

# The Happy List

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C. Elijah Bronner: Don't focus on negative thoughts. Focus on creating what you desire.

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And now for 7815, The Happy List.

C. Elijah Bronner: Thank you for joining Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the Word. We welcome all of you joining us by television and those of you joining us online at BrothersofTheWord.com or Facebook live. Thank you for tuning in and being with us today. Always a wonderful, delight, and joy to have you to tune in and join us.

Well, I would like to share just a little humor. The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic Elementary School for lunch. And at the head of the table was a large tray of apples. A nun had written a note and posted it on the apple tray saying, "Take only one, God is watching." Further along the lunch line at the other end was a large tray of chocolate chip cookies. A little girl wrote a note which she put next to the tray of cookies that said, "Take all you want, God is watching the apples."

Well, we've been talking a lot about joy and I want to really conclude today but I want to entitle today, "The Happy List." I've been trying to share my little happy list for weeks now. Never got around to this, I said, "I just devote our entire session and we'll call it The Happy List." Let's read the scripture over in the Book of Proverbs 15:13. When you get that, say "Amen." Proverbs 15:13. And I'm reading from the message bible it says, "A cheerful heart brings a smile to your face; a sad heart makes it hard to get through the day." They were talking about The Happy List.

Bible study that said probably that only about 20% of people are happy, only about 20% of people are happy. So, a lot of unhappy people in the world and that's why Jesus wanted us to be full of joy, the happiest joy because the world can be such an unhappy place, there's so many unhappy people, because people don't have the spiritual fair with all to be able to have the joy of the Lord if

they don't know Christ Jesus as a savior. And then, the sad part is that a lot of Christians who know Jesus as a savior and they're not operating in joy either. And so, that's why we've been sharing this message of mountain joy so let God's people can be full of joy and enjoy life, and allowed that joy to spill over and to be a blessing to others.

We've talked quite a bit about some things that God wanted us to be full of joy so that we could enjoy life, but also because being full of joy makes everything better, it makes everything better. Everybody say, "Better." Makes everything better when you're full of joy. It helps us to enjoy life and it makes everything better, that was reading of study, this was a popular hotel at shine and they said that when they interviewed, people that work for their hotel that they only have people who smile at least four times in the interview. And they said, "We don't smile four times in interview. You immediately crossed out the -" Well, that's because joy makes everything better.

So, people are better presented at work. When you have a happy attitude, when you're joyful that you want a joyful team member, you want joyful employee as a joyful staff. And so, it's a powerful and powerful principle talking about just -- let's read another scripture over in the Book of Proverbs 15. Proverbs 15 talks about joy. Proverbs 15:15 it says, "All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart have a continual feast." And let me read it from another translation, another translation says, "For the despondent, every day brings trouble; for the happy heart, life is a continual feast regardless of the circumstances."

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And so, it's letting us know that for the happy heart, life is a continual feast regardless of the circumstances. So, it doesn't matter about the circumstances, that's not the determining factor of our joy, happiness is an attitude. Happiness is a choice, it's a choice. There are a lot of choices in the world, but I choose happiness. Tell your neighbors that, "I choose happiness." It's an attitude, it's a choice.

I love what it says here in Proverbs 15:15 that says, "Every day brings trouble for the despondent." So, every day brings trouble for the despondent. Doesn't seem fair, does it? It doesn't seem fair for every day to bring trouble for the despondent and for a

happy heart to have a continual feast, it doesn't seem fair. And I was like, "Why is that?" Well, in the Amplified Bible gives a little more clarity and it really explains it. Listen to this, it says, "All the days of the despondent and afflicted are made evil [by anxious thoughts and forebodings], but he who has a glad heart has a continual feast [regardless of circumstances]. So, what this is saying is that if you live life depressed or you're always dreading, you're living full of anxious, thoughts or care, or if you're a fearful, you're always highlighting the bad things that happened. It says that your days are made evil. You are making them evil by the way you think, by the way you're approaching your day, by the words you're speaking. So, you are bringing to past the very content -- that's only inside of your own mind and your own spirit. You're bringing that, you're drawing those things into your life, so you're making your life worse and worse simply by being a despondence. Because when you despondent, you're like nothing ever happens good for me, will always be. I never get any good breaks. So, you've constantly looking for the bad things and the negative things, and that's why it's continuous to show up because you're always looking for the negative part of life.

So, every day brings trouble, life gets worse and worse, darker and darker because of that cloud of depression. A person who is depressed, they don't have any hope, they don't see anything good coming. And so, they only see more and more bad, more and more gloom, more and more doom, and it keeps them depressed. So, every day brings trouble, will always be. And so, they're looking for the worse even before it happens. They are drawing it into their lives. And so, Proverbs 15:15 is letting us know happiness is an attitude, it's a choice.

And so, this is speaking about how to think and how to approach your life. You have to have a positive life stance. Everybody says, "Positive life stance." So, your stance in life, the way you approach life has to be a positive stance, it has to be a positive stance. I play golf and one of the things that they teach you in golf is your stance is very important, because that's your positioning, that's your positioning over the ball. And so, you have to have the correct stance. You have to have your knees bend at a certain angle, you have to bend from the waist, so your feet have to be a certain distance from each other. You have to have the perfect distance so that you can have the correct leverage to be able to swing appropriate.

So, your stance is very important. Where your life stance is very important, the way you position yourself in life, because you have to have a positive life stance, so that it makes such a difference in your life. You have to have a positive -- everybody says, "Positive life stance." So, no matter what happens in life, always look for the positive, always look for the bright side, always have a positive life stance. That's your posture, that's your positioning that you are a positive person.

And so, this is where Proverbs 15:15 is saying that you have a continual feast regardless of the circumstances because you have a positive life stance, you have a positive life stance. You're always looking on the bright side, you always have a great attitude and you're always have a great approach to life, great perspective toward life. Here are some things in the happy list that I wanted to share. I've read a lot of books on happiness over the years, and just a glimpse some of the principles. In fact, I brought a little book on happiness. I'm going to try to read the book to you because it's so good, I just love it. I keep that little book on my desk, it's a little book called, "Be Happy."

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And I keep it on my desk and I just love to refer to it from time to time. But I've read several books on happiness and I gleaned some of the principles. Then, I want to share. So, that's why entitled this, "The Happy List". Here are some of the things that's in the happy list. Number one, this is from studies done around the world. They found the happiest people on earth and they studied them. And these are some of the things that they found and come among the happiest places around the world. Number one, they have a spiritual life. They all have a spiritual life, and we've already talked about how our joy is in direct proportion to our connection to Him. Our joy is in direct proportion to our connection in Him. Joy is produced from our union with Him. So, he fills us with joy, 1 John 14, "He fills us with joy." And that's one of the things they found on the happy list is that people who they found the happiest around the world, they have a spiritual life. They have a spiritual life.

Number two, pursuing goals. Pursuing goals makes you happy. That's having something to work on. When you're working on something with a definite target, a definite aim, you feel a sense of accomplishment. You feel you're striving and so, that gives you

a sense of excitement. It makes you feel alive and alert and makes you feel like you have something and it actually excites you and makes you happy. So, pursuing goals is another trait that they found that makes people happy. When you have something to get up and go to every day, you get up and go to something and so, you're working on something. Tell your neighbors, say "I'm working on something. I'm working on something, man. You always have something to work on. I always have something to look forward to." So, if you're working on something, you have something to look forward to. That makes you happy when you engaged and you have something to look forward to.

Here is another one. Number three, they found the personal expression. Personal expression makes you happy. Well, personal expression can take on many different forms and you have to find which form works for you, but personal expression could be drawing. You sit down and just draw or paint. That's personal expression because this is coming out of you. And so, when you put your paints on the paper or your -- you go to the canvass with your paintbrush, this is creativity that's coming out of you. So, personal expression makes you happy. So, whether you are doing art or if you're composing music or if you're writing letters or writing a book or if you're just singing, that's a personal expression – speaking? See, I'm expressing myself personally right now. That's why I'm so happy.

So, personal expressions – so you get an opportunity to draw out of you what's in you through personal expression. You get an opportunity to create something and then they actually makes you happy because this is coming from you. This was coming from you. So, when you write, draw, paint, sing, speak, any of these things, that's personal expression. When you invent something – Pastor Nathaniel, he's an inventor. So, he is at his happiest when he's working on something new because of his personal expression. You got an opportunity to bring out of you something that's in you. You get the chance to personally express yourself. So, everybody says, "personal expression" that makes you happy.

Here's number four, gratitude. Gratitude makes you happy. Being thankful for what you already have, looking each day to find something to be thankful for and makes you happy. When you realized how blessed you are and how much you already have, it makes you happy. It makes you happy because you realize, when you give thanks, you realized how good God is and how good

God has been to you and you realized what you do have. And so, it makes you appreciate what you have and you realized things are not as bad as it seems when you are grateful. So, gratitude brings in just a wonderful spirit of happiness. It makes you happier. So, reflect on your day and, right now, things that you are grateful for. Gratitude that will help your happiness. And here's the next one. This is number five, purpose makes you happy. Purpose makes you happy. When you're part of something that's bigger than you are, that makes you happy. There were three men on the construction site, and the reporter walked by. He asked the first man and he said, "What are you doing?" The man said, "I'm laying bricks." He went to the second man and he said, "What are you doing?" He said, "I'm building a wall."

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Then, they were all doing the same thing, and he went to the third man. The third man was just whistling and just happy. He said, "What are you doing?" He said, "I'm building a cathedral." See, he had a purpose in mind. So, when you're working with a purpose, purpose makes you happy. When you're part of something that's bigger than you, it makes you happy. So, connect with purpose. When you find purpose and connect with purpose, that's actually a part of making you happy. Somebody said, this happiness is not the purpose of life. It is the by-product of finding your purpose. Happiness is not the purpose of life. It is the by-product of finding your purpose. So, when you tapped into your purpose, there's a great sense of happiness that's released in your life. So, people who are tapped into the purpose are happier people. They're happy.

Number six is serving and helping others. Serving and helping others makes you happier. There was a study done. They did the study. They said, each person involved in the study was asked to list 10 people that they knew and to label them as happy or not happy. Then, they have them to go through the list again and they labeled each one as selfish or unselfish. When they gathered the results, they found that all the people who were labeled happy were also labeled unselfish. So, they found that people whose activities were devoted to bringing themselves happiness were far less happy than those whose efforts were devoted to making others happy. So, serving and helping others makes you happy.

And number seven, family, friends and social groups makes you happy. So, when you have good family ties or you have good friendships or you belong to some good social groups, it could be a group or say if you're part of a photography club or sewing club or a wine club or travelling club, any type of club makes people happier. This is what they found from studying people all around the world, people who gathered with common interest and so either they had strong family relationships, strong friends or they were part of strong social groups, being with other people makes you happy. Being with other people makes you happy. That's why you're happy at church. Are you happy at church? Church people are happy. That's why the Bible says, "Don't forsake the assembly of yourselves together because there is a happy element God knows us in collective worship as a body." So, you're not here just to praise God and hear the word and to serve, it's our collective unity fellowship with one another that actually makes you happier and you don't even realize it. You're happy when you get a hug. You're happy when someone smiles. When you're talking about your events of the week and you develop friendships and happiness at church, it actually makes you happier because there's a social group. So, it makes you happy. So, family, friends, social groups makes you happier.

Here's number eight, sunlight. Sunlight makes you happy. So, get outdoors. You're happier in the sunlight, even indoors if you have bright colors. Bright colors are shown to make you happier. So, you know, you have bright pastel colors makes you happier. So, bright colors, sunlight, being outdoors, being around nature, being around water, all those things make you happier. Being out in God's creation, it actually makes you happy. It makes you happy. Get outdoors. Men, take your shoes off and walk barefoot. It actually makes you happy.

Number nine, smiling, laughing, singing, dancing, having fun, all of these things instantly improve your mood. In fact, the word "Rejoice" in the Bible, in the Greek, it literally means to brighten up, to jump up and down, and to spin around. So, what it means? It means to brighten up, jump up and down, and spin around. So, smiling, laughing, singing, dancing, having fun, all those things instantly improve your mood just by doing any of these things improve your mood. So, engage in things that are fun. Remember, Proverbs 15:13 says that, "A merry heart makes a happy face. So, when you're happy here, it shows up here. So, if

you're happy on the inside, it shows up on the outside. A merry heart makes a happy face.

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Number ten, think right thoughts, think right thoughts. Think happy thoughts. Paul said that I think myself happy. I think myself happy and that's why Paul said, "Think on these things, these things that are noble and these things that are praiseworthy in a good report." Think on these things because it deals with your happiness. He said, "I think myself happy." So, think right thoughts that helps your happiness. Thinking right thoughts helps your happiness.

Number 11 is exercise. Exercise makes you happy. It makes you happy. Who went to (00:20:40) today? Why you should be a little bit happier than the rest of us? I saw one guy coming on and he wasn't that happy though. He said, "Man at (00:20:52). Well, it makes you happy. Exercise makes you happy. It increases your serotonin levels and the chemicals in the brain and all these things releases endorphins in the body and all these things, so you actually chemically you made happier by exercise, moving your body, exercise makes you happy. Sleep, getting a good night sleep, makes you happier, good night sleep. If you don't believe me, try not sleeping and see how unhappy you are in the next day. Praise God. What those all of the things I had on my happily list and I want to share -- I'm going to try to read this whole book. It won't take me about a couple of minutes because it's only one sentence. I love this little book because it's only one sentence on its page and it's entitled Be Happy by Monica Sheehan but I just love the little book. So, on its pages, there was one line in a picture on its page.

So, the first page says, "Follow your heart that will make you happy." In other words, follow your passion, follow your passion that makes you happier. This one that says, "Stay inspired." And has picture of a person upside down standing on the hill. Stay inspired. So, don't get bored, be creative, do something different, stay inspired, don't let life become boring to you. Here's one that says, "Stop being a victim." So, stop negative defeating self-thought and all those things that work against you. Here's one that says, "Do things you're good at." Here's one that says, "Love your work." If you don't do work you love then love what you do. Love your work. Here's one that says, "Get a new perspective."

Here's one that says, "Have a sense of wonder." Here's one that says, "Don't isolate." And that's why we talked about how happiness is being a part of social groups. Don't isolate yourself. Here's one that says, "Find people you love." Here's one that says, "Set goals. Finish what you start. Help others. Do a one-day news fast." Cut the news off for one day, and don't read any of President Trump's tweet. Here's one that says, "Dance. Pamper yourself" and has a picture of a lady in a bubble bath. Pamper yourself makes you happy. Face your fears. Go to a museum. Make decisions. Here one that says, "Exercise. Limit television. Listen to music. Get in touch with nature. Line up. Have a moral compass. Get a good night sleep. Read books. Buy yourself flowers. Reach out. Make friends. Set up a realistic schedule. Don't compare yourself with others. Live in the moment."

Some people are stressed out about the future. They have regrets over the past. They fail to enjoy the moment that they're in. Live in the moment. Don't beat yourself up. We all make mistakes. We all miss the mark. We all fail. Don't beat yourself up. Dress yourself up. Get back up and go out again. Accept that life has its ups and downs. It does, as a part of life, that's a little machine that beeps to let you know that you are loved, notice it moves like this. Life moves like that so accept that – there are some challenges, there are some great times, there are some challenges. Accept that. That means you alive. Accept that and don't let it been you out of shape. Be open to new ideas. Believe in yourself. Be kind. Let people know how special they are. Be honest with yourself. And you all can stand in your feet. I'm out of time – stand in your feet. Don't focus on negative thoughts. Focus on creating what you desire. Make time just to have fun. Say thank you to the people who teach you and support you and encourage you. Don't forget, money doesn't buy happiness. Give away what you don't need to someone who does. Value who you are right now. We all need to make big changes.

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We all need to change and improve but value who you are right now. All of your little quirks, all of your little idiosyncrasies, all of the little things that make you unique, value yourself right now. So, what if you're overweight. Appreciate the little extra weight. Some people wish they could gain weight. Some people have told me that being skinny is overrated. Value who you are right now. Value who you are right now. Be a part of community.

Find common ground. Keep the romance in your life. Make a gratitude list. Love your mother earth. Do your best. Don't lose hope. You never know what tomorrow will bring. Keep learning. Want what would you have. Believe in something bigger than yourself. Stay close to friends and family. Be true to yourself. Praise God. Well, that's the whole book. I read the whole book to you all. Praise God. You all read a book. If anybody ask you what books have you read for 2018? Tell them you read the book called, Be Happy by Monica Sheehan. You all read your first book for the year. Praise God. I'm out of time. But I just wanted to get my happy list, I've been holding it for a long time so I just wanted to share the whole list with you and pray that you enjoy and then got something out. Let's pray, Father, we just love you and we just give you thanks. Thank you for doing this good and making us happy. Lord, we thank you for your joy that's unspeakable and full of glory. We love you. Thank you for releasing us to enjoy life, Lord and to inspire others and to be a blessing to others wherever we go to brighten up the place, to brighten others and help others wherever we go to make the world a better place because your joy is in us and it spills over to others and we just love you and praise you. And in Jesus name, we pray, let every heart say, Amen.

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