



Happiness

By Mr Saurabh Jacob

The World Happiness Report 2022 ranked India 136th - tenth from the bottom of the list. When there is so much of advancement in science and technology then why is it that happiness is so elusive and distant to many. This Christmas season I would like to share three thoughts on the topic of happiness.

1. Comparison:

One of the reasons for our unhappiness is our constant comparison with others. In the digital world of social media, is it possible to escape social comparison when we are constantly seeing the highlight reels of others? The highlight reels posted on social media are often people's best and brightest moments and we unconsciously compare our day-to-day life with everyone else's shining moments. However, what we don't see on social media are the struggles, the sadness, the insecurities, the self-loathing, or any other battles that each one of us fight daily behind the scenes. There would also be moments in life when we feel we are behind in life and that most of our friends or peers are ahead of us. But we need to remind ourselves to be patient, grateful and understand that we all have different timelines, different abilities and have different pace. Everyone is unique, and we shouldn't be comparing ourselves with others. In Jordan Peterson's book - *12 Rules for Life*, the number four rule is "*Compare yourself to who you were yesterday, not to who someone else is today*". I think if we all applied this rule in our lives, we would be much happier.

2. Obedience and periods of happiness:

Billy Graham in one of his sermons talks about how nowhere in the scripture does it teach that we must search and pursue happiness. Happiness should never be a goal in life. Instead, our goal in life should be to lead an obedient and disciplined life before God. We should strive and work towards having a personal & deep relationship with Jesus Christ. Then we would find happiness as we do our duty, and we will have periods of happiness along the way. And though, there would be struggles, pain and disappointments in life, *HIS GRACE* would be sufficient for us to pass through such times.



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3. Service & helping others:

Studies have proven that we are happier when we serve and help others. When we genuinely help people, we can experience true joy and happiness. And no amount of success or money alone would make us feel that same sense of joy and happiness. There is a Chinese saying that accurately captures this thought and it goes like this: *“If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody.”*

We also limit our definition of what service is and we generally think of service as helping the poor or helping a charity. And though this is important and wonderful, and everyone should do it, it is not the only form of service. Service can also be serving through your skills or your talents that benefits other people. Even our office job is a form of service that we often miss or don't realize. If we looked at our job as also a form of service as opposed to just a means of living, I can guarantee that this would not only help us better perform in our job, but it would also make us happier.

So, this Christmas season let us shed away from our self-centeredness and look more towards helping and serving others in whatever means we can. God bless!.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year too!!

Saurabh Jacob, Cochin