

Joy vs Happiness in the Body, Soul, and Spirit of Man

Paper presented at Grace Bible Conference

July 2017

Steve Thomas

- I. Physical Gratification of the body is a pleasant but temporary feeling. It is not meant to sustain over a long period of time. It is found in the satiation (temporary) of the appetites of the body.
 - A. During the Son's earthly ministry, Jesus relegated the needs and desires of his body to the Father's will.
 1. John 4:23-24 He tells the Samaritan woman that worship of God will be in Spirit, not in the flesh.
 2. John 4:31-34 He tells the disciples that his meat is to do the will of the Father.
 3. Hebrews 12:2 Christ with his focus forward, endured the cross, despising the pain. He was the example for delayed gratification.
 - B. Paul makes a clear distinction for the believer between the physical and the spiritual.
 1. Romans 16:18 He describes those whose God is their belly. They will cause divisions among believers and seek to draw them away with fine words or an elegance of speaking.
 2. 1 Tim 4:1-11 Paul sets a contrast between food that is to be eaten and bodily exercise contrasted with a nourishment that comes from words of faith and of doctrine. Early in the chapter he warns against those who would forbid to marry or eat certain foods. We see here that it is not a sin to gratify the flesh. But later in the chapter, he puts the physical in proper priority the spiritual.
 3. 1 Tim 6:3-11 Paul prioritizes the physical needs to the spiritual, directing Timothy's focus on the spiritual.
 4. Col 1:24 Paul is stating that it was "his turn" to suffer. To fill up that which is behind tells us that Paul is in essence taking his turn at bat so that he can use up the sufferings that are remaining. Christ had his turn, and it is our turn to step in the line or fill the gap and take our turn with those sufferings that are left behind. The physical suffering that we endure has no atoning value as Christ's did, but Paul is preparing the believer for what to expect.
 5. 1 Tim 5:6 Paul contrasts the spiritual widow who trusts the Lord and the woman who lives in pleasure.
 - C. The writers of the Epistles recognized the folly of pursuing the physical rather than the spiritual benefits.
 1. James 5:1-6 The "rich man" is told that he lived in pleasure and "nourished his heart", but judgement is coming. In the previous chapter James deals with the carnal believers who did not know how to communicate with the Father correctly and it has led to division and strife.
 2. 2 Peter 2:13 Peter describes those that riot (to indulge the body) in the day time. There is always a consequence.

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- D. During the Age of Law and the Dispensation of Law God used physical blessings and cursings to motivate obedience and punish disobedience. (Deut 8:1, Lev. 18:5)
 - 1. Ex 22, Lev 20, Deut 4, Lev 24, Ex 31, Num 15, Ex 21, Lev 24, Deut 19. Punishment for breaking seven of the ten commandments was always death. Death was the punishment under certain circumstances. The death penalty was intended to motivate Israel by fear.
 - 2. Deut 28:1-13 Promised blessings for obedience were physical: Child-bearing, livestock, crops, granaries, victory over enemies, land would yield treasures, nations will borrow from them, etc.
- E. The OT writers also saw the temporary benefits of the gratification of the body.
 - 1. Prov 21:17 There is no lasting benefit to what brings gratification to the body.
 - 2. Ecc 2:1 The writer here ascribes the word “vanity” to the physical gratification found in this life. Word comes from the root meaning vapor, or breath.
- II. The pleasure given to the soul is sometimes harder to recognize, but its effects are as limited as those to the body. The soul craves attention, appreciation, the feeling that exists from showing dominance over others. This is the engine for competition, the pride of victory and achievement.
 - A. Jesus forsook the gratification of the soul and put it in its rightful place coming after the responsibility he was given to do.
 - 1. John 6:15 Christ could have had the fame and attention given to a celebrity or a king, but he departed instead. He did not use His deity as a way to woo or entertain people into the Kingdom. He wanted followers who followed for the right reason.
 - 2. John 6:38, 5:30, Matt 26:29-32, Rom 15:3, Phil 2:5-8, Heb 5:8, Heb 10:5-10 Jesus submitted his will to the Father’s Will. His will would have been no less perfect, but the Son willingly placed himself under the authority of the Father.
 - 3. Matt 4:1-11 During His temptation by the Evil one, Christ each time placed His body and soul’s needs behind the Will of the Father. There were times where He did eat and was refreshed, and there will come a time when He will assume the throne, but it will be at the appropriate time, and not to gratify the body or soul.
 - 4. Luke 8:14 In the parable of the sower Christ describes the pleasures of the soul/body which choke any fruit that would remain.
 - B. Paul shows the same type of denial of those things that would gratify the soul. A lack of obsession with fame, appreciation, and attention.
 - 1. 1 Cor 2:1-5 Paul was not an imposing figure. His message had power not his presence or his appearance. 2 Cor 10:10 speech contemptible and body weak.

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2. 1 Thess 2:7-9 the physical/emotional was sacrificed because of the spiritual bond of Paul with the Thessalonians.
 3. 2 Cor 12:5 - 10 Paul could have gloried because of the revelations to him, but the thorn in the flesh was given to him to keep him humble.
 4. Titus 3:3 Paul describes the desire for attention to be soulish and something that characterizes someone before salvation.
 5. 2 Cor 4:6-12 The treasure of earthen vessels. Paul makes the connection of carrying around the spirit in the limitation of the flesh. The treasure is the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. But it is always limited by the physical body. We “die” in the body, so that the “life” of what we carry around can be beneficial to others. This makes the suffering that Paul was enduring profitable.
 6. 1 Cor 4:10-13 Paul presents the contrast between the physical and spiritual. He makes clear the sufferings of the soul/body and asks the Corinthians to mimic him - be a follower.
 7. Phil 3:3 Paul’s joy is not in the litany of things that might please his soul, but in Christ.
- III. In contrast with the body and soul, which desire gratification or what the world might describe as happiness, the regenerated Spirit possesses Joy. Joy is a mental willingness to endure any circumstance with patience.
- A. Joy is not dependent on our circumstances like happiness or gratification.
 1. 1 Thess 1:5-6 Paul reminds those at Thessalonica that they received the Word with affliction, yet with much joy.
 2. 1 Peter 1:6-8 Peter tells us that even though we have not seen Christ yet that we can rejoice, even in manifold temptations.
 3. Phil 4:4, 1 Thes 5:16 Joy should be the default setting of the Believer.
 - B. The joy that we have is a part of the Fruit of the Spirit. It was placed in us at the moment of salvation. It is the character of the Son.
 1. John 16: 20-22 The joy that is available to the believer is the joy of the Son of God.
 2. 1 John 3:9, 1 John 5:11 Col 3:4 The believer possesses the seed of the Father, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our Eternal Life.
 3. Gal 5:22-24. The Believer possesses the Fruit of the Spirit. We are the possession of Christ.
 4. John 17:13 Rom 5:11 This joy was made possible by the finished work of Christ, and the return of Christ to heaven.
 - C. During the Dispensation of Grace, God has provided the believer with all spiritual blessings in Christ, even though we are undeserving. 2 Peter 1:3-4. Just a few of these blessings are listed below.
 1. Eph 1:4 We are blameless and holy in Christ.
 2. Gal 2:20 We died with Christ, even though it was Christ who suffered, we receive the benefit, especially in regards to our sin nature.

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3. Eph 2:5-6 Christ rose, yet that is counted to us.
 4. Eph 2:6 Christ is seated, again, counted to us.
 5. Acts 3:14 Christ is the righteous one, yet God counts us to be righteous in Him
 6. Rom 5:18, Rom 8:1 The believer is free from condemnation.
- D. The believer being in the will of God and participating in what God is doing in this time, Joy can be expounded.
1. 2 Cor 7:13, Acts 13:52, 15:3 Rom 15:13 It seems here that in contrast to soulish gratification, participation in the work of God can expound the joy that is found in the believer.
 2. 2 Cor 8:2 Where no joy would be present in the physical gratification of the body or even the feeling of happiness in the soul, The Spirit of the believer experiences joy because of what the Godhead is performing in the lives of believers.
 3. 2 John 12 The aged Apostle would experience full joy if the Father would allow face to face fellowship.
 4. Philemon 7, 20, 1 John 1:4 When believers are experiencing victory in their walk, it adds joy to what is already in the believer.

Summary: The Body and Soul will experience gratification. These things are not evil in and of themselves. But they are temporary and are not to be sought after. They are not to be the objects of our ambitions, goals, dreams and desires. When they are the prime focus of an individual, it will end badly.

Joy however, is a stabilizing fruit that was placed in every believer at the moment of salvation. It is not dependent on our circumstances. Joy can be present in affliction, tribulation, and even in times of grief. It can be experienced in a more full way when the believer is in the center of the Father's desirous will.