4:4 "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

The supply never runs out. Order some today.

X. THIS HAPPINESS PROTECTS FROM DISSOLUTIONMENT.

When the Christian puts on the breastplate of righteousness, then he can safely move through the Devil's world and will never get thrown off the track.

a. Circumstances can't take happiness from you.

PHILIPPIANS 4:11-12 "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

b. Details of life can't take happiness from you.

HEBREWS 13:5-6 "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. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

c. Other believers' failure can't dissolution you.

HEBREWS 12:2 "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

XI. INNER HAPPINESS ENHANCES YOUR CAPACITY FOR LOVE.

This is love toward God, love toward your partner, and love toward others. This love applies in all three categories.

Love helps you to relax and be free from suspicion.

Song of Solomon 3:1 "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not."

Solomon 4:6 "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense."

Solomon 8:6 "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame."

XII. INNER HAPPINESS IS COMMANDED BY GOD.

God commands the believer to be happy.

PHILIPPIANS 4:4 "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice."

In order to obey these commands, you must live by grace.  
JEREMIAH 15:16 "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."

JOHN 13:17 "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

1 JOHN 1:4 "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

Our next study shows us what Christians must wear on their feet.