

# Scriptures for A Happy Life

1. (Prov 22:6 KJV) Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

2. (Phil 4:11-14 NIV) I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. {12} I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. {13} I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

3. Even Jesus was half flesh, half God. (John 1:11-13 NIV) He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. {12} Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- {13} children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

4. (Mat 6:25-34 KJV) Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? {26} Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? {27} Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? {28} And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: {29} And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. {30} Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? {31} Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? {32} (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. {33} But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. {34} Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

5. (Phil 3:14 KJV) I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

6. (Mat 25:35-40 KJV) For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: {36} Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. {37} Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? {38} When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? {39} Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? {40} And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

7. (Mat 25:28-30 KJV) Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. {29} For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. {30} And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

8. (Prov 3:5-12 KJV) Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. {6} In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. {7} Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. {8} It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. {9} Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: {10} So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. {11} My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: {12} For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

9. (1 Cor 5:9-13 NIV) I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people-- {10} not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. {11} But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. {12} What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? {13} God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

10. (Mark 10:42-46 NIV) Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. {43} Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, {44} and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. {45} For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

# How to be happy

By Sara Eckel

Last night, I had dinner with a friend who has everything I want: a beautiful brownstone house filled with expensive furniture, a smart and funny husband, an adorable baby girl and a published novel.

***She just told me that she's miserable.***

"I know it's terrible," she said. "I have nothing to complain about. But I've always been miserable. I get it from my mother — she was a real grump." (1 - Prov 22:6 KJV)

I was surprised; I had always thought she was happy. Not that I ever asked her. Of course she's happy, I figured, she has all the toys. This deduction is a common mistake, says David Niven, Ph.D., author of "The 100 Simple Secrets of Happy People."

**"One thing that continually shocks people is that the events of a person's life have little to do with how happy he or she is," says Dr. Niven** (2 - Phil 4:11-14 NIV).

Rather, as my friend suspected, genetics is about 50 percent responsible for our level of happiness, says Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Ph.D., author of the groundbreaking book "Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience." Fortunately, we have a significant amount of control over the other half. (3 - John 1:11-13 NIV)

***Here are some ways to tend to your mental health and happiness today:***

**1. Appreciate the moment:** (4 - Mat 6:25-34 KJV)

Many of us view happiness as a future state: something we'll achieve when we get that great job, beautiful home or handsome husband. And while we do often feel quite elated when we attain these goals, the bliss is usually short-lived — and quickly followed by a desire for something else, whether it's more money, a renovated kitchen or flowers on Valentine's Day. **"That's why winning the lottery or getting a promotion doesn't work.**

You're always looking toward the next step," explains Dr. Csikszentmihalyi. To break that looking-ahead cycle, **you need to cultivate an appreciation of your life as it is now — dissatisfying job and all.**

Csikszentmihalyi says people have a natural tendency to think about what's not working in their lives and ignore the good stuff. So **make a list of everything that you love about your life** — Thursday-night Chardonnays with the girls, the nature trail nearby, the way your two-year-old looks in her Halloween costume — and then remind yourself to really savor them.

**2. Give yourself a higher calling:** (5 - Phil 3:14 KJV)

Csikszentmihalyi says that **people are happy when they feel that they are contributing to something greater than themselves**, whether through their job, family or community. "Happy people don't ruminate about themselves and their problems. **They say, Life is short. I'd better do something useful.**" But you don't have to have a large family or a job vaccinating orphans in order to lead a fulfilling life.

Take the real-estate agent I know. Truly invested in helping people find the right home, he will often steer prospective tenants away from listings he considers subpar, depending upon their needs and desires.

If he was strictly out for his commission, he wouldn't get nearly the same job satisfaction (and, in the long run, he probably wouldn't make as much money, either). So think about the ways you can transform your perspective of your daily tasks.

**3. Build small acts of kindness into your day:** (6 - Mat 25:35-40 KJV)

You can always **build small acts of kindness into your day**, such as giving up your seat on the bus, putting a quarter in a stranger's ready-to-expire parking meter or clicking on The Breast Cancer Site ([www.thebreastcancersite.com](http://www.thebreastcancersite.com)), where you can help fund mammograms for poor women. These things do make a difference in others' lives. **You flow, girl (or guy).**

**4. Find your flow:** (7 - Mat 25:28-30 KJV)

We've all had those moments when things feel completely right in our world. Perhaps you were cross-country skiing through a beautiful ice-coated forest or creating a scrapbook of snapshots and ticket stubs from your trip to Los Angeles. You spent the day completely immersed in the activity, and when you finally looked at your watch, you were startled to realize how much time had passed.

Csikszentmihalyi says these moments of complete absorption are when people are happiest, a state he calls "flow." "These are the moments people treasure in their lives, and the more of them you get, the better off you are," he says.

To find your flow, first get a hobby — an activity you do for pure enjoyment. Think about the stuff you loved to do as a kid — ballet lessons, pottery, pickup basketball — and then just go with it.

**5. Examine your options:** (8 - Prov 3:5-12 KJV)

One crucial difference between happy people and unhappy people is that the former believe they have choices. Two workers could be toiling away at the same understimulating job with the same impossible-to-please boss but have completely different experiences: one feeling that the situation is hopeless, the other seeing a way out, either through moving up in the company or dusting off her resume.

So even if the happy person stays on the job, she still feels she is doing so by choice.

**6. Cultivate friends and activities that will increase your sense of options:** (9 - 1 Cor 5:9-13 NIV)

Anything from taking night classes to joining an Internet dating service to sitting down with a good friend and brainstorming about your dreams for the future.

Actually, you're already doing one of those things. Studies show that **people who use computers tend to be happier than people who don't**. "People feel a sense of possibilities when they use their computer," says Niven. "It gives you access to information and to connections. If you have an interest in an obscure hobby, there may not be anyone in your town who shares it, but you can probably find at least 100 people online who do."

**7. Nurture your relationships:** (10 - Mark 10:42-46 NIV)

Having a strong connection to others — be they family or friends — is a crucial part of mental health; but unfortunately, many of us simply focus on what our relationships are or aren't giving us rather than asking ourselves what we can do to bolster the people in our lives.

But Csikszentmihalyi says the **key to having fulfilling relationships is to invest in others without expecting anything back**. "It can't be quid pro quo," he says. Paradoxically, **those who expect the least from loved ones, usually get the most**. "That's the interesting thing," says Csikszentmihalyi. "The less you try, the more you succeed."

**Find joy in the people and places around you!**