

## IT MADE HER HAPPY

I stopped into the grocery store on Monday morning after dropping my daughter off at school in order to get a few items we were out of. One item I needed was a certain brand of cereal and I was hoping that it was on sale otherwise I would be heading up to Walmart at some point during the week to get it there. Thankfully it was on sale and even though it was 16 cents more than what it would have been at Walmart I didn't mind because I was saving on my time and gas by not having to go up there.

While I was grabbing two boxes of the cereal from the shelf another customer came up from behind and shared with me how happy she was that it was on sale this week. It was easy to understand why she was excited considering how much prices have risen at the grocery store during these past few years. It was nice to see somebody happy in the grocery store for once instead of frustrated by the rising prices.

On the car ride home, I began thinking about how her happiness will only be temporary as opposed to lasting. By the time I got home and unpacked my groceries I found God leading me to open my Bible and search for references about experiencing a lasting joy and happiness. The first passage God led me to was these words found in Psalm 119:35:

**Make me walk along the path of your commands, for that is where my happiness is found.**

It might seem strange to some people reading this that true happiness can be found in following God's ways. Some people believe God's commands are meant to limit and restrict us, but the psalmist understood how the **Lord's ways free us in order to experience His best for us**. After examining this passage, I found my fingers turning pages toward the New Testament and stopped on the Beatitudes Jesus taught about in His Sermon on the Mount. Depending on which version of the Bible we might be reading from, each beatitude will start off with:

**Blessed are those, or Happy are those.**

Each beatitude that Jesus speaks about shows us how we can be truly happy and experience joy regardless of outward circumstances occurring in our

lives. It becomes evident after reading the beatitudes that ***the key to experiencing a lasting happiness is following Jesus in our lives no matter what.*** Just when I thought my journey on examining the key to having enduring happiness was about to conclude I found God place a hymn on my heart. We may be familiar with the hymn "Happiness is the Lord." In the first verse and refrain we discover this truth about having a lasting and enduring happiness:

**Happiness is to know the Saviour, living a life with His favour, having a change in my behaviour, happiness is the Lord.**

**Real joy is mine, no matter if teardrops start. I've found a secret, it's Jesus in my heart.**

As we discover from this journey I was taken on Monday morning, whether we look at passages from either the Old or New Testament, or remember hymns like this one, the key to maintaining a lasting and enduring sense of joy and happiness comes from having a relationship with Jesus and living our life for Him. It is so important for us to be reminded of this truth because there are so many outward circumstances in life that are beyond our control that can rob us of joy or happiness. We will find ourselves on an emotional roller coaster if we are relying on external circumstances such as finding cereal on sale in order to provide us with some happiness. Jesus offers us the opportunity to have a lasting and enduring level of happiness regardless of life's circumstances. Let's make sure we have given ourselves this gift of real joy by having Jesus in our heart.

At one time we used to get excited by finding the toy or surprise in a cereal box. Now we get excited by finding cereal on sale. Things change over time. Let's make sure what does not change is having real joy in our hearts.

**Keep safe and God bless,**

**Pastor Dean**