

HAPPINESS IS...
Rev. Phillip Appenzeller

V. Hello! is everyone happy tonight (this morning)?

D. (After kids have answered) No!

V. You're not? Well we're going to have to do something about that. But you know, Jose'.....

D. (Interrupts) Yea, I know Jose'

V. Please!....Everyone wants to be happy.

D. Well, I don't have to worry; we dummies were MADE with a smile on our face.

V. That's a very good observation, Jose'. In fact, I suppose that's why a lot of people call you a SMART dummy.

D. And do you know what they call you?

V. No, what do they call me?

D. A dumb smarty!

V. Okay, now that's enough of that. Actually, did you know Jose' that God wants everyone to be happy.

D. What!??

V. That's right.

D. Okay, Mr. Wise guy: then why ain't everybody happy?

V. (Pause) Well because there are THINGS which can make us sad.

D. Oh, and do I ever know.....like school, spinach, cleaning my room....

V. No, no! Not things like that. First of all, Jose, Let's find out what happiness is. What do you think happiness is?

D. Happiness is....

V. Yes?

D. EATING A CANDY BAR!

V. What happens when the candy bar is gone?

D. I get another one.

V. What happens when that one is gone?

D. I get another one.

V. (Getting a little upset) And what happens when that one is gone?

D. I get a tummy ache!

V. That's right Jose', Happiness that comes from eating something or doing something, doesn't last. Try again Jose', give me a better definition for happiness.

D. Okay, I got it now. Happiness is being rich or winning the lottery and having a lot of money.

V. Yes, happiness is...No! That's not right at all. What makes you think that?

D. Because if I had lots of money and was rich I could get anything I wanted.

V. I happen to know about the richest man that ever lived.

D. You do? Tell me, quick. Who is it, Bill Gates?

V. No, this person is not alive now!

D. I knew it was too good to be true.

V. The richest man that ever lived was King Solomon, David's son.

His story is in the Bible. Jose' do you know how Solomon got his riches?

D. He had a job when he was a kid, and worked hard and saved his money?

V. No! No! No! When it was time for him to become king, he asked God....

D. (interrupts) for a lot of money. That's how he got it!

V. No, now wait a minute. It wasn't that way at all. He asked God only for wisdom to lead his people in the right way. And God said He would give him this wish. Furthermore, God said that because Solomon didn't ask for riches, He would give him a lot of money also.

D. Wait a minute! You mean he got money by NOT asking for it?

V. That's right.

D. By-the-way, I'm not asking for \$20.00!

V. That's good, 'cause you're not getting it!

D. I didn't think it would work with that tightwad! (To the audience)

V. Let's finish the story. God knew Solomon's heart was in the right place so He was more than willing to give him riches, besides the wisdom. But Solomon didn't stay happy.

D. His money ran out.

V. No, it didn't, but as time went by, Solomon forgot about the true and living God. He married wives who worshiped other gods. They wanted him to build temples to their god in their temples. And he became very, very sad.

D. God took his money away then?

V. No, He didn't. But Solomon learned a very important lesson and that was that it wasn't his money that had made him happy. It was the fact that God had been with him. When Solomon broke God's commandment which says: "You shall have no other gods before me" God's peace left Solomon, and he wasn't happy anymore.

D. How do you know that?

V. Because Jose', Solomon wrote a book in the Bible called

Ecclesiastes and it shows how sad he became. He said he tried everything to be happy but it was all useless! Then, right at the end of the book, and at the end of his life he wrote about the real secret of happiness.

D. And what was that?

V. He said, "Remember now your creator in the days of your youth..."

D. But Solomon didn't really FORGET God, did he?

V. Yes, Jose', when he stopped obeying God, He was really forgetting God. Do you remember when we started, that I said THINGS can make us sad?

D. Yeah, what do you mean by "things"?

V. Well, anything that becomes more important to us in this world than God, is an idol. The last verse of 1 John says, "Little children keep yourselves from idols." Things in this life that mean more to us than God are idols, and can never make us truly happy. Only Jesus can make us really happy! (If used at Christmas), I hope we can understand this at this holiday season, and remember, Jesus is the reason for the season.

D. I think I understand now.

V. Well, it's time to say goodbye.

D. Goodbye, See you later. Goodbye!

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