

JOHN- and the way to supreme happiness
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(JOHN 15:11)

The apostle John had an infallible remedy for happiness. It was a guaranteed cure for melancholia, and promised complete satisfaction to any man or woman who would give it a fair trial. Yet he was unable to claim proprietary rights for his prescription, as he had learned his secrets from Another. He had lived with the Great Physician, and his opportunities for study had not been neglected.

Ingredient 1. I Must Abide in Christ

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. . . . These things have J spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in ~ 00, and that your joy might be full "(John 15 :4, 11). Supreme happiness only becomes possible for the Christian when he learns to abide in his Lord. Should anything prevent the flow of life from the Lord to His child-from the vine to the branch-spiritual tragedy will undoubtedly follow. The health of the branch is dependent upon clean channels through which the life-giving sap might flow. And in like manner this is true of the relationship between Christ and His followers.

Ingredient 2. I Must Commune With Christ

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16 :23, 24). This constituted the new teaching on prayer. Through the medium of Christ the disciples could talk with God, and confidently expect to receive from Him definite answers to their petitions. When humble fishermen found in the Lord Jesus the authority and means whereby to approach the throne of grace, they quickly discovered that language was inadequate to express the joy resulting from a real answer to prayer.

Ingredient 3. I Must Study the Words of Christ

"And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word (John 17:13, 14). The immortal prayer of Christ reveals many truths, but this is one of the greatest. We may never know how often Jesus secretly prayed in the mountains, for He constantly sought the place of communion. Yet in the garden of Gethsemane the Lord ordained that His prayer should be made public, in order that the disciples might have access to His words. He desired that they should be acquainted with His statements, for through this medium abundant joy would reach their hearts. His gracious words are now recorded in a book which is a source of real happiness to every devout reader.

Ingredient 4. I Must Walk With Christ

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. . . - Walk in the light" (I John 1: 3-7). It remains one of the greatest miracles of our faith that through His death and resurrection, the Saviour has now

JOHN- and the way to supreme happiness become omnipresent to His people. He has said, "I will never leave you. And if this be true, we are thereby provided with the opportunity of walking with Him in blessed fellowship. The road of life need never be lonely. Every path can be an Emmaus road, on which our hearts may burn as we listen to His word.

Ingredient 5. I Must Talk A bout Christ

"Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full" (2 John 12). This is a fitting climax for all that has gone before. If we enjoy the preliminary steps, we cannot refrain from talking about the Lord Jesus. It is easy for us to imagine John sitting down with the "elect lady and her children," and as they conversed about the Saviour, their faces shone with holy delight.

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