



THE PASTOR'S PEN

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How to Enjoy Your Life

With the way that things are happening in our community and in our nation, it seems to me that if you are like most folks in the US these days, you might feel like life is getting the upper hand and you need some help. You may not quite know what kind of help you need, but you do know that you are in need of some kind of assistance. That has been happening in the lives of a lot of the people that I have been talking with over the past few months here in Pensacola.

On my recent trip to Washington, D.C., I saw a great many people from all over the country who were expressing that same concern to their senators and congressmen, as well as to the general public and anyone else who would listen, on the street corners, in the parks and even at the public monuments. Right now, it seems that a lot of the nation is feeling that something is missing from life or that they are somehow not getting what they need to be able to live a secure and productive life.

What is the answer? How can you find the help you want, that you feel you need, in order to make life into what you want it to be for you? As I pondered on this situation, I realized that the answers we truly need are not that far away. The problem is really one that is based on the fact that we are not failing to get what we need, but that we are failing to see the real needs we have and the real solutions to our problems as they are staring us in the face.

To put things into perspective, I want to share a little story I heard back in my seminary days from up in the hills of Kentucky. It went like this:

An Appalachian farmer from back up in the hills walked twelve miles, one way, to the general store.

“Hi Fred,” said John, the store owner. “Tell me, are you and yer wife still making fires up there by rubbing stones and flint together?”

Fred replied, “You betcha, John. Ain't no 'tother way. Why?”

John grinned at Fred and continued, “Got something to show you. It’s something to make fire. It's called a match.”

“A match?” said Fred, “Never heard of it.”

“Watch! If you want a fire you just do this,” John says, taking a match and striking it on his trousers.

“Well I’ll be,” said Fred with a look of amazement and wonder on his face. “That's something alright, but that ain't for me, John.”

“Ain’t fer you? Well, why not?” asked John.

“Cause I can't be walking twelve miles to come and borrow yer trousers every time I want a fire.”

Yes, John had a solution to a problem that Fred needed to solve to make his life better, but Fred was not able to see the real solution or use it properly.

Like Fred, we want our lives to be full, happy and productive; we think we see all the problems clearly and that we know how to fix them. Then, when we try to make the fixes we think are needed, nothing changes. We get frustrated; we feel that that we need more help or that the help we really need is beyond us making our perceived failures someone else’s fault.

According to the scriptures though, we only need three things in life to be truly happy and content. There are only three things that we need to focus on in order to take back the upper hand in life and make it ours. Most importantly, all three are completely within our reach and ability. They can be found in Micah 6:8:

“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

There you have it. Now you only have to go out and do it. How you ask? Come by for Sunday School and Worship so we can talk about it; then you can go and do it in your life each week. Yes, the help you need is already in your hands and waiting for you. What are you waiting for?

Blessings,

James