

## LESSON 3

### Learners' Guide

#### **40 Spiritual Principles For Life Management**

—Rick Ellison—

#### **Entertainment – Pleasure – And the Joy of Giving and Serving God With Passion**

Mega millions of dollars are spent each year in the United States in the pursuit of entertainment and pleasure. Money is not the only commodity that is spent in the pursuit of pleasure. Time is also spent in order to enjoy a diversion from the busyness of life. Notice some items where we invest our money and time in the pursuit of rest, relaxation and enjoyment.

- Movies
- Sports
- Internet
- Video Games
- Trips
- Historical pursuits
- Plays
- Books
- Magazines
- Music
- Television
- Eating out
- Shopping
- Sightseeing
- Recorded Movies
- Radio
- Recorded Music
- Vacations
- Hobbies
- Parties
- Theme Parks

Pursuing wholesome entertainment has an important place in our lives. It can offer opportunities of enjoyment with our families and friends. These experiences can give us precious memories that we will never forget. We can enjoy much needed rest and restoration through these experiences. It is central to our nature to desire happiness and joy.

There are two pitfalls to avoid in our quest for entertainment and pleasure.

1. Avoid living for the weekends or time off. God wants us to experience joy even in the busy times of working.
2. Avoid the let down that can come after each entertainment experience. God wants us to experience His joy in each experience of life.

In the Old Testament, Solomon was a man who tried entertainment and pleasure. Parties and entertainment did not bring Solomon happiness and satisfaction. Notice what Solomon wrote.

READ PROVERBS 14:13

READ ECCELIASTES 2:1-3, 10-11

Consider this question. While there is nothing wrong with innocent fun, will entertainment help us to escape from the burdens of life to the extent that there is true long term happiness?

The Bible gives us insights about the fact that our giving and service for God can cause us to experience a higher peace and joy than mere entertainment. Solomon's true happiness came from his relationship with God. So does ours. When we experience the joy that comes from serving Christ our other pursuits such as sports or vacations can even take on a greater meaning. They can be used for the glory of God.

WHAT ARE SOME SPIRITUAL TRUTHS FROM GOD'S WORD THAT WILL HELP US IN THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS AND JOY?

1. Understand that Jesus has come to give us abundant life.

READ JOHN 10:10

2. In the busyness of life, as believers we can sometimes take for granted our salvation and how exciting it is that we are a part of God's family and will go to heaven some day. In the day to day details of life we can never forget that we have eternal life.

READ ROMANS 6:3-4

3. Some believers do not experience happiness and joy each day because of guilt from the past or a feeling of low self esteem. Some may feel that they don't deserve God's love.

READ JOHN 3:17-18

4. Wholesome vacations, hobbies and entertainment have their place. These activities can help us unwind and provide extended time with our family. Every good and pure gift that we enjoy is a gift from God.

READ MATTHEW 7:11

5. God desires that we be a cheerful giver of our time, talents, tithes and offerings. True joy comes from serving God and supporting His kingdom's work.

READ II CORINTHIANS 9:7

6. Serving and giving our finances to God brings longer lasting happiness than entertainment or hobbies.

READ II CORINTHIANS 9:6

7. Joy comes from serving God using our spiritual gifts and natural abilities.

READ I CORINTHIANS 12:4-5

8. The negative things that we think about the most takes away our happiness and controls our joy.

READ PHILLIPPIANS 4:8

9. The more we submit to God to control our mind the happier we will be.

READ I CORINTHIANS 2:16

10. God desires that we develop a lifestyle of joyful, meaningful service.

READ PSALM 100:2

## **LESSON 3**

### **Teachers' Guide**

## **40 Spiritual Principles For Life Management**

—Rick Ellison—

Entertainment – Pleasure – And the Joy of Giving and Serving God With Passion  
(Begin with prayer)

### **CREATING A CLIMATE FOR LEARNING**

Note that millions of dollars are spent each year in pursuit of entertainment and pleasure. On a marker board or blank piece of poster board ask the class to brainstorm.

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS WE DO FOR ENTERTAINMENT AND RELAXATION?

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

QUESTION #1: Why does pursuing wholesome entertainment and relaxation have an important place in our lives?

QUESTION #2: Why is it important not to just live for the weekends and time off?

QUESTION #3: How do we avoid the let down after each entertainment or vacation experience?

### **BIBLE BACKGROUND**

Review the background information about Solomon in the Learners' Guide.

- NOTE THAT PARTIES AND ENTERTAINMENT DID NOT BRING SOLOMON HAPPINESS AND SATISFACTION.
  - READ PROVERBS 14:13  
(Solomon wrote)
  - READ ECCLESIASTES 2:1-3, 10-11  
(Solomon wrote)
- QUESTION: Will innocent fun and entertainment give us true long term happiness?
- NOTE: OUR SERVICE AND GIVING TO GOD IS KEY TO EXPERIENCING A LIFE OF PEACE AND JOY.

## APPLICATION

1. Understand that Jesus has come to give us abundant life.

READ JOHN 10:10

QUESTION: Does being joyful and happy in Christ have any affect on our stress level, health or even our outlook on life?

2. In the busyness of life, as believers we can sometimes take for granted our salvation and how exciting it is that we are a part of God's family and will go to heaven some day. In the day to day details of life we can even forget that we have eternal life.

READ ROMANS 6:3-4

QUESTIONS: Should the fact that we have eternal life have an affect on our level of happiness and joy each day? Why?

3. Some believers do not experience happiness and joy each day because of guilt from the past or a feeling of low self esteem. Some may feel that they don't deserve God's love.

READ JOHN 3:17-18

QUESTIONS: Why is it important to understand that Jesus died on the cross for the forgiveness of all our sins? Why is it important to receive God's forgiveness as we confess our sins as believers?

4. Wholesome vacations, hobbies and entertainment have their place. These activities can help us unwind and provide extended time with our families. Every good and pure gift that we enjoy is a gift from God.

READ MATTHEW 7:11

QUESTION: What are some good gifts that God gives us for our enjoyment?

5. God desires that we be a cheerful giver of our time, talents, tithes and offerings. True joy comes from serving God and supporting His kingdom's work.

READ II CORINTHIANS 9:7

QUESTION: Why is God delighted when we serve him cheerfully at church and in the world?

6. Serving and giving our finances to God brings longer lasting happiness than entertainment or hobbies.

READ II CORINTHIANS 9:6

QUESTION: Why is it that the more we give to God the more joy we receive?

7. Joy comes from serving God, using our spiritual gifts and natural abilities.

READ I CORINTHIANS 12:4-5

QUESTION: Why do we enjoy serving God more in the ministries and activities where we are spiritually gifted and have natural ability?

8. The negative things that we think about the most takes away our happiness and control our joy.

READ PHILIPPIANS 4:8

QUESTION: How do we break the cycle of constantly dwelling on negative issues that control our joy?

9. The more that we submit to God to control our mind the happier we will be.

READ I CORINTHIANS 2:16

QUESTION: What keeps us from submitting to God the control of our minds as we are obedient to him and obey His word in the Bible?

10. God desires that we develop a lifestyle of joyful, meaningful service.

READ PSALM 100:2

QUESTION: How do we develop a lifestyle of joyful service?