

**THRU THE BIBLE SERIES**  
**"Part LII: 1 John - Finding And Sustaining True Inner Fulfillment"**

Introduction: (To show the need . . . )

The New York Times and author of the best-selling work, Emotional Intelligence noted in his book that what most people **think** will make them happy does **NOT** work **long-term**: (a) with the exception of the **very** poor, there is little connection between income and true happiness. (b) Educational level and social status don't make a difference, either: Ph.Ds are no more likely to feel happy than those who never graduated from high school. (c) Gender and age don't matter: youth doesn't outdo age, and men and women rate themselves equally on the happiness scale. (d) In spite of big events like a job promotion, making a killing in the stock market or getting a great deal on a house, within 6 months, people experiencing such "up" events are generally right back where they were before their "big break" came! (cf. Bottom Line/Personal, November 1, 1996, p. 9)

Christians that are **currently** on the market in the "CBD" catalogue:

(a) Don't Let Jerks Get the Best of You, by Paul Meier, M.D. Dr. Meier defines a jerk as "anyone of any race, creed, sex or color who selfishly abuses another human being or animal." According to Meier, the 1980 produced many such people.

(b) The Anger Workbook, by Drs. Les Carter and Frank Minirth. It's a book helping readers get a hold of their righteous anger and deal with it until they find contentment.

(c) Hurt People. Hurt People by Sandra D. Wilson. This work focuses on breaking the physical abuse behavior patterns a child learns from his or her parents so that the sins of the fathers will not have to be visited on the children generation after generation.

12 "Christian" Beliefs That Can Drive You Crazy, by Drs. Henry Cloud and John Townsend. Cloud and Townsend reveal 12 commonly accepted beliefs going around Evangelical churches that cause bondage, and they show how they can replace these falsehoods with sound Scriptural truths to regain control of their emotions!

**Why are people unhappy?! Why are even many Christians unhappy or unfulfilled? What is the SOLUTION?!**

(We turn to the sermon's "Need" section . . . )

**Need: "Many people I know--even Christians--seek 'something more' to fill a deep, inexplicable inner void! HOW is this done?!"**

- I. **When man sinned, his RAPPORT with his Creator failed, and the resulting PAIN led him to futile, ignorant efforts to DEAL with it!**
  - A. When God made man, He fulfilled man's spiritual needs by daily having personal fellowship with him, Gen. 1:27, 31; 3:8-9 implied.
  - B. Yet man's **sin** created a gulf between himself and God, **alienating** man from fulfilling rapport with his Creator, Gen. 3:8-9; 3:22-24a.
  - C. Man reacted by **creating** false "gods" to fill this void, Rom. 1:21-23.
  - D. Finally, fallen man's **distorted** view led him to **assume** that God's segregation arose from disliking the **material** universe, that God stayed aloof since man was in a **body**, Ry. St. Bib., KJV, Intro., 1 Jn.
  - E. In time, some men concluded with the Gnostics that fulfillment by fellowship with God was available only for some **elite** mystics, *Ibid.*
- II. **God led John to write to counter these errant views and show how satisfying rapport with the Creator is possible, 1 Jn. 1:1-4.**
  - A. John knew Jesus as the Genesis **CREATOR** of **material things** come in the **BODY** to address man's **sin** to solve God and man's rapport problem, 1 Jn. 1:1-2 with Gn. 1:1; Jn. 1:1-3, 4-18.
  - B. John wrote this letter to describe how mortal men could have **fullness of joy** by interaction with their Genesis **Creator**, Christ, 1 Jn. 1:1, 3-4.
- III. **John then explained the path for gaining that fulfillment as follows:**
  - A. To have **rapport** with God, man must **adopt** God's **viewpoint**, 1:5-7:
    1. By the term "light" in 1 John 1, John recalled Isaiah 8:21 and 9:2:
      - a. In Isaiah's day, Israel sought insight through demons, Isa. 8:19.
      - b. Isaiah stated that unless God's people turned only to **Scripture**, they had no "light", or no **true** reality in their viewpoint, 8:20.
      - c. However, Messiah would come and be God's great "light" of **true** viewpoint for spiritually darkened Israel, Isa. 9:2-3, 6-7.

2. Thus, 1 John 1:5-7 notes that one must order his life after God's **revealed viewpoint** in **Christ & Scripture** to **start** being fulfilled!
- B. Now, **GOD'S VIEW** on the rapport issue as stated via **Christ & Scripture** is that **man** must make some **adjustments**, 1:8-2:27:
1. **Adjustment One** - As it was with Adam and Eve, one **today** must not have **sin** in his life or it will block rapport with his Creator, 1 Jn. 1:8-2:1. **Unbelievers** must believe on Christ for salvation and cleansing from **sin** (2:2b,12); **believers** must confess **sins** that have blocked spiritual intimacy with God since salvation, 1:8-2:2a, esp. 9
  2. **Adjustment Two** - Unlike Adam and Eve, believers must **obey** the Creator's **Word**, which in summation is **loving the brethren**, to enjoy **living** in rapport with Him, 1 Jn. 2:3-11; Mtt. 22:34-40.
  3. **Adjustment Three** - The believer must **conquer competing errant viewpoints** that trip him up into **sin** & break his rapport with God:
    - a. **New converts** (Children) must **stop** leaning on **man's words** (as Adam failed in heeding Eve, Gn. 3:17a!) and trust the **Spirit's Bible teaching** to avoid false **input** leading to sin, 2:13,18-27.
    - b. **Growing** believers (Young Men) must **also not** utilize **lusts** to **evaluate** things or ideas, leading to deceived, sinful actions (cf. Eve's case, Gn. 3:5-6), but **simply obey Scripture**, 13b, 14b-17.
    - c. **Mature** believers (Fathers) must **keep applying these two learned lessons** for **continual** fulfillment, 1 Jn. 2:13a,14a. (see John G. Mitchell, *Fellowship: Three Letters From John*, p. 63ff)
- C. John then announced 14 **enrichments** flowing **from God** to people who **make these adjustments**, 1 Jn. 2:28-5:20: (1) Such people are always motivated to be cleansed from sin, 2:28-3:3; (2) they produce effective Christian service, 3:4-18; (3) their epistemology (basis of knowing) solidifies in God's truth, not the authority of others or the world, creating stability, 3:19-21; (4) they get answers to prayer, 3:22-24a; (5) they are assured of communing with God, 3:24b; (6) they discern true & false ministries, 4:1-6; (7) they overcome false spirituality, 4:7-5:3; (8) they are assured of salvation, 5:4-5, 6-13; (9) they pray well, 5:14-17; (10) they overcome habitual sin, 5:18a; (11) they understand the security of their position in Christ, 5:18b; (12) they view the world as being under Satan's reign, thus avoiding its destructive seductions, 5:19 (2:17a); (13) they see the need to separate from the world system for sustained happiness, 1 Jn. 5:19; (14) they overcome (Gnostic) heresies due to this victory of faith, 1 Jn. 5:19-20.
- D. In summary, John urged people to seek happiness by looking to **Christ** and heeding **Scripture**, not the "idols" of the **world** or **others**, 5:21.
- IV. **1 John adds to the "thread of redemption", showing that heeding SCRIPTURE equips mortals EVEN to SUSTAIN what man LOST in EDEN--fulfilling communion with their holy Creator, CHRIST!**

***Lesson Application:*** To FILL that inner "void", (1) believe on Christ as Savior from sin (Jn. 3:16) and (2) commune with God as stated in 1 John. (3) To KEEP that fulfillment, RESIST replacing reliance on God and His will presented in Scripture with leaning on the errant "gods" of others and the world and their harmful input!

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the lesson . . .)

Radio Bible Class Ministry's December 1996 issue of Our Daily Bread will have a story on December 11 that reveals the blessing of spiritual fellowship with God. Richard W. DeHaan reports this story:

A widow of a godly man who passed away was asked shortly after her husband died in a hospital: "Did he have any last words?"

The widow replied, "No. He slipped away so quickly that we didn't have a chance to talk about anything."

The friend replied, "How sad. It must break your heart."

The widow responded graciously, "Oh, don't feel sorry for me. I have something better. I recall so well the night he testified in church about his faith in Christ. I also have the wonderful memory of his consistent life that spoke far more effectively of his devotion to God than a few comforting comments in his final moments."

**When we walk with the Lord, in obedience to His Word and in dependence upon His Spirit, we have a spiritual immunity built within to "unhappiness" as the world knows it. We have communion with God, something this widow and her husband knew as a way of life.**

**Let us similarly walk in the light of God's Word for real fulfillment!**