

THE BELIEVER'S HAPPINESS
BERACHAH CHURCH
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Are you happy? Really happy? Are you always happy or does your happiness come and go depending on the day or the circumstances?

So many people were happy about the last election and once it was over they were very excited about all the things that were changing. The other side lost their happiness as soon as the election was over.

The winning side's happiness lasted only as long as things went their way. Then it bogged down with court cases, drama, in-fighting, and on and on the list goes.

At any moment, external circumstances can change and suddenly happiness is converted to dread, anger, suspicion, guilt, fear, and it leads to unhappiness.

Such responses are common to the souls of those who have no stability of thought. Their happiness usually depends on things over which they have no control.

If they have money, then loss of money destroys happiness. If they have no money, then acquisition of money produces happiness.

Having friends makes some people happy, but loss of friends makes them unhappy. Having a spouse makes some happy, but for others it makes them sad.

We have examples from all areas of life. You can take this to the area of sports. Everyone who loved college football was so excited when they changed the playoff format to 12 teams but then when their team was 13th or 14th, they didn't like it.

Now everyone wants it to be 14 or 20 teams. The happiness was gone. Except if you were in the top 12 you were still happy...until your team lost. Then the happiness disappeared.

The world has all kinds of definitions for happiness and most of it is just pure human viewpoint based on emotional pleasure and some sort of emotional stimulation.

People's happiness is fleeting.

Externals that affect internals cause us to fluctuate in the field of happiness.

So if you are happy, but you weren't yesterday, or vice versa, then your kind of happiness is temporal. The kind of happiness I'm going to be talking about is permanent.

Everyone is looking for happiness in all the wrong places. It's been like that forever. There's nothing new under the sun.

The truth is that happiness is the number one feel-good emotion in America today and almost everyone is willing to pay big bucks to get it.

There are many books on happiness. Here are a couple:

"101 Ways to Have A Happy Day"

"How Happiness Happens"

"The Courage to Be Happy"

"The High Achiever's Guide to Happiness"

People have even made thousands of dollars writing songs about happiness:

Don't Worry Be Happy – by Bobby McFerrin

Here's a little song I wrote
You might want to sing it note for note
Don't worry, be happy
In every life we have some trouble
But when you worry you make it double
Don't worry, be happy

Or for the older folks how about "Oh How Happy (You Have Made Me) – By Shades of Blue

In our years together
We've got stormy weathers
But our love has been so strong
For somehow we carry on

Oh, how happy (you have made me)
Oh how happy (you have made me), ooh, ooh

You brought joy
To my empty life, yeah
And all that was wrong
You made it right

Everyone is searching for happiness, and they try to find it in people or circumstances.

PRINCIPLE: The mature believer maintains perfect happiness in the midst of the storm; and lives in the eye of the hurricane.

If a believer is steeped in doctrine, enjoys the prosperity of the sophisticated spiritual life, and has become habitual in his use of problem-solving devices, then it can be said he is a happy Christian. So, a happy Christian possesses true happiness in his soul.

True happiness may be defined as follows:

Happiness is an inner resource developed from maximum Bible doctrine resident in the soul and is so advanced in its grace orientation to the plan of God that all aspects of life are evaluated with regard to eternal rather than temporal implications. Consequently, happiness is the penultimate problem-solving device.

Let's look at what Webster's Dictionary has to say about "*Happiness*":

- A. In *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* happiness is defined as: "A state of well-being characterized by relative permanence, by dominantly agreeable emotion ranging in value from mere contentment to intense joy in living and by natural desire for its continuation; a pleasurable or enjoyable experience... Happiness is the general term denoting enjoyment of or pleasurable satisfaction in well-being, security or fulfillment of wishes."
- B. The common perception of happiness centers around emotional stimulation derived from pleasant experience and "fulfillment of wishes." Human beings typically regard favorable environment, personal success and recognition,

harmonious relationships, and the general absence of adversity as necessary for attaining the state of happiness. Marked by “relative permanence,” this happiness endures only as long as the pleasant circumstances remain.

Unfortunately, the world is filled with unhappy people and the paradox is that each and every one of them is enmeshed in a frantic search for happiness. As in all things worth having, only a few actually achieve the objective that is so universally pursued.

In order to demonstrate the futility of the world's fruitless but perpetual effort to find happiness, let's take a look at what the great philosophers of the past have had to say on the subject.

Some of these sages' ideas are rational on the level of human viewpoint, but each falls short of achieving the prize since true happiness can only be obtained by the believer in Jesus Christ.

John Locke observed that men place themselves in miserable circumstances because of poor decisions; decisions entered into originally with the hope of acquiring happiness.

Locke further observed that happiness for one man may be quite different for another. He defined happiness as being the utmost pleasure, we are capable of and misery as being the utmost pain.

Happiness and misery are responses to either internal or external influences. We look on that which produces happiness as good and that which causes misery as bad or evil.

Plato of fifth-century B.C. Greece defined happiness as “spiritual well-being.” He classified it as a harmony in the soul, an inner peace which results from the proper order of all the soul's parts.

Plotinus, third century A.D., made the accurate statement that “nothing external can separate a virtuous man from happiness.”

NOTE: Man cannot be the lone source of mastering his inner conflicts. Environment is not an issue in the development or maintenance of true happiness.

Lucretius Carus, a first-century Latin philosopher, who made this insightful comment, “That which we desire seems the most desirable thing in the world; then, when we have got it, we want something else; ‘tis ever the same thirst.”

Socrates said, “That the happy are made happy by the possession of justice and temperance.

Blaise Pascal, a seventeenth-century French philosopher who happened to be a believer, said this about happiness:

All men seek happiness. There are no exceptions. However different the means they may employ, they all strive towards this goal... The will never takes the least step except to that end. This is the motive of every act of every man... "Yet for very many years no one without faith has ever reached the goal at which everyone is continually aiming. All men complain: princes, subjects, nobles, commoners, old, young, strong, weak, learned, ignorant, healthy, sick, in every country, at every time, of all ages, and all conditions.

"What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him, seeking in things that are not there the help he cannot find in those that are, though none can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words, by God himself.

"God alone is man's true good, and since man abandoned him it is a strange fact that nothing in nature has been found to take his place.”

Solon, one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece, once told Croesus, king of Lydia, that he would not call him happy “until I hear that you have closed your life happily ... for oftentimes God gives men a gleam of happiness and then plunges them into ruin. For this reason, in judging of happiness ... it behooves us to mark well the end.”

John Locke commented that “happiness becomes an existence exempt as far as possible from pain and as rich as possible in pleasures.”

We can see that the philosophers quoted above succeed in beating around the bush. Some have better ideas than others but none of them is able to define true happiness.

There is one consistent thread which links all these philosophers together in their analyses of happiness: pleasure versus pain.

Pleasure is the feeling of satisfaction which accompanies the possession of objects desired. Pain is the frustration which comes from the denial of these pleasures.

Unfortunately, the devil's world has come to accept the general definition of happiness as being the status in which pleasures are maximized while pain is minimized.

In a humanistic environment in which absolutes are rejected out of hand, then one man's pleasure amounts to another man's pain.

American satirist, [Ambrose Bierce](#) sarcastically defines happiness in his "*The Devil's Dictionary*" as "[an agreeable sensation arising from contemplating the misery of another](#)."

Colonel Thieme says in the Thieme Bible Doctrine Dictionary about the "*The Happiness of God*":

[The perfect, immutable attitude of joy that exists eternally as part of God's nature. God desires to share His happiness with mankind "so that they may have My joy made full in themselves" \(John 17:13b\). \(page 122\)](#)

Colonel Thieme also says,

- A. ["Genuine happiness is not emotional stimulation but a way of thinking formed from truth in the soul. As such truth replaces arrogance with humility, there results stability of mind, an attitude of contentment, a sense of honor and appreciation for life, and freedom from fear and anxiety, even under pressure. These characteristics translate to the mental attitude of happiness as described in Scripture."](#)
- B. ["The believer oriented to the spiritual truths in God's Word can possess maximum genuine happiness. This greatest happiness is attained by consistent residence in God's grace plan, utilizing the power of God the Holy Spirit and applying metabolized doctrine to life."](#)

In the devil's world today, we have come to accept the general definition of happiness as being the status in which pleasures are maximized while pain is minimized.

A lot of the population in the United States today are committed to the concept of equality in its pursuit of happiness. We have those who want a socialist system of government and will promise maximum pleasure to every group in order to minimize its pains.

When a client nation drifts away from the basic principles of biblical Christianity, then the universal desire for happiness ceases to be a personal objective but rather becomes a one-against-all competition.

German author [Helmut Schoeck](#) calls this *envy* and defines it as follows:

Envy expresses that vindictive and inwardly tormenting frame of mind, the displeasure with which one perceives the prosperity and the advantages of others, begrudges them these things and in addition wishes one were able to destroy them.

Schoeck also writes, “that envy is a basic part of human existence and is a profoundly destructive force that eats away at happiness...”

Thus, when the majority of the people begin to seek happiness – a happiness defined as the maximizing of pleasures while at the same time minimizing pains – then the means they will use to reach that end is envy.

Our entire society is pursuing happiness in all the wrong places. In order to acquire false happiness people are willing to sell their very soul.

PRINCIPLE: “Much of our activity these days is nothing but a cheap anesthetic to deaden the pain of an empty life.”

PRINCIPLE: We spend money we don't have on things we don't need to impress people we don't even like.

Most of the time our unhappiness comes from our own poor decisions. We make bad decisions about our health, relationships, finances, which causes problems for us and brings unhappiness along with them.

There are six words in the Hebrew and Greek languages that refer to happiness. Their definitions range from happiness to self-sufficiency.

Studying each would not establish a clear understanding of what the idea really means. We commonly relate the idea to emotions, stimulation, excitement, or anticipation.

To nail it down we must observe certain biblical principles since the word “happiness” does not adequately describe it.

True happiness is not necessarily acquired by a set of circumstances, association with certain things, or relationships with people. [Each of these can cause great unhappiness as well.](#)

There are certain circumstances of life that cause an emotional response, but this is not true happiness [since happiness is not produced independently by the individual.](#)

True happiness is something that the believer possesses [at all times.](#) It is related exclusively to the soul, never to the body.

The body can only respond with emotion. It is the soul that maintains true happiness by means of Bible doctrine resident in the stream of consciousness.

[Let's look at God's Happiness:](#)

1. God exists permanently in a state of happiness (Romans 1:25b). God's own happiness reflects His essence and is therefore based solely on who and what God is. Since God is eternal and immutable and possesses absolute righteousness, His happiness is never-ending, unchanging, and perfect in nature.
2. God's happiness cannot be tarnished or in any way challenged or destroyed. He can never be saddened, disappointed, or dissatisfied. Neither the failure of angels or man nor their rejection of God and His provision can cause unhappiness in Him.
3. God is the source of true happiness (Psalm 43:4a). In eternity past, God designed a grace plan whereby He can share His perfect happiness with man in time. This is possible only through man's regeneration and subsequent perception of Bible doctrine. Matthew 4:4; John 17:17; cf. 13:17; James 1:25; Habakkuk 3:18

Psalm 43:4a: “Then I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy; And upon the lyre I shall praise You, O God, my God.”

4. Jesus Christ executed the prototype system of spiritual advance to maturity. This unique system of problem-solving devices culminated in Him sharing the happiness of God.
5. The night prior to His execution, the Lord indicated that the device of perfect happiness was prominent in His ability to fulfill the Father's plan for salvation.

John 15:10: “If you obey My commandments, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed My Father's commandments and remain in His love.

Vs. 11: I have told you these things so that My joy (*Chara*: perfect happiness) may be in you, and your joy may be complete.” (NET)

6. Because of Jesus Christ's impeccability in His true humanity, His inner harmony (happiness) of soul was pure and perfect.

Hebrews 12:2: “Be concentrating on Jesus (His true humanity), the founder and perfecter of our faith (mystery doctrine of the Church Age), Who because of His exhibited happiness ((*chara*): PSD #9) He endured the cross (staying power from the tandem PSDs of personal love for God and unconditional love for man), disregarding the shame (of being identified with our sins), and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (EXT.)

7. The verse documents the Lord's staying power on the cross as the combination of virtue love and perfect happiness.
8. Having mentioned our Lord's use of the tandem problem-solving devices, but their use indicates the presence of the extremely significant problem-solving device of true happiness.
9. Since the Lord's prototype spiritual life has been bequeathed to believers in the Church Age, then the same system that provided the Lord His staying power on the cross is the same system that enables us to have staying power in the relentless combat of the angelic conflict.

Biblical Categories of Happiness

Pseudo-happiness or Minus H:

1. Pseudo-happiness or minus H is the superficial, fleeting pleasure and emotional stimulation derived from environment, human accomplishments, circumstances, wealth, possessions, or people.
2. The world is replete with categories of pseudo-happiness which is a counterfeit of true happiness. It is concocted by Lucifer, the ruler of this world, whose efforts are to keep his human followers happy.
3. Lacking a foundation in spiritual or establishment truth, pseudo-happiness is volatile, transient, and frustrating, incapable of providing real solutions or sustaining anyone through the challenges and adversities of life.
4. The devil emphasizes things that appeal to the emotion, self-aggrandizement through stimulations associated with ambition, self-esteem, popularity, social status, or fame.
5. Pseudo-happiness may also be pursued through lascivious trends such as drug use.
6. True happiness is the acquisition of the thinking of God which provides a state of mind that is in control of all circumstances during which a happy mental attitude prevails.
7. If you are dependent on people, circumstances, prosperity, success, or possessions for your happiness, then you are not in control of your own life. You are dependent on externals with which you are associated or hope to acquire.
8. Satan, through his cosmic system, encourages pseudo-happiness as a substitute for the genuine happiness that only God can provide.
9. Satan lures people from the plan of God with systems of stimulation and self-indulgence that either counterfeit or cancel out genuine happiness.

10. True happiness is the development of an internal inventory that operates in the realm of reality, cognizant of antecedent grace, the divine decree, the plan of God, logistical grace, and divine guidance provided by consistent inculcation of Bible doctrine in the soul.
11. The believer does not have access to future events. Therefore, he must operate in the realm of reality knowing that he is living in the devil's world and each day will present a new set of circumstances that require good decision-making.
12. Never be surprised that these events are not on your Day-Timer knowing, **"there is nothing new under the sun."** There is a divine solution to every situation. Challenges, and how you resolve them, become great teaching aids for future problem solving.
13. On the other hand, the unprepared believer who operates on pseudo-happiness is caught unawares and reacts with emotional solutions that are inadequate problem-solvers.
14. Adversity, pressure, suffering, and testing require biblical problem-solving devices which the cosmic believer has failed to facilitate or has never learned let alone applied.
15. The cosmic system appeals to man's sin nature with the myth that the details of life: **money, success, pleasure, social life, relationships, sex, material things, human approbation, health, etc.** can alleviate unhappiness and provide lasting fulfillment.
16. The cosmic system categories of pseudo-happiness do not sustain under pressure. The pleasures associated with human-viewpoint attempts to acquire happiness result in disappointment frustration.
17. Other people or circumstances are used as excuses for failure to maintain one's pseudo-happiness.
18. Satan's most effective pseudo-happiness lure is religion: **empty rituals, human works, emotional-based worship, more music than Bible teaching and legalistic behavior** through which Christians ignorant of doctrine seek happiness.
19. The quest for pseudo-happiness is an expression of the arrogance of unhappiness, or subjective preoccupation with self. The arrogant person

relies on something on the outside to alleviate frustration and emptiness on the inside.

20. Pseudo-happiness describes the believer who rejects the spiritual life and embarks on a frantic search for happiness in the details of life.
21. Believers on a frantic search for happiness are described in 2 Timothy 3:4 as “**lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.**” With desire for stimulation exceeding their desire for Bible doctrine, they build their lives around pleasure goals and neglect goals related to spiritual advance.
22. The believer frantically searching for happiness caters to the lust patterns of the sin nature; he indulges in a lifestyle of self-gratification through legalism, licentiousness, or both (Galatians 5:16)

Galatians 5:16: “**But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.**”

23. Pseudo-happiness is a source of self-induced misery as well as a guarantee for divine discipline (Psalm 7:14–16).
24. The search for happiness apart from God and His plan is a vicious cycle that always arrives back at the same place: **boredom, restlessness, instability, confusion, and emptiness.** (Proverbs 14:14; Ecclesiastes 1:5–9; 2 Timothy 3:7)

Proverbs 14:14: “**The backslider in heart will have his fill of his own ways, But a good man will be satisfied with his.**”

25. Bad decisions made in every frenzied pursuit of happiness only intensify the misery that motivated the search in the first place.
26. The believer immersed in pseudo-happiness warrants God the Father's corrective discipline, administered to encourage rebound and spiritual advance (Proverbs 3:12; Hebrews 12:6).

Proverbs 3:12: “**For whom the Lord loves He reproveth (discipline), Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.**”

Hebrews 12:6: “For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines,
And He scourges every son whom He receives.”

27. Persistent failure to respond to divine punitive measures results in the sin unto death: the believer who lives with minus H will die with minus H; no dying grace, just misery in dying. (Proverbs 14:12–13; 1 John 5:16b)

PRINCIPLE: Never forget unhappy people take their unhappiness with them wherever they go!

Mass unhappiness destroys the potential for contentment among those who have the potential for natural or plus-happiness.

Abandonment of biblically revealed ideas that produce true happiness leads to the destruction of a client nation.

PRINCIPLE: This loss of thought means loss of standards which leads to loss of freedom.

Since pseudo-happiness is rooted in neither divine establishment nor the Christian way of life, its perpetuation within society eventuates in the destruction of the national entity.

Neutral Happiness or Neutral H:

1. Neutral happiness (neutral H) belongs to the person who possesses humility derived from the laws of divine establishment. Compliance with the laws of establishment allows the person to move beyond basic morality to a place of human honor and integrity. Self-discipline, personal responsibility, courage, respect for authority, patriotism, and other establishment-oriented virtues characterize the person with neutral happiness.
2. Neutral H or Neutral Happiness, though genuine, is a limited, temporary happiness dependent upon the virtue of the individual and the perpetuation of establishment principles within his environment.
3. Neutral H is available to both believer and unbeliever for honorable function within certain establishment-related areas of life.

- A. The unbeliever can enjoy being married to someone with whom he or she has mental and physical compatibility and can also find satisfaction in the honorable execution of a job or profession. Ecclesiastes 9:9
 - B. Parents who teach their children establishment principles will be gratified and honored by the virtue of their offspring. Proverbs 23:24–25
 - C. Both believer and unbeliever who live under the laws of divine establishment can find neutral happiness in national freedom and prosperity and in the role of military victory. Psalms 89:15–18; 144:15
- 4. Where regard for establishment principles does not exist, neutral H cannot exist, because there is no authority orientation present to restrain arrogance. Proverbs 29:18
 - 5. Neutral happiness has no perpetuation beyond the grave. Regardless of the honor and happiness attained in the temporal life, unbelievers, lacking the imputed righteousness of God from Faith in Jesus Christ, is consigned upon death to eternity in the Lake of Fire. Revelation 20:15

Normality is what is communicated by the Word of God through which God provides perfect happiness as a problem-solving device for those who seek it.

Let's get a few principles for developing True Happiness in the soul before we cover Plus H (+H) – Sharing the Happiness of God.

- 1. The undergirding principle of this device ([Problem Solving Device #9 – Sharing the happiness of God](#)) is that it sustains in adversity as well as prosperity.
- 2. The secret to maintaining status-quo happiness is not only the knowledge of biblical doctrines, but most especially consistent application of them.
- 3. True happiness is related to the essence of God. The believer is happy with the Father's plan of antecedent grace, therefore grace is an expression of His perfect happiness.
- 4. From this we may conclude that grace is the source of our perfect happiness.

5. In eternity past, God desired to share His happiness with man in time. This is only possible through entering God's plan and being sustained in that plan by application of His Word to the details of life.
6. Perfect happiness is accomplished through grace. In prevenient grace, God found a way to share His happiness with us.
7. The potential for this level of happiness is provided at the point of salvation. This is where it starts, but this is not where it ends.
8. Perfect happiness is confined to the plan of God and is made available at salvation, but this does not mean that such happiness will exist; only its potential.
9. *Epígnōsis* understanding of biblical truth must become one's inventory for application. Too many believers are able to quote principles and doctrines but fail in their application in times of adversity.
10. Happiness is the result of right thinking. Error occurs when man assumes that happiness can be pursued in and of itself. But happiness cannot be found by pursuing it.
11. Happiness is a mental attitude – an inner resource – that develops when one pursues truth.
12. Capacity for happiness must precede the function of happiness. Morality, self-regulation, and self-determination based on divine standards will produce two kinds of happiness:
 - (1) The unbeliever sans arrogance will have neutral happiness by submitting to the laws of divine establishment,
 - (2) The believer will enjoy perfect happiness by recall and application of doctrinal constellations.
13. The foundations for happiness in a society are the four divine institutions and the authority structure of each:
 - (1) The individual under the authority of his free will,
 - (2) Marriage under the leadership authority of the husband,

- (3) Family under the leadership authority of parents,
 - (4) The nation under the leadership authority of parents,
 - (5) The nation under the leadership authority of government.
14. It is in this environment that unhappy people are free to advance in the plan of God, or not. Happiness is an acquired advantage that is designed to function in the hostile environment of the devil's world.
15. True happiness is an asset developed in the soul and is not dependent upon what others are able to do for you.
16. True happiness is acquired by means of a process that accumulates divine thought into the stream of consciousness from which it develops the ten problem-solving devices.
17. Spiritual growth efficiently advances when following this four-stage process:
- (1) Reception of the Word through Bible study or Operation *Gnōsis*,
 - (2) Retention of the Word through Operation *Epígnōsis*,
 - (3) Recall of resident doctrine for volitional consideration,
 - (4) Application of resident doctrine by pulling the volitional trigger.
18. This exercise puts muscle on your faith. The more you rely by faith on divine guidance the more powerful you become as a believer who puts his trust in the Word of God and God honors His Word wherever it is found including your soul.

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God is alive, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.”

This is the treasure He has given to us and through antecedent grace we may delve into its boundless riches for divine guidance.

The world provides its own brand of happiness, but it is a tale told by the great deceiver who, with his demonic faculty, leads both sheep and goats astray.

Our Lord sets the example for us. Our Lord willingly went to the cross as is indicated by His prayer in Gethsemane in which He characterized the imputation of our sins upon Him as drinking from a cup.

Matthew 26:39: “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.”

Matthew 26:42: “If this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.”

1. Once on the cross, Jesus had to endure the imputation and judgment of our sins while also enduring the physical agony that accompanies the act of crucifixion.
2. To accomplish the objective, He could not sin nevertheless, He not only willingly received the imputation of our sins, but also their judgment while remaining impeccable.

Hebrews 12:2: “Be concentrating on Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, Who, because of His exhibited happiness He endured the cross, disregarding the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

3. The Lord willingly received the imputation of our sins motivated by His unconditional love for mankind.
4. Jesus willingly received the judgment of our sins motivated by His personal love for God and commitment to His plan for salvation.
5. Disregarding the shame of the experience indicates His maintenance of perfect happiness while being judged for our sins.
6. Unconditional love for mankind **was necessary** for Him to agree to receive the imputation of all the sins of human history.
7. Personal love for God **was necessary** for Him to be motivated to die spiritually for them.

8. [To be successful](#), the Lord could never submit to any sinful reaction to the imputation or the judgment which means that during the events of the cross [He never lost His true happiness](#).
9. The three problem-solving devices mentioned above constitute the Lord's staying power on the cross.
10. So, while facing the most intense suffering ever recorded in human history, our Lord never lost His happiness.
11. For the believer to acquire this level of pure happiness they must follow the example of Jesus Christ on the cross.
12. First from spiritual growth through Bible study, you must develop personal love for God which is problem-solving device #7.
13. Secondly, from the motivation of this personal love for God, the believer must develop unconditional love for mankind which is problem-solving device #8.
14. Having accomplished these two goals then he has eliminated all distractions from the world. All thought, system, people, and disaster testing's offer challenges for us to doubt God or judge people.
15. Without the distractions that these externals provide and internals magnify, the believer is in status quo happiness.
16. Inside the operational divine dynasphere, he shares the happiness that Jesus Christ possessed in His true humanity while being imputed human sin and suffering their judgment.

PRINCIPLE: [The combination of virtue love and pure happiness is the formula that resulted in the Lord's victory on the cross.](#)

[Now let's look at Plus H \(+H\):](#)

1. Plus H, fully described as "sharing the happiness of God," is the maximum genuine happiness attained by the believer who reaches spiritual maturity.

2. This happiness is an enduring state of inner peace, confidence, and contentment unrelated to any detail or circumstance of life. The believer with plus H has the happiness of God residing in his soul.
3. God shares His happiness with the believer by sharing His thinking, which is revealed in His Word (John 15:11; cf. 17:17).

a. True happiness is a mental attitude based on divine viewpoint. When God's thinking becomes the believer's thinking, the believer shares in God's happiness. Jeremiah 15:16; Romans 12:3; 2 Peter 1:3

Jeremiah 15:16: “Your words were found and I ate them, Your words became for me a joy (happiness) and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.”

b. Wisdom is the basis for happiness: “How blessed (happy) is the man (believer) who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding (Of Bible Doctrine)” (Proverbs 3:13). The believer who finds wisdom is the believer who learns and metabolizes doctrine and applies it to experience.

c. The Bible uses the term “made full” and “complete,” to indicate that attaining happiness is a process. John 15:11; 17:13; 1 John 1:4

d. Completed happiness is spiritual maturity. The believer who functions under consistent post-salvation epistemological rehabilitation will eventually achieve this enduring genuine happiness.

d. Psalm 119:2 describes believers whose priority is Bible doctrine: “How blessed (happy) are those who observe His testimonies (mandates), Who seek Him with all their heart (soul).”

4. Plus H is the happiness found in the humanity of Jesus Christ.
 - a. To sustain the humanity of Christ throughout the First Advent, God the Father designed a system for learning and applying the Word of God and attaining spiritual maturity by means of a divine power source.
 - b. In His humanity, our Lord had perfect happiness through consistent residence inside this divine power system. He maintained that happiness even while on the cross. Hebrews 12:2

- c. Every Church Age believer has the potential to share in this happiness by utilizing the same divine power system that sustained the humanity of Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:19–20; 3:20–21

Ephesians 3:20-21: “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”

- d. John 15:11 reveals the relationship between Christ's happiness and the Church Age believer's happiness: “I have taught you these things (mandates of Bible doctrine), in order that My happiness [+H] might be in you, and that your happiness might be completed (fulfilled).”
5. The Holy Spirit is the power source for sharing in God's happiness. John 14:26; 16:13; Romans 14:17; 15:13; Galatians 5:22

Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,”

- a. At salvation, the Holy Spirit enters the Church Age believer into eternal union with Christ, creating a new spiritual species. 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10 Only the “new creature” in Christ is capable of sharing in divine happiness.

2 Corinthians 5:17: “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”

- b. Under the Holy Spirit's filling ministry, the believer is in fellowship with God, functioning inside the divine power system; his soul is controlled by the Holy Spirit rather than the sin nature. Galatians 5:16, 22–25; Ephesians 5:18
- c. The Holy Spirit is the mentor who teaches the believer Bible doctrine. John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13
- d. The filling of the Spirit makes spiritual truth communicated by a pastor-teacher understandable and usable, so that the believer can advance to maturity to share in God's perfect happiness.

6. Contentment is a biblical synonym for plus H.

- a. New Testament Greek terms for contentment describe the state of inner peace that the believer can experience in even the most difficult pressures and circumstances.
 - 1) “If we have food and covering (basic necessities), with these we shall be content.” 1 Timothy 6:8
 - 2) “Therefore I am well content, with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.” 2 Corinthians 12:10
 - 3) “Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.” Philippians 4:11
- b. Hebrews 13:5 exhorts believers to be “content with what you have,” based on the rationale, “For He Himself has said, ‘I will never desert you, nor will i ever forsake you.’”

7. Characteristics of Sharing the Happiness of God (+H).

- a. Contentment and tranquility of soul.
- b. Honor, virtue, and resultant stability for any situation in life.
- c. Prevention of stress in the soul.
- d. Capacity for life, love, gratitude, and enjoyment of the details of life. Psalms 9:1–2; 97:12; Philippians 4:11–12; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; 1 John 4:19

Psalms 9:1-2: “I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wonders.

Vs. 2: I will be glad and exult in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.”

- e. A true sense of security concerning temporal and eternal life. 1 Peter 1:8

1 Peter 1:8: “And though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,”

- f. Insulation against arrogance controlling the soul.
- g. Freedom from fear, worry, anxiety, doubt, and apprehension.
- h. Strength in the face of adverse circumstances, legalistic criticism, evil, threat, or persecution. Psalms 5:11; 2 Corinthians 12:10; James 1:2–4

2 Corinthians 12:10: “Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Psalms 5:11: “But let all who take refuge in You be glad, Let them ever sing for joy; And may You shelter them, That those who love Your name may exult in You.”

- i. Ability to endure anything in life, as proved by Jesus Christ, “who for the joy (happiness) set before Him endured the cross.”
Hebrews 12:2
8. Plus H is designed for every category of existence after salvation. Psalms 16:11

Psalms 16:11: “You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”

- a. The believer who attains plus H for living will have plus H in dying.
Philippians 1:21

Philippians 1:21: “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

- b. The mature believer carries his happiness into the eternal state, where it is parlayed into eternal rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:7–8; Revelation 22:12–14

2 Timothy 4:7-8: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

Vs. 8: in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

- c. Although there is happiness for all believers throughout eternity, the mature believer has a greater happiness from the “**surpassing riches of His grace**,” above and beyond the normal blessings of heaven. Ephesians 2:7

Ephesians 2:7: “So that in the ages to come He might show the **surpassing riches of His grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

Biblical Mandates to Happiness:

1. “**Do not be grieved** (unhappy), **for the joy** (happiness) **of the Lord is your strength** (power).” Nehemiah 8:10b
2. “**Be glad** (happy) **in the Lord, you righteous ones** (believers); **And give thanks to** (the memory of) **His holy name** (His integrity).” Psalms 97:12
3. “**Finally, my brethren, rejoice** (keep on having happiness) **in the Lord. To write the same things** (mandates) **again is no trouble to me, and it** (inner happiness) **is a safeguard for you.**” Philippians 3:1
4. “**Rejoice** (keep on having happiness) **in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice** (keep on having happiness)!” Philippians 4:4

Biblical principles for the Happy Christian:

1. True happiness occurs when the believer fulfills the plan of God for his life. This happiness is made available by learning the details of that plan revealed only in the Word of God.
2. Suffering for blessing produces happiness and results in generosity. Believers in the Macedonian churches, e.g., Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea were experiencing a shortage of logistics but nevertheless remained exceedingly

happy, so much so they contributed financially to fellow believers in the Jerusalem church:

2 Corinthians 8:1: “Now we make known to you, fellow believers, the grace of God given to the churches of Macedonia,

Vs. 2: that during a severe ordeal of suffering, their abundant happiness (*car£ (chará)*) and their extreme poverty have overflowed in the riches of their generosity.”

3. Consequently, the philosophers' ideas that happiness is the maximizing of pleasure while minimizing pain is the opposite of what the Word of God teaches.
4. Scripture informs us that happiness is built from the strength accumulated from successfully using doctrine to endure testing for blessing. When we see doctrine work we are motivated to study and that study results in momentum.

James 1:2: “Fellow believers, after weighing the facts, conclude it [all happiness](#) (*p©j car£ (pás chará)*) whenever you become involved in the various categories of testing,

Vs. 3: knowing that the testing is for the approval of your doctrine producing patience.

Vs. 4: But let patience keep on having quality production, so that you may be mature and undamaged, being deficient in nothing.”

5. This leads us to the conclusion that happiness is the ultimate problem- solving device as demonstrated by our Lord in Hebrews 12:2.
6. Perseverance under pressure produces blessing from God which indicates His recognition of your loyalty to doctrine:

James 5:11: “We consider happy (*μακαρίζω (makarizō)*) the ones having endured. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.”

7. The word we translate “*happy*” in James 5:11 is not *chará* but the verb *makarízō* which is translated “*blessed*” in all the major English translations with the exception of the King James which happens to get it right. Here’s why:

The special feature of (*makarízō*) in the New Testament is that it refers overwhelmingly to the distinctive joy which accrues to man Thus the verb is used of the blessing ... in James 5:11 of the righteous who endure.

8. Integrity, which is loyalty to doctrine in all circumstances, demands that the believer stand fast under pressure. Therefore, loyalty to truth accrues happiness from the source of divine blessings:

1 Peter 3:13: “Who is going to harm you if you are devoted to what is good?”

Vs.14: But in fact, if you happen to suffer for doing what is right, *blessed* (plural of the noun *makárijōj* (*makárijōs*): happinesses) are you. But do not be terrified of them or be shaken.”

9. Suffering for blessing is a necessary part of learning how to utilize doctrine under the pressure imposed from the Invisible War. Passing momentum tests are prerequisites for acquiring inner happiness.

1 Peter 4:12: “Dear friends, stop being shocked by the maximum pressure you face that is coming to you for your benefit, as though some unusual event has caught you off guard.

Vs.13: But keep on rejoicing (*ca...rw* (*cháirō*)), because you have in common the sufferings of Christ, that even in the reveling of His glory that your happinesses (plural of *ca...rw* (*cháirō*)) may be perfect (Sharing the happiness of God and Christ).

Vs. 14: If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are *blessed* (plural of the noun *makárijōj* (*makárijōs*): happinesses), for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you (the indwelling of the Holy Spirit).”

10. Pastors receive happiness when they become aware that their students are growing in grace and advancing in the plan of God:

3 John 4: “I have no greater happiness (*carf* (*chará*)) than to hear that my students are walking according to truth.”

11. Trusting in God through loyalty to His Word allows the Father to make you happy by means of divine blessings:

Romans 15:13: “May the God of confidence fill you with great happiness (*carf* (*chará*)) and prosperity as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with confidence by means of the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.”

12. The Psalmists often commented on the status of happiness and a good example of the Hebrew concept of perfect happiness expressed in reciprocal expressions of gratitude to God is:

Psalm 100:2: “Serve the Lord with super-abundance of happiness; come before Him with joyful exuberance.”

13. This overflowing confidence combined with overflowing happiness produces a major problem-solving device against the disillusion of life — you have contentment: in all things:

- a. The disillusion of circumstances:

Philippians 4:11: “Not that I am speaking with reference to poverty, for I have learned in whatever circumstances I am to keep on being content.”

Vs. 12: In fact, I have come to know how to be debased under discipline, and I also have come to know what it is to live in prosperity following recovery. In every place and in all circumstances I have been instructed in both how to be well-fed with truth and to hunger for it.

Vs. 13: I have the endowed power to obtain all things by means of the One Who keeps on pouring the power (operational power of the Holy Spirit) into me.”

- b. The disillusion of the details of life:

Hebrews 13:5: “Let your lifestyle be free from the love of money (logistics). Constantly keep on being content with what you possess; for He Himself has said, “I will not ever abandon you, neither will I ever desert you. (Deuteronomy 31:6)

Vs. 6: So that being confident we say, “The Lord is my Helper, and I will not be afraid of what man can do to me.” (Psalm 118:6)

c. The disillusion of cosmos diabolicus (the world):

James 1:2: “Fellow believers, after weighing the facts, conclude it all happiness (*p©j car£ (pás chará)* whenever you become involved in the various categories of testing,

Vs. 3: knowing that the testing is for the approval of your doctrine producing patience.

Vs. 4: But let patience keep on having quality production, so that you may be mature and undamaged, being deficient in nothing.”

d. The application of Bible Doctrine to life's problems provides +H. John 17:13
John 17:13: “But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.”

These passages just noted emphasize the principle that the believer in Jesus Christ who has developed the “staying power” of personal love for God, unconditional love for mankind, and +H or perfect happiness and it is not influenced by the world's allurements of a false happiness.

The lure of maximum happiness and the desire for minimum pain is a lifestyle that functions under the principle of the frantic search for happiness.

[Inner Happiness and the Happy Christian:](#)

1. +H is maintained by placing the true emphasis on Bible Doctrine. Jeremiah 15:16; Matthew 4:4; 1 John 1:4; Psalms 119:130; Ephesians 4:23

1 John 1:4: “These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.”

Psalms 119:130: “The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.”

2. Believers are commanded to be +H. Philippians 3:1; 4:4; Romans 14:22

Philippians 4:4: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!”

NOTE: This is really a command to reach maturity. John 15:11; 17:13

3. True happiness is an inner resource that is not affected by anything externally from the world or internally from the lures of sin, human good, or evil.
4. It is only the staying power from Bible doctrine that can lead a person to the status of +H.
5. The apostle Paul exhorts us in:

Philippians 3:1: “Keep on having inner happiness (*ca...rw* - (*chairō*) in the Lord. To be writing the same things again (Paul had already used the words *chairō* and *sugca...rw* – *sunchairō* five times in the Epistle) to you on the one hand is not troublesome while on the other hand it is a safeguard from falling into reversionism for you.”

6. Paul uses *chairō* four more times in Philippians including:

Philippians 4:4: “Keep on having inner happiness in the Lord at all times! Once more I repeat the command: keep on having inner happiness!”

7. Fulfilling Paul's command means that we must make the commitment to appropriate time for, interest in, and the concentration on the daily intake of Scripture under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.
8. This process, if pursued without wavering, will lead us to the possession and utilization of the same problem-solving devices that provided our Lord with the staying power to complete the work of our so great salvation on the cross.

9. His personal love for the Father motivated the Lord to be judged for the sins of the world while his unconditional love for the human race motivated Him to receive the imputation of these sins.
10. His staying power was enabled by the presence of +H (perfect Happiness) in his soul so that nothing associated with the imputation or the judgment caused Him to lose that happiness.
11. There is great +H in divine suffering for blessing to reach spiritual maturity and receive fantastic rewards. 1 Peter 3:14; James 1:12; 1 Corinthians 10:13
12. If you want to be really happy—a happiness that will provide the staying power to endure all the challenges and tests common to man—then this is the winning formula: Personal Love for God; Unconditional Love for all Mankind; and the perfect happiness of +H.
13. For those who trust God as the Source of truth, both confidence and happiness will gradually define their lives.

Romans 15:13: “May the God of confidence fill you with happiness and prosperity as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with confidence by means of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.”

14. Your loyalty to the Word of God will fulfill Paul's mandate to keep on having inner happiness. For those who have made that advance and for those who are well on the way, let it be known that when in this status quo you will consider yourself to be a truly happy Christian.
15. Perfect happiness is something that is developed through serious study of the Word of God:

1 John 1:4: “These things we write, so that our joy (*carē - chará*): The state of happiness) may be made complete.”

16. “May be made complete” indicates a process. The phrase is made up of two verbs referred to as a periphrastic:

Periphrasis. A roundabout way of referring to something by means of several words instead of naming it directly in a single word or phrase. Commonly

known as 'circumlocution,' periphrasis is often used in euphemisms like passed away for 'died.'

17. "May be made," the present active subjunctive of *eimí*, is merged with the perfect passive participle of *plērōō*: "complete."
18. The perfect tense indicates the idea of making many positive decisions, while the passive voice of *plērōō* indicates the subject, perfect happiness, receives the action of being completed.
19. True happiness is an inner resource that is not affected by anything externally from the world or internally from the lures of sin, human good, or evil.
20. It is only the staying power from Bible Doctrine that can lead a person to the status of perfect happiness. Philippians 3:1
21. The mechanics whereby God can share with the believer His own +H without compromise to His Perfect essence is rooted in Grace. Psalms 9:14; 31:7; 51:12; 97:12; Habakkuk 3:18

Habakkuk 3:18: "Yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation."

22. Never forget there will be great happiness and joy amongst believers in the 1,000 years when Christ rules in the millennium. Isaiah 35:1-2; 64:4-5; Matthew 5:5; 1 Corinthians 2:9
23. This perfect happiness is said to be inexpressible, yet the Psalmists instruct us to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." Here is an example of how B. E. Warren made the effort to do so in his hymn "Joy Unspeakable" in which he references the words of 1 Peter 1:8:

1 Peter 1:8: "and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory."

I have found His grace is all complete,
He supplieth every need;
While I sit and learn at Jesus' feet,
I am free, yes, free indeed.

It is joy unspeakable and full of glory.
Full of glory, full of glory;
It is joy unspeakable and full of glory,

Oh, the half has never yet been told.
I have found the pleasure I once craved,
It is joy and peace within;
What a wondrous blessing! I am saved
From the awful gulf of sin.
I have found the joy no tongues can tell,
How its waves of glory roll!
It is like a great o'erflowing well,
Springing up within my soul.

It is joy unspeakable and full of glory.
Full of glory, full of glory;
It is joy unspeakable and full of glory,
Oh, the half has never yet been told.

If you want to be really happy, a happiness that will provide the staying power to endure all the challenges and tests common to man, then this is the winning formula:

Personal Love for God, plus Unconditional Love for Mankind, plus Perfect Happiness = True Happiness!!

Your loyalty to the Word of God will fulfill Paul's mandate to keep on having inner happiness. For those who have made that advance and for those who are well on the way, let it be known that when in this status quo you will consider yourself to be a Happy Christian!

1. So many believers fail to live the spiritual life God designed for them, and they have nothing in eternity except their eternal life and resurrection body. They therefore never achieve the perfect happiness that God desires for each believer.
2. The believer must live the dedicated lifestyle of his very own spiritual life. The spiritual life is not just something we do, but something we think, something we love.

3. We must live every day as unique to the Lord for the glory of God. We are to live our spiritual life one day at a time.
4. God has provided for you your very own unique spiritual life, so that you can possess your very own capabilities in every situation of life and fulfillment of the protocol plan of God for you. God's will must always be related to that spiritual life.
5. How can we be consistent in our spiritual life, in the use of the problem-solving devices, in the use of everything that God has provided for us, if we fail to utilize these wonderful things we have been given?

We must have daily positive perseverance, daily positive consistency, and daily faithfulness to the Lord in never missing an opportunity to hear the accurate teaching of the Word of God.

1. The spiritual environment of the soul provides the spiritual capacity to fulfill the plan of God. This includes the three spiritual skills being operational in your life:
 - a. The filling of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Metabolized doctrine circulating in the seven compartments of the Stream of Consciousness.
 - c. The Ten Problem-Solving devices functioning on the FLOT Line of the soul.
2. Without the filling of the Holy Spirit we cannot metabolize doctrine or live the spiritual life.
3. Without metabolized doctrine circulating in the seven compartments of the stream of consciousness we cannot form the problem-solving devices.
4. And without the problem-solving devices on the FLOT line of the soul we are defeated, destroyed, and overwhelmed by people and circumstances in this life.
5. The question of 2 Peter 3:11 avoids three things:

- a. Self-justification
- b. Self-deception
- c. Self-absorption
- d. And these lead to Self-destruction

2 Peter 3:11: “Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,”

- 6. The believer who wants to become someone God can use and attain perfect happiness they must have self-motivation. Self-motivation of the believer is one of the most difficult things to maintain because it is tested in so many ways.
- 7. The self-motivated believer growing in grace can't wait to get to church and hear the teaching of the Word of God; you can't wait for the next installment; you can't wait to learn what comes next.
- 8. Losing your momentum means you have lost interest, and therefore, you will never fully understand what God has done for you.

NOTE: The worst thing an advancing believer can do is lose interest in Bible Doctrine!

- 9. The Bible (The Word of God; The Mind of Christ) is your playbook for the Christian life and your unique spiritual life and the spiritual skills necessary for its function and execution.

PRINCIPLE: Testing is not an exception to God's love and grace, but an expression of God's love and grace.

- 10. God permits testing or directly sends testing. God permits testing because you are advancing in the spiritual life. God sends testing because you have not advanced and it's time to wake up and get moving.

Hebrews 12:1a: “For this very reason also since we keep on having the support of such a great battalion of witnesses surrounding us...”

- 1. This battalion of Old Testament heroes has given evidence for our benefit that in any dispensation, anyone who directs his faith toward the doctrines of the Word and places absolute confidence in their veracity under pressure will conquer the exigencies of the devil's world.

2. But all these Old Testament witnesses can do is provide motivation for us. We are to take up the colors and follow their example into the battles of the Angelic Conflict.
3. And in order to apply Bible Doctrine efficiently we must avoid, ignore, and discard all distractions that might hinder or retard our advance.
4. Such distractions are mentioned next in our passage beginning with the aorist middle participle of the verb:

ἀποτίθημι – *apotithēmi* – “having stripped for action”

aorist: Constative; takes the action of the verb in its entirety and gathers it into a single whole. Application of this idea is one's consistent attendance at Bible class while ignoring any and all distractions.

middle: Indirect; lays stress upon the church age believer as producing the action rather than participating in its results.

participle: Circumstantial; depicts troops preparing for action by the removal of anything that might impede their advance.

Hebrews 12:1: “For this very reason also, since we keep on having the support of such a great battalion of witnesses surrounding us, having stripped for action...”

5. *Apotithēmi* is a military metaphor. The infantryman discards his nonessential equipment as he prepares to take action. The prefix *ἀπο*, *apo* means “away from” and the verb *τίθημι*, *tithēmi* means “to lay aside, such as garments.”
6. The Roman soldier was trained daily in the mechanics of the art of war. When on campaign he was required to be virtually self-sustaining. The gear involved is described by:

Watson, G. R., “*The Roman Soldier*.” (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1969): p. 63:

In his Jewish Wars Josephus writes of the Roman soldier on the march. ‘The picked infantry who form the general’s bodyguard carry a lance (light spear) and a round shield, as well as a saw and a basket, a bucket and an axe, together with a leather strap, a sickle and chain, and rations for three days.

7. Colonel Thieme, elaborates on this subject in:

Thieme, R. B., Jr., “*The Christian Warrior*” (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1975), 34:

In the field, each Roman infantryman carried approximately sixty pounds of equipment besides his weapons and armor. The equipment consisted of a bronze food box containing three days’ rations, a kettle, a portable hand mill, a length of rope, a chain, a saw, a hook, a shovel and pickaxe and, of course, a type of canteen made from skins.

In addition to his two light javelins, the Roman soldier carried into battle a sword – the machaira, approximately eighteen inches long – and a short leaf-shaped dagger.

His armor comprised his helmet; his belt, from which were suspended thick leather strips that could be fastened in loops to protect his loins; his breastplate, worn over a sleeveless woolen or leather tunic; his boots; and his shield, the scutum. In its entirety, the Roman soldier’s equipment, which included his weapons and armor, was known as the panoplia.

8. When it was time to engage the enemy, the Roman soldier stripped for battle, retaining only the essentials of the *panoplia*.
9. Abandoned were the useful but unnecessary accessories such as basket, bucket, sickle, food box, rations, kettle, hand mill, rope, chain, saw hook, shovel, pickaxe, and canteen.
10. All these items are related to logistics and, in the heat of battle, survival is the imperative and thus only one’s armor and weapons are pertinent.
11. The spiritual application is that the Christian soldier is to place more emphasis on his preparedness to do battle in the Angelic Conflict than the distractions caused by overemphasis on the details of life.

PRINCIPLE: Spiritual survival takes priority over physical survival.

12. God has promised the believer an unbreakable logistical supply line. We need not worry about the provisions required for temporal survival. Our concern should be focused on fulfilling our duties in the assigned deployments of the angelic conflict.
13. Concern about the details of life distracts the believer from his top priority which is preparation for battle in order to execute under the pressures ubiquitous in one's daily life.
14. Therefore, placing one's trust in the Word produces confidence under pressure. This confidence enables the believer to strip for action for greater efficiency in spiritual combat.
15. What we strip off is not the literal accessories Roman soldiers needed during a military campaign but whatever distractions prevent us from advancing in the spiritual campaign. This is summarized next by the phrase "every weight" which looks like this in the Greek:

πᾶς, ὄγκος pás, ónkos – "every impediment, encumbrance, or burden that impedes or hampers function or activity."
16. *Ónkos* is the direct object of *apotíthēmi* and describes that which is stripped off and laid aside.
17. This does not refer to sin but to a concern about logistics which causes distractions and also to those things which you may enjoy but when overindulged create distractions as well.
18. These include baseball games, symphony performances, holiday activities, social functions, civic events, family outings, business engagements, or many varieties of other entertainment.
19. These kinds of things are not only legitimate activities but quite necessary in leading a balanced life that contributes to the maintenance and preservation of one's culture and traditions. But they may not become distractions to the top priority of preparing oneself for spiritual combat.

Hebrews 12:1: “For this very reason also, since we keep on having the support of such a great battalion of witnesses surrounding us, having stripped for action by laying aside every distraction...”

20. Now comes sin. It is separated from the distractions just mentioned by the conjunction *καί*, *kaí* translated “and.” Then we have the accusative singular noun:

ἁμαρτία, *hamartia* – “sin”

21. This type of sin is described next by a second direct object, the adjective:

εὐπερίστατος, *euperístatos* – “which so easily ensnares”

22. This reminds us of Romans 7 and the condition Paul addresses regarding the sin nature challenging the volition of the soul.

23. The effort is to regain control of the *kardia*, the command post of the soul, where it can manipulate volition into executing the desires of the flesh.

24. When our sinful behaviors have been facilitated into paths of least resistance then we are highly vulnerable to being distracted by them.

25. Thus such a behavior pattern becomes a “sin that so easily ensnare us.”

26. The issue is that no matter what your distractions might be or what sin you are currently into, all these things must be stripped off and tossed aside.

27. This illustration is designed to emphasize good decision-making from a position of strength and that when we fail to make an immediate correction by using the problem-solving device of rebound.

Hebrews 12:1: “For this very reason also, since we keep on having the support of such a great battalion of witnesses surrounding us, having stripped for action by laying aside every distraction and the sin which so easily ensnares us...”

28. Let's not again the circumstantial participle of the verb *apotithēmi*: “having stripped for action”.

- a. The circumstantial participle notes contingency.
- b. This means that some will strip for action while some will not.
- c. Some will ignore distractions, some will not.
- d. Some will pursue truth, some will not.
- e. Some will rebound, some will not.
- f. Some will burden themselves down with both distractions and personal sins while attempting to fight the Angelic Conflict and some will not.
- g. However, those who strip for action through good decision-making and rebound are ready and prepared to engage the enemy.

29. How these warriors advance into the battle is described next by the first-person plural, present active subjunctive of:

τρέχω, tréchō – “to advance on the run”

present:

Tendential; used for an action that is purposed or attempted, though it is not taking place. It represents the idea of that which is intended or inclined to occur – that which tends toward realization.

The writer of Hebrews commands believers who desire to strip for action but are not presently doing so should be immediately.

active:

Believers are commanded to participate in the action by advancing to spiritual maturity while avoiding all distractions.

subjunctive:

Hortatory; when one exhorts others to participate with him in any act or condition, the subjunctive is used in the first-person plural.

This is therefore a low-key request which invites believers to join him in this course of action: “let us advance on the run.”

30. This hortatory command sets up a military advance which assumes those who are addressed have the inclination to make the advance and only need to be encouraged to execute the objective.

31. The manner by which the spiritual application of such a military advance is to be executed is revealed next by the preposition *δι*, *di* plus the genitive of means of the noun:

ὑπομονή, *hupōmōnē* – “with endurance”

32. This advance on the run is executed by positive volition toward Bible Doctrine plus the consistency and duration of one's daily pursuit of truth.
33. The believer needs to move forward through difficulty, momentum testing, and adversity in order to reach the object of Mount *Pleroma*.
34. The hortatory challenge to “advance on the run with endurance” has nothing to do with the athletic race of the national games as is implied by the King James Version.
35. This “race” is against the frontal assault of the enemy who hope to break the line of the FLOT Line in the soul and breach the deployed problem-solving devices. The military analogy continues with the Greek noun:

ἀγών, *agōn* – “in the conflict”

36. This word can be interpreted in several ways and it is helpful to consult:

Kittel, Gerhard (ed.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans publishing Co., 1964), 1:135, 137-138

ἀγών. In the New Testament. The final goal is so high and glorious that all provisional ends must fade before it. If a man is not ready to set aside his egotistic needs and desires and claims and reservations, he is not fit for the arena. (p. 137)

Hebrews 11:33, in the style of the books of Maccabees, refers to heroes of faith. Here the place of conflict seems to be the battleground rather than the area. Nevertheless there seems to belong to the whole concept of *agōn* the thought of obstacles, dangers, and catastrophes through which the Christian must fight his way. (p. 138)

37. The “**conflict**” is the Angelic Conflict; the “**battleground**” is your soul; the “**fight**” is the advancing believers which is encouraged to endure all obstacles while moving toward the objective of the sophisticated spiritual life.
38. “**Let us advance on the run with endurance in the conflict ...**” is described by the present middle participle of:

πρόκειμαι, prókeimai – “**laid out for us.**”

present: Signifies action in progress.

middle: The subject acts in a view of participating in the outcome.

participle: Ascriptive; denotes a general class of believer involved in the action.

39. The present participle indicates continuous action that takes place simultaneously with the action of the main verb which is the tendential present of *tréchō*: “**to advance on the run.**” This participle when acted upon defines how this advance will be executed: “**in the conflict laid out for us to engage.**”
40. Old Testament heroes serve as a source of motivation for Church Age believers in their advance toward spiritual maturity. Hebrews 10:35-12:2
41. Our duty is to advance to spiritual maturity.
42. But this objective can only be attained through an ongoing, consistent advance which is not impeded by distractions or sins.
43. That which is marked out before us describes God's perfect plan for our lives.

Our expanded translation of Hebrews 12:1:

Hebrews 12:1: “**For this very reason also, since we keep on having the support of such a great battalion of witnesses surrounding us, having stripped for action by laying aside every distraction, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, let us advance on the run with endurance in the conflict that is laid out for us to engage.**”

1. “Stripping for action” is the isolation of distractions and any ensnaring sin. “Advancing on the run” is putting doctrine as life’s top priority. The ability to continue the advance with “endurance” is the requirement for spiritual growth. The attainment of the objective is arrival at spiritual maturity.
2. We find the essential ingredient and stabilizing factor that keeps us focused on the objective and it is found in the first part of Hebrews 12:2.

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.”

3. Having stripped for action we are free to advance on the run with endurance in the conflict marked out for us.
4. That which insures our uninterrupted advance is occupation with Christ: “Be concentrating on Jesus.” He is our prototype example for executing the spiritual life of the Church Age.
5. He has demonstrated that if He can endure the greatest suffering by utilizing the faith system then we can endure less suffering by utilization of that same system.
6. Also Old Testament heroes can serve as a source of motivation for Church Age believers in their advance toward spiritual maturity. Hebrews 10:35-12:2
7. Motivation gains momentum if the believer consistently isolates his distractions and rebounds his sins.
8. Positive advancing believers who have developed the three spiritual skills have stripped for action by isolating these distractions and are thus able to advance on the run in the angelic conflict.
9. Loyalty to this system enables them to build the endurance necessary for the daily battles of the Invisible War.
10. Motivation, momentum, and endurance are the essential qualities necessary for the believer to fulfill the Father’s plan for his life.

11. Fulfillment is the successful advance all the way to Mount *Pleroma* and receiving the conveyance of escrow blessings in time.
12. The *modus operandi* that keeps us from being distracted in this advance is occupation with Christ; concentration on Him as the prototype example of the sophisticated spiritual life.
13. Jesus was the Pioneer, Who openly conducted an historical experiment in which He demonstrated the validity of the spiritual life He bequeathed to the Church Age believer.
14. He successfully completed this plan by remaining impeccable throughout the judgment of our sins on the cross.
15. Thus, He not only pioneered the plan, He perfected the plan.
16. The secret to our Lord's ability to endure the cross was his mental attitude of perfect happiness.
17. Happiness therefore becomes the foundation upon which the superstructure of endurance is constructed.
18. Mission completed, our Lord was granted a new name: King of kings and Lord of lords. He is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God – a resurrected Human Being Who has command authority over all things.
19. Let's conclude our study by repeating the definition of true happiness:

True happiness is an inner resource developed from maximum Bible Doctrine resident in the stream of consciousness and is so advanced in its grace orientation to the plan of God that all aspects of life are evaluated with regard to eternal rather than temporal implications. Consequently, happiness is the ultimate problem-solving device.

20. Therefore, we can sing along with the psalmist in:

Psalm 118:24: “This is the day which the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be in super abundance of happiness.”