

One Nation Under God - Walk Across America

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Don't Worry, Be Happy is a title to a popular song during the 1980's. In Matthew 6:25-34, the Jesus tells us not to worry concluding with this verse, *Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.* In the King James Bible, Psalm 144:15 states, *happy is the people, whose God is the Lord.* The Declaration of Independence declares, *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*



To some people, happiness is having a satellite dish. To another, happiness is finding the blue blazes of the Buckeye Trail. Some Americans pursue happiness with reckless abandonment, only to find that happiness can vanish faster than the dew in the morning sun. A bungee-jumper obtains a rush by jumping off a high place only to find that the rush disappears and he needs to jump again. A person taking illegal drugs is very much like the bungee-jumper. He needs that rush again and again. The compulsive gambler, the alcoholic and the compulsive eater are others that fit into the same category.

Some people find happiness in their possessions; their cars; their houses or their jewelry. In our consumer-based economy, advertisers ascertain the fact that it is essential if we are to be happy that we must buy the latest and greatest products that they are selling. How many things do we have in our homes that we don't use? Matthew 6:19-21 states *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and there thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

We are taught as toddlers that happiness can come by pressing buttons on a toy. Later we are taught that happiness can come by pressing buttons on a television remote to see cartoons. Later in life, the buttons are on video games, stereos and cell phones. And as we grow older, we press the buttons on an ATM to buy more gadgets with more buttons to make us happy.

A button may bring a person temporary happiness, but a button will not make a person holy. In American, most Christians pursue happiness more than they pursue holiness. Shouldn't we all pursue happiness? Yes, but not more than

holiness. While the King James Version of the Bible translates the Hebrew word, 'esher, as happy, some versions use the word, blessed. The same goes for the Greek word, makariōs. *Blessed are the people, whose God is the Lord.* Being happy has a much different meaning than being blessed. Happiness often comes from things of the world while blessings come from heavenly places. When we are blessed, we receive peace, love, joy and salvation.

Am I happy all the time? The answer is no. If I were happy all time, I would have never started my prayer walk across America. Five years ago when the Ten Commandments plaque was nearly removed from the Chester County Courthouse in West Chester, Pennsylvania, I was not happy. When the words, "one nation under God", in our pledge of allegiance were attacked, I was not happy. During the prayer walk, I wept when I read the name of a high school classmate on the Vietnam Memorial. I was not happy when I met a homeless family also in Washington, D.C. I am not happy but concerned when I hear the prayer needs of people whom I meet along the way. I am not happy when I hear the words: abortion, suicide or war.

If we pursue holiness, will we get happiness? We will receive the joy of the Lord. We will have all our needs met but not necessarily all our wants. We will see the world in a different perspective and by doing that we focus more on the needs of others. The cultural holiness of the church today too often is to adapt to the character and behavior pattern of the Christians around us. Christians should always be looking towards Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, and not necessarily following other Christians.

While an intercessor, praying in God's will is not always happy but is blessed and holy. Too many people in church do not understand when a person is weeping that it may be a form of prayer. Jesus wept; do we? Where do you read in the Bible that Jesus was happy? People followed Jesus, not because he was happy, but because he was holy.

The Bible commands us to *be holy, because I am holy.* How should we pursue holiness? Jesus said *take up the cross and follow me.* Our minds are the key. We must no longer be conformed by the things of the world but are to be renewed in the spirit of our minds. Paul explained in Philippians 4:12, *...whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise think on these things.*



News along the American Discovery Trail

Debbie Schachner, a missionary to Kenya, is now walking eastbound in southern Ohio. She has completed over 4000 miles of her journey. Last week Pastor Cheryl Miller allowed her to stay at the Father's House in Logan, Ohio.

The two Englishmen, Stuart Hamilton and Dave Toolan, are back on the American Discovery Trail in Colorado. Last year, they raised money for the British Heart Foundation. This year, they are raising money for the Association for International Cancer Research. At the end of their walk last year, Stuart was

diagnosed with testicular cancer. This year during their travels across the west, he must stop to get monthly blood tests and a bi-monthly chest x-rays.

Keep Debbie, Stuart and Dave in your prayers.

To learn more about the One Nation Under God –Walk Across America, go to our web site, www.walkacrossamerica.info.

**God bless,
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**Total miles walked of the American Discovery Trail - 772 miles
Number of prayer walkers - 59 prayer walkers
Number of people praying for America - 53,006 prayer warriors**