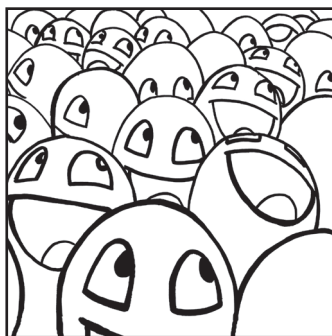


The Biblical Secret To Happiness

The Biblical Secret to Happiness

GENE GOBBLE





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Dedication



This book is dedicated to my grandparents,
my parents, my wife, my 10 children, and
my 18 grandchildren that I am very grateful for.

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Introduction



Many people may be surprised to learn that the Bible talks about secrets. Psalm 25:14 (NKJV) says, “The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him.” In other words, those who discover His secrets (*mysteries or blessings*) are those who fear Him in the proper biblical way. Therefore, the fear of the Lord is the key to unlocking those secret treasure rooms where you will find the blessings of God.

One of the most interesting secrets that can be discovered in the Bible is the secret to a happy life through the fear of the Lord. Most people will acknowledge, if they are honest, that they want to experience a genuinely happy life. How many books have been written about happiness? How much money has been spent on trying to buy happiness? How many relationships have people gone through in search of happiness? People throughout history have tried everything under the sun to find and hold

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onto that elusive state of true and enduring human happiness, only to find themselves unhappy again and again and again.

There is a very important reason that true and genuine happiness is so hard to find and experience. Happiness is actually a by-product of something else. You cannot go out and find happiness directly like you go out and find a good deal on a car, clothing, or a home. You cannot try to focus on being happy (mentally or emotionally) and expect to wake up happy every day. It won't work. It would be like looking into a mirror and saying, "I am going to lose weight." Losing weight is a by-product of other things such as a proper diet, exercise, and self-control. You can look in a mirror and tell yourself all day long you are going to become strong, but that will not make you strong. Gaining strength is also a by-product of other things such as weight lifting, cardiovascular workouts, endurance training, proper intake of protein, and other essential body-building nutrients.

So, what is the biblical secret to happiness? True and lasting happiness can only be reached through a spirit of gratefulness. Happiness is a by-product of a grateful soul. If you become a grateful person, you will become a happy person. The degree of your gratefulness will dictate the degree of your happiness.

Gratefulness in the psychological and spiritual realm can be compared to gravity in the scientific realm. The law of gravity is one of the dominant features of the universe that controls everything we do. It also controls how the movable parts of the universe interact with each other. You cannot break the law of

gravity. Humans have learned how to temporarily overcome gravity with the principles of aerodynamics, but we cannot break it.

Gratefulness is one of the dominant features in the realm of the spirit, soul (the mind, will, and emotions), and body. Gratefulness, or the absence of it, controls everything we do. It also controls how we interact with other people and God. Unlike how gravity can be overcome with aerodynamics, the laws of gratefulness cannot be overcome with other principles. If we violate the laws of gratefulness, we will lose our happiness. Cause and effect will kick in every time. Gratefulness is the cause and happiness is the effect, or ungratefulness is the cause and unhappiness is the effect. There is no way to avoid these cause-and-effect relationships. Ungratefulness and the by-product of unhappiness will also cause us to make some of the worst decisions of our lives. These bad decisions are very serious and can have life-long consequences.

The good news is that you can choose to become a truly grateful person. You have full control of your destiny when it comes to being grateful. Nothing in the world can stop you from becoming a grateful person once you decide that is what you really want. It is entirely a matter of choice. No one else can make this choice for you and no one else in the world can stop you from making this choice. Once you make the decision and begin working on the steps to becoming grateful, you will begin to experience real, true, and genuine happiness. Although it will take time and it will take work, be assured that if you will

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take the necessary steps explained in this book, you can begin to experience gratefulness and happiness today, tomorrow, and the rest of your life. Your destiny lies in the palm of your own hand.

As you read and think about the ideas and illustrations in this book, I hope and pray that you will make that blessed decision to become a grateful person. The chapters in this book are designed to help you develop a grateful spirit, so you can become that incredibly happy person you always wanted to be. May this journey into gratefulness be the most exciting trip on which you have ever embarked. There is no limit to how happy you can become, and it will not cost you a thing. Satisfaction is guaranteed to the grateful person.

Yours in Christ,
—**Gene Gobble**

Why Developing and Maintaining a Grateful Spirit is an Absolute Necessity



Gratefulness will enter your spirit when you begin to identify and recognize what God has done for you and what others have done for you. We all tend to have short-term and long-term memory problems when it comes to all God and others have done for us.

Have you ever read Proverbs 15:13 (NKJV)? It says, “A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance.” A paraphrase could read, “A grateful heart makes a happy face.” Proverbs 17:22 (NKJV) says, “A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.” A paraphrase could read, “A grateful heart does good like medicine.” It is vital to see God is trying to help us understand how a grateful heart benefits the body physically as well as helping the mind to be happy.

In an article (*Better Homes and Gardens*, July 21, 1993) titled “Laugh Your Way to Good Health,” Nick Gallo made an observation that echoes what Solomon wrote about a merry

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heart thousands of years ago. “Humor is good medicine and can actually help keep you in good health.” He quoted William F. Fry, MD, who describes laughter as “inner jogging” and says it’s good for a person’s cardiovascular system. Comparing laughter to exercise, Gallo pointed out that when a person laughs heartily, several physical benefits occur. There is a temporary lowering of blood pressure, a decreased rate of breathing, and a reduction in muscle tension. Many people sense a “relaxed afterglow.” He concluded, “An enduring sense of humor, especially combined with other inner resources, such as faith and optimism, appears to be a potent force for better health.”



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Mr. Gallo would almost certainly agree that a grateful spirit could be added to the list of inner resources that bring a blessing to our physical bodies as well as an enduring sense of humor and faith and optimism. A happy mind is a by-product of a grateful spirit.

Consider the list of characteristics below that describes a person with a happy mindset that springs up from a grateful heart or grateful spirit.

Joyful	___	Forgiving	___	Content	___
Considerate	___	Generous	___	Compassionate	___
Courteous	___	Patient	___	Gentle	___
Enthusiastic	___	Sensitive	___	Positive	___
Flexible	___	Sincere	___	Loving	___

Now make two copies of this list. Then ask someone who knows you well to take one copy of this list and put a checkmark by each of the words that describes you on a consistent basis. While your friend is working on this list, put a checkmark by each of the words that you feel describes you on a consistent basis. After you and your helper are both finished, set the two lists side by side and see how they compare. If you are both genuine and transparent in this exercise, you may get some very helpful insights into how grateful you really are.

Next, consider the list of characteristics below describing a person with an unhappy mindset springing from an ungrateful heart or ungrateful spirit.

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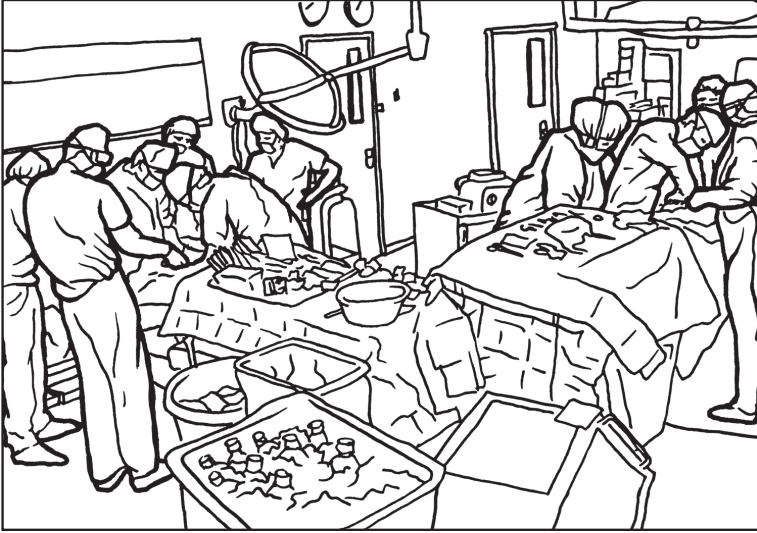
Irritable	___	Critical	___	Harsh	___
Impatient	___	Inflexible	___	Overbearing	___
Depressed	___	Selfish	___	Insensitive	___
Discouraged	___	Judgmental	___	Stingy	___
Negative	___	Fault-finding	___	Touchy	___

Now repeat the same exercise you did with the first list of words using your trusted friend to identify the words in this second list that describe you on a consistent basis. After both of you have checked off each applicable word, compare your lists and learn what you can from it.

Negative is one of the words above that needs a little more attention. The research of Dr. Herbert Clark, a psychologist from Johns Hopkins University, shows it takes the average person about forty-eight percent longer to understand a sentence including a negative, than it does to understand a positive or affirmative sentence. Dr. Clark concluded the secret to good communication is positive affirmation. It is not what you won't or can't do that interests people, but it is what you will or can do. Have you ever gone on a job interview and told a prospective employer how many things you were not willing to do?

Grateful-happy people will manifest these qualities in all they can do and try to do in every area of life. This includes in their families, neighborhoods, churches, workplaces, and their recreational activities. People are always glad when a grateful-happy person shows up, and they are always glad

when an ungrateful-unhappy person leaves. Choose to be that grateful-happy person that others rejoice to see.



Another interesting idea related to the health value of gratefulness residing in the heart and affecting the mind comes from insights gained from heart transplants. A new concept in heart transplantation technology is emerging, according to an article by Kate Ruth Linton, “Knowing By Heart: Cellular Memory in Heart Transplants,” published in the *Montgomery College Student Journal of Science & Mathematics* (Vol. 2, Sept. 2003). This concept is called cellular memory.

Linton tells the account of a woman named Claire Sylvia, a dancer, who had a heart transplant operation on May 29, 1988, when she was given the heart of an 18-year-old man killed in a motorcycle accident. After the operation the woman noticed

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changes in her attitudes, habits and even what she liked to eat. She was walking in a more masculine way, and craving items like green peppers and beer, which were not to her taste before. She even began having recurrent dreams about a man named Tim L. and thought he might be her donor. When she met her donor's family, she found her donor's name was indeed Tim L., and the changes in her behavior, attitude and tastes were in line with her donor's.

While some members of the scientific community claim this is just a strange coincidence, others believe this is evidence of cellular memory. Linton says, "Cellular memory is defined as the idea that the cells in our bodies contain information about our personalities, tastes, and histories. Evidence of this phenomenon has been found most often in heart transplant recipients."

Linton cites the studies of Candace Pert, PhD, a biochemical research scientist that say, "every cell in our body has its own 'mind'... and if you transfer tissues from one body to another, the cells from the first body will carry memories into the second body." Pert found that "the brain and the body send messages to each other through short chains of amino acids known as neuropeptides and receptors." Previously, these amino acid chains were thought to only exist in the brain, but now they have been found in major organs throughout the body, including the heart.

Kate Linton also cites Dr. Andrew Armour, a pioneer in neurocardiology. Research by the HeartMath Institute shows that the heart and brain have a "dynamic, ongoing, two-way

dialogue, with each organ continuously influencing the other's function." Dr. Armour is the one who came up with the concept of the "heart brain," saying the heart has its own "intrinsic nervous system." He calls it the "little brain in the heart." This is what makes heart transplants work and allows the heart and brain to talk to each other through nerve fibers in the spinal cord. When these nerve connections are severed during a heart transplant, the "transplanted heart is still able to function in its new body using its intact, intrinsic nervous system," according to Dr. Armour.

Another example of cellular memory the article quotes is the case of an eight year-old girl who was transplanted with the heart of a murdered ten-year-old girl. When the eight-year-old girl began dreaming about the man who had murdered her donor, her mother took her first to a psychiatrist, and then to the police. She was able to give them descriptions of "the time, the weapon, the place, the clothes he wore, what the little girl he killed had said to him." The details were all accurate and the murderer was arrested.

Kate Linton quotes Bruce Lipton, a former Stanford research scientist, who says, "A transplanted heart comes with donor's unique set of self-receptors, which differ, naturally, from those of the recipient. As a result, the recipient now possesses cells that respond to two different 'identities.' Not every recipient will sense that a set of cells within their body is now responding to a second signal. But if anyone is going to experience this change, it might well be a dancer who is acutely aware of her own body, referring to Claire Sylvia."

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For the purposes of this book the information from this article illustrates the intricate relationship between the mind (brain) and the heart. It shows how it could be scientifically possible (as well as spiritually possible) for a grateful heart to produce a happy mind. The more you develop a grateful spirit, the happier mind you will experience.

Also, consider the power of your salvation experience. Jesus Christ gave you a new spirit, which is His Spirit, to reside in you for the rest of your life here on earth. You could say that Jesus performed a supernatural heart transplant. He put His heart and mind in you. Consider the following verses.

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you;
I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you
a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause
you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments
and do them.

(Ezek. 36:26-27 NKJV)

But we have the mind of Christ.

(1 Cor. 2:16 NKJV)

With the heart and mind of Christ transplanted into you through salvation, you now benefit from the memory cells of Christ's heart and mind. Jesus Christ is the epitome of gratefulness to God the Father, and He was totally grateful to every person who ministered to Him during his thirty-three years on earth. Just allow the gratefulness of Christ to well up inside of you and you will be the happiest person on earth.

Why Developing and Maintaining a Grateful Spirit is an Absolute Necessity 23

In the following chapters you will first read specific steps on how to cultivate, develop, and maintain an ungrateful spirit and unhappy mind (if that is your goal), and how to cultivate, develop, and maintain a grateful spirit and happy mind (if that is your goal).