



Thank you for downloading the  
**CQ Rewind - Summary Only Version!**

Each week, the **Summary Only** version provides you with approximately four pages of brief excerpts from the program, along with Scripture citations.

If you would like to receive the **CQ Rewind FULL EDITION** at no charge, simply sign up at [www.ChristianQuestions.com](http://www.ChristianQuestions.com).

The **FULL EDITION** of approximately 10-12 pages includes comprehensive excerpts from the program, fully quoted Scriptures, graphics, illustrations, and even extra study points that time prevented us from covering during the live program.



## Why Can’t I Just Be Happy?

**Philippians 4:12:** (NASB) *I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.*



You want to be happy. I want to be happy. Everyone wants to be happy, I mean, who would not want to be happy? The Declaration of Independence of The United States of America talks about “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” as being unalienable rights of humanity. What can we conclude from all of this? Happiness is a central objective and desire that belongs to all. Having said that, why are we not happy? Why are so many of us frustrated, disappointed and anxious about our lives? Why do we overeat, binge, eat chocolate, shop or do any number of other things to hide from our lack of happiness? Why can we not just be happy? Why can we not stop comparing, stop wishing, stop regretting, stop rationalizing and just start living today for the glory of it being our present? There is hope, because happiness is attainable! We just need to know where and how to look for it and how to recognize it when we see it.

The whole idea of “Why can’t I just be happy?” needs rebooting, because happiness is often elusive and is therefore a long-term objective for most of us. That being the case, let’s reframe our approach to happiness this way: “How can I learn to continually grow into a happy, God-honoring life?” According to the Merriam-Webster definition, happiness can be characterized by well-being and contentment. As we search for long-term happiness, we are sure to find contentment.

### Defining happiness, *How to be Happy, The Science of Happiness*

For our conversation, let’s label “happy” as a state of mind and “content” as a state of being.

**Our theme text tells us that there is something hidden:** Philippians 4:12: (NASB) *I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned **the secret** of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. **Secret:** Greek English Lexicon - “initiate into the mysteries”*

According to the Apostle Paul, there is something to the idea of coping when we have a lot or have almost nothing. There is a secret, an understanding, for the life we want.

**Happiness Observation:** Managing physical or emotional changes in life is a learned behavior.

**This reminds us of:** Hebrews 4:11: (KJV) *Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest...* You have to work at resting - it does not come naturally, just like happiness.

Some background on happiness in the Scriptures:

**Happiness:** Strong’s #835 how happy/happiness, blessedness

“Blessedness” helps us to reframe happiness. We can be happy from a human perspective or blessed from a godly perspective. The godly perspective is the scriptural definition of being happy.

**Happiness:** Strong’s #833 to be straight (used in the widest sense, especially to be level, right, happy); figuratively, to go forward, be honest, prosper

So, the primary Old Testament word for *happy* <Strong’s #835> comes from a word <Strong’s #833> that has to do with being level, moving forward and progressing. This being the case, we could say that from an Old Testament perspective, to be truly “happy” and “blessed” is to be in a position where progress is attainable. Being level means you are on ground that allows you to move forward.

### First reason - adaptation, *Three Science-Backed Reasons You Should Quit Complaining, TheMeetologyLab*

**Happiness Text:** Trusting in the Lord brings happiness - and happiness is a pathway to progress: Proverbs 16:18-20: (NASB) *<sup>18</sup>Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling. <sup>19</sup>It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud. <sup>20</sup>He who gives attention to the word will find good, and **blessed <835>** (happy) is he who trusts in the LORD.*



Trusting in the Lord brings happiness, not having lots of "stuff." [Philippians 2:14](#): Acknowledge the beginning of the process - prayer and appreciating the little things of life. This is a basis for us to find happiness, what it is and how it works.

**Happiness Observation:** Heartfelt personal anxiety must be countered by contentment for happiness to be given a place to live in our hearts.

We are connecting heartfelt personal anxiety with our ability to be happy. We acknowledge we all have anxiety. Somehow to be happy, it must be countered with contentment.

))) **The declaration, *The Pursuit of Happiness, Movie Quote (2006)***

True happiness NEEDS contentment to flourish! Jesus knew this and showed us what the road to contentment and happiness looks like: [Luke 12:22-32](#): Our human life and body must be seen in light of the kingdom. If we are followers of Jesus, then our life and body are bent towards his footsteps.

))) **Increasing happiness, *How to be Happy, The Science of Happiness***

The birds and the animals go about their instinctive business and are provided for as a result! Our contentment will instinctively flourish when we are about our business of following Jesus. We are small in the big picture of God's plan. Our contentment comes in acknowledging that God does watch over and care for our lives. God's creation of the flowers that simply grow because they are planted are stunning evidences of God's care for His creation. Our contentment can take root in this beautiful example of God's care for detail. We, as the called ones of Jesus, are different and our contentment depends upon our being reminded of this important, basic and life-changing fact. Our Father knows we need certain things, and He also knows there are a lot of things we want. He also knows there are a lot of things we might want but should not have.

))) **Second reason - emotions spread, *Three Science-Backed Reasons You Should Quit Complaining, TheMeetologyLab***

Our contentment is a result of our focus and our application of that focus. Once we set our lives in order, we can begin to truly develop deep and abiding happiness. This does not come just because you say, "I want to be happy."

**Happiness Observation:** Contentment is the DRIVING FORCE that gives happiness deep roots.

))) **Killing happiness and adversity, *How to be Happy, The Science of Happiness***

Here is the scriptural combination that builds contentment: [1 Timothy 6:6-9](#): (NASB) *But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment <841>*.

**Contentment:** Strongs #841 self-satisfaction, i.e. (abstractly) contentedness, or (concretely) a competence

*Great gain* - means "splendid acquisition." Godliness can bring us splendid acquisition when it is accompanied by spiritual competence. This would imply some level of maturity.

**The following Scriptures dictate a way to measure that maturity:** *Those who want to get rich* - This grand comparison flushes out our truest desires and shows us our level of spiritual maturity. This is completely opposite of the "Prosperity Gospel."


**Content:** Strongs #714 properly, to ward off, i.e. (by implication) to avail (figuratively, be satisfactory)

So, contentment in these verses is a (spiritual) competence that "wards off" fleshly desire. Contentment therefore is not just sitting back and absorbing the trials of life; rather, it is the strength of spiritual choice and action to choose to accept our circumstances for the sake of Christ.

**A listener asks:** How does contentment work when you have inherited anxiety? Some people are just wired anxiously. How can you be content if you are naturally on edge? Looking at the [Luke 12](#) verses and [1 Timothy 6](#) verses we have looked at so far - contentment is "spiritual competence." To be competent at your job, you have to practice and train. This applies to our spiritual work as well. We have to be able to do what we need to do - through fellowship,



study, prayer and standing up for what we believe in. These things all create spiritual competence. Godliness with spiritual competence is great gain.

 **Third reason - illness comes, Three Science-Backed Reasons You Should Quit Complaining, TheMeatologyLab**

**Regarding the Apostle Paul's "thorn in the flesh" he wanted removed:**

2 Corinthians 12:9-10: (NASB) <sup>9</sup>And he has said to me, my grace is **sufficient <714>** for you, for power is perfected in weakness. ...<sup>10</sup>Therefore **I am well content <2106>** with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. We believe this deficiency was his eyesight. We can parallel this with inherited anxiety. Jesus said, *my grace is sufficient for you*. The word for *sufficient* here is the same word for *content* in 1 Timothy 6:8. His grace can ward off any lack in your life. That is one of the ways we take our inherited anxiety and put it in the hands of God.

**I am well content:** Strongs #2106 to think well of, i.e. approve (an act); specially, to approbate (a person or thing)

Paul could "think well of" his weaknesses, because when he was weak in the flesh, he could still be content. This was spiritual maturity and spiritual competence in action. Again, contentment is a spiritual competence that wards off fleshly desire, and now we see it brings us a powerful acceptance of higher standards to deal with our many issues in life.

**Where else can we find examples of this "well content" powerful acceptance?** Matthew 3:16-17: ...*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased <2106>*. We have the same word used again - God showed us how well pleased He was in His son. And the Apostle Paul used the same word to describe how well content he was with weaknesses, insults and distresses. These examples both show spiritual confidence.

**This gives us insight into what it means to be godly, but God is pleased with more than just Jesus:** Luke 12:32: (NASB) *Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly <2106> to give you the kingdom*. God looks at our attempts to follow Jesus and says, "Yes, I am happy to give you the kingdom." The same happiness God has in His son is the same acceptance and approving He has in giving us the kingdom. We need to allow the grace of Jesus to ward off those things in our lives that prevent us from being spiritually content.

**Happiness Observation:** Wanting and comparing seriously challenge spiritual contentment and must therefore be understood and dealt with appropriately. Only then can happiness grow.

Comparing our lives to others seriously challenges our contentment! "I wish my child was more like yours." "I wish my wife did that for me like yours does." All this brings is more anxiety and a reason to challenge the good things in our lives.


The five points in this segment are from the sermon "Learning Contentment," by Pastor Rick Warren (YouTube). What are the results of always wanting more?

1. **More fatigue.** The race to get more makes us work too hard. Do we not get tired in the effort to always try to get more? Proverbs 23:4-5
2. **More expenses.** "If the grass is greener on the other side of the fence, so is the water bill. Somebody had to pay for that green." It costs more to have more! When having more becomes your life's obsession, are you content? Ecclesiastes 5:10-11
3. **More anxiety.** The more you have, the more you have to worry about. "I never ever worry about my yacht getting barnacles. Why? Because I don't own a yacht!" Ecclesiastes 5:12
4. **More conflict.** Fatigue + Expenses + Anxiety = Conflict 1 Timothy 6:9

 **Gratitude and happiness, How to be Happy, The Science of Happiness**

5. **More dissatisfaction.** I think having more will make me more happy, more secure, more important, more loved. None of that is true. 1 Timothy 6:10


**Happiness Observation:** The happiness we strive for is a profound and deep state of mind.

 **The wisdom of Dory, Just Keep Swimming, Finding Nemo, Movie (2003)**

When life has you down, keep moving forward! If you stay still, anxiety grows. If we continue to move, contentment can begin to find us.



Managing the inconsistencies of our *interpretation* of life IS tricky. Again, focusing on and attaining contentment will by default bring us happiness - not the fleeting happiness of something new or the temporary lift of a single experience. True spiritual contentment brings a happiness that is abiding, powerful and life-changing. This can happen in the midst of the most difficult parts of our lives if we are seeking spiritual competence and the spiritual ability to ward things off AND (like the Apostle Paul) we have happy acceptance of what comes our way through the filter of God's will for us.

 **Boosting happiness, How to be Happy, The Science of Happiness**

A lot of what can boost our happiness involves other people. That is significant - get outside of yourself! **Contentment brings us strength:** Philippians 4:10-13: ...<sup>11</sup>*Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be **content <842>** in whatever circumstances I am.*

**Content:** Strongs #842 self-complacent, i.e. contented

"I have learned to be okay in whatever circumstances I am" is a deliberate, intentional interpretation of the inconsistencies of your life. "Whatever position I am in, I can learn from it, (even if I do not feel like it yet, do not know quite how yet and do not even WANT to yet) because God has granted me this very important experience." We must be faithful stewards with the gifts given to us. If we look at our responsibilities - family, job, church - we should have the strength to move forward. Being a good steward of what we have is a godly perspective. Our lives are not our own - we have given our lives to God through Christ. God through Christ gives those lives back to us to take care of, nurture and guide to bring honor to His name. That is what being a steward is. Contentment comes from being a steward in God's name. **To be content is to be competent in God's strength:** *I can do all things through him who strengthens me* - This verse is often misrepresented. When read out of context, it sounds like you can do ANYTHING - you can make a lot of money, close that sale, get that new car, etc. because Christ strengthens you. But that is not what it is saying. *I know how to get along with humble means* - it was not that the Apostle could do anything he wanted; he learned the secret of spiritual competence through Christ who strengthened him. This strength is the soil in which happiness can grow, be tended and flourish. Happiness is there if you want it. Just seek godly contentment first.

**Strength brings happiness: Did you know that Jesus gave a teaching specifically dedicated to happiness?** Matthew 5:1-3: (NASB) ...<sup>3</sup>**Blessed <3107>** *are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* Matthew 5:3: (Phillips) *How **happy <3107>** are those who know their need for God, for the kingdom of Heaven is theirs!*

**Blessed:** Strongs #3107, supremely blest; by extension, fortunate, well off, blessed, happy

When you go through the Beatitudes in Matthew 5, substitute *blessed* with the word *happy*, because happy is easier for us to identify with than blessed. Happy comes from within the human frame and we think in those terms.

**Jesus, even the night before he was crucified, taught us how to be happy:** John 13:12-17: This happiness lesson started with Jesus humbling himself, taking the lowest position of everyone in the room and serving. He wanted them to do this for each other - but what did this have to do with happiness? The bottom line lesson was: "Do what I did. You are not greater than me. If you do this and understand its value, you are blessed (happy)." He is literally walking into his crucifixion within hours. At that very tenuous, stressful, disheartening moment for him, he teaches this lesson. "I want you to be happy in your Christian life." He was happy in his sacrifice and to go through the pain, because it meant glory to God. That is spiritual competence! That is contentment!

To be happy means to be spiritually content and competent, to put things in order and understand the purpose of all of our trials and difficulties. This is all so we can do the things which honor God. Seek God first and happiness will follow

*So, why can't I just be happy?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*