

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

by Henry M. Morris*



We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

These very familiar and wonderful words in our American Declaration of Independence seem *almost* divinely inspired. They recognize first of all that it is “self-evident” that there is a “Creator” and that “all men are created” by Him—despite the skepticisms of atheists, secularists, and evolutionists. And then appears that most felicitous phrase—“Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Now, although Thomas Jefferson and his colleagues who prepared and approved this Declaration (our “founding fathers”) may have been thinking mainly

of physical life, political liberty, and worldly happiness, the phrase surely also could and should include *spiritual* life, liberty, and happiness as well. Otherwise it could hardly be true that all men are created equal in seeking them. There have been millions through the centuries that have experienced very little earthly freedom and happiness in their physical lives, and they surely did not have “equal” opportunities to search for them. Many people—particularly children who died in infancy (or aborted *before* infancy) never even enjoyed real *physical* life.

As far as spiritual life is concerned, on the other hand, it is true that Jesus Christ is “*the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*” and that “*In Him was life; and the life was the light of men*” (John 1:9,4). The

*Dr. Henry Morris is Founder and President Emeritus of ICR.

Bible assures us that all are indeed created equal in this respect, for “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus*” (Galatians 3:28). All who search sincerely for true spiritual life will indeed find it, for He said that “*he that seeketh findeth*” (Luke 11:10), and He also said that “*I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*” (John 10:10). Therefore, “*He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life*” (I John 5:12).

With reference to spiritual liberty, Christ is also the answer to that search. Spiritual liberty, of course, is liberty from the penalty of sin at God’s coming judgment, freedom from the power of sin in this present life, and eventual freedom from the very presence of sin in heaven and in the ages to come. “*If ye continue in my word,*” Jesus said, “*ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*” (John 8:31–32,36). Thus, true life and true liberty are found in Christ—and only in Christ.

What about the pursuit of happiness? Christians often have suffered because of their faith in Christ, but Peter says: “. . . if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye” and “*If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye*” (I Peter 3:14; 4:14).

There is much more to Christian happiness, of course, than just being able to “*rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings*” anticipating the time “*when His glory shall be revealed*” and we can then “*be glad also with exceeding joy*” (I Peter 4:13). Consider a few of the many promises of happiness in living for Christ day by day.

We are happy just because we know that the mighty God of all creation is our

God—our heavenly Father. “*Happy is he . . . whose hope is in the LORD his God: Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever*” (Psalm 146:5–6).

We also ought to be wonderfully happy just because we live in a land founded on faith in that God and His Word. “*Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD*” (Psalm 144:15).

If one would indeed pursue happiness, he should surely be able to find it here in the United States, if anywhere. Our very Declaration of Independence begins and ends with a devout recognition of this great God of the universe. The opening sentence refers to “the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God” and its last sentence expresses “reliance on the protection of divine Providence.”

It is true that some of the signers of the Declaration were deists or Unitarians, rather than evangelical Christians. But even those men all believed in God as Creator, in the general authority of the Bible, and in the moral and ethical perfections of the teachings of Jesus Christ. They were all profound thinkers and courageous leaders, 56 men altogether, representing all thirteen of the original colonies.

It is profoundly significant that all were at least nominally believers in the God of the Bible and in His supernatural creation of all things in the beginning, and in Jesus Christ as the chief Founder of our nation’s religion. None were atheists or Muslims or Buddhists or from any other non-Christian religion, and the same was true of the body of distinguished men who several years later formulated our national Constitution. It is understandable why God has signally blessed our nation. Indeed, “*happy is that people, whose God is the LORD.*”

There are also a number of other more individualized Biblical criteria for true

happiness. For example, the attainment of true wisdom will result in true happiness. *“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. . . . [Wisdom] is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her”* (Proverbs 3:13,18).

And how does one start to find true wisdom? *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom”* (Proverbs 9:10). True wisdom, of course, must be based upon true knowledge—that is, true science—so how does one go about acquiring true knowledge? *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge”* (Proverbs 1:7). Furthermore, it is in Christ Himself (who created and upholds all things) that *“are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”* (Colossians 2:3).

True happiness is also found in obeying God’s commandments. *“Where there is no vision [that is, divine revelation], the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he”* (Proverbs 29:18). As Paul said, “. . . we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully” (I Timothy 1:8). *“The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart”* (Psalm 19:8). After all, He is our Creator, and He would only establish laws concerning our behavior which would contribute to our happiness if we conform to them.

Another great blessing of God was the establishment of the family as the basic unit of human society. *“But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh. . . . What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder”* (Mark 10:6–9). To that first male and female He had created, God also gave His first command, *“Be fruitful, and multiply”* (Genesis 1:28).

Father, mother, and children—the family! *“Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is*

his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them” (Psalm 127:3–5).

Happiness is also a by-product of a clear conscience. *“Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth”* (Romans 14:22). Those who patiently endure affliction and suffering, especially if these arise because of faithfulness to God, can actually find happiness in suffering. *“Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure”* (James 5:10).

Finally, the Lord Jesus Himself, after an act of true humility and service, said: *“For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. . . . If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them”* (John 13:15,17).

Christ even suffered and died for us, *“leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps”* (I Peter 2:21), and this brought Him true happiness and joy. *“Wherefore . . . let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 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”* (Hebrews 12:1–2).

As we celebrate our nation’s Independence Day, we need to remember with great thanksgiving those godly men who, as they signed the Declaration, realized that doing so meant that they must “pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.” It did indeed, before the War for Independence was finally won, cost many of them their fortunes, and several their lives, but not their sacred honor. They secured for us the happiness of living in the most blessed nation in the history of the world, and we honor them for such a legacy. ☛

WILL WE HAVE ANY WORK TO DO IN HEAVEN?

by John D. Morris, Ph.D.


What will we do when we get to heaven? Eternity is a long time. Of course, we will enjoy a close and personal relationship with our Creator/Redeemer, thanking and praising Him for all He is and has done on our behalf, but will there be any jobs to do? Certainly we will delight in renewing acquaintances with loved ones and the heroes of the faith who have gone before. How many years will we allot for that? But what then? Dare we speculate?

In many ways heaven will mirror God's "very good" creation in Eden. Realization of His full plan for earth has been delayed but not thwarted. We will even have access to the Tree of Life and its delights once again. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, . . . the things which God hath prepared for [us]" (I Corinthians 2:9). Thus, we can only speculate on heaven's delights by noticing Eden's character.

As it relates to work, we note that Adam was given work to do. It was not burdensome, but enjoyable and rewarding seeing the fruit of his labors blossom in caring for the Garden (Genesis 2:15). It was a responsible job, for God had made him the steward of His creation. We aren't told what would have resulted had Adam been obedient, but he was the steward of the entire planet and potentially beyond. What responsibility will be given us in eternity? Scripture only reveals that "His servants shall serve Him" (Revelation 22:3) in heaven and that he who has been "faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things" (Matthew 25:23).

Astronomers now know the universe teems with billions of beautiful galaxies never before seen, and we wonder why God even created them. Never before have humans even known of them. There are many more galaxies than there are people who have ever been born. What is their purpose, and what is their future? Let me speculate.

In a marvelous passage on the glories of heaven we are told that we are already seated in "heavenly places" (Ephesians 2:6) positionally declared righteous in His eyes, and able to receive His favor and participate in His plan for the ages. Might this also have a physical meaning?

Has God created this immense universe as our "Garden" for eternity? Will we have access to the stars? The same passage teaches that "in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (v.7). Perhaps He will assign a galaxy to each of us, with the rewarding work of developing it for His glory. We will always be welcome in His omnipresence, experiencing fellowship unbroken by sin or distance. But maybe He will expect an occasional progress report on our galaxy. Just as Adam was to "tend" the Garden, we may have the privilege of exploring and showcasing His stellar handiwork and visiting the "gardens" of others, all the while fellowshiping with Him and giving Him credit for His creative majesty. We will have an eternity of time to explore seemingly infinite space, giving glory to Him in all, and pleasing Him with faithful service. At any rate, we can dream. 



© 2005 by ICR • All Rights Reserved

Single Copies 10¢ • Order from: **INSTITUTE FOR CREATION RESEARCH**

P.O. Box 2667, El Cajon, CA 92021 • Available for download on our website (www.icr.org).