

*In
search
of*

Truth and Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Philippians 4:8 (NASB-U)

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Have a Good Time

By: Bob J. Walton

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It's that season of the year again; the "good ole summer time." It's that time of the year when many of us take that long awaited vacation. It's the time for recreation, travel, and truly the time of the year to "have a good time."

And certainly if there was ever a time in human history when people can have a good time, it is now. While our grandparents worked from 60 to 80 hours per week, we plan our schedules around a 40-hour workweek. Thus we all have more time on our hands for pleasure and recreation. And furthermore, with our technological age, there are so many things to help us have a good time; in fact, helping us have a good time has become one of the world's leading industries. It is because of these factors that America has become a land of "enjoy the good life" as one catchy television commercial has put it.



From my study of the Scriptures, I am convinced that God wants us to have a good time; to enjoy the beauty of his creation. Our Heavenly Father has put so many things on this earth for us to enjoy, and to enjoy them is his desire. And to enjoy the things of God's creation is recreation. With the everyday toils of life, we often become tired both mentally and physically; thus the word recreation conveys the thought of "re-creating" our minds, bodies, and energies.

One of the truly great books of the Old Testament is the book of Ecclesiastes. This ancient book teaches us how to have a good time. The theme of the book is "*life under the sun*," or how to live on this earth. Six times in the book the writer admonishes man to enjoy life. "*Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely (fitting) for one*

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TIMES OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

**Bible Classes* 10:00 AM
AM Worship 10:45 AM
PM Worship 6:30 PM**

WEDNESDAY

Bible Classes* 7:00 PM

(* Bible Classes for All Ages)

to eat and drink and to enjoy the good of all his labor that he taketh under the sun, all the days of his life which God giveth him: for this is his portion" (Ecclesiastes 5:18). "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw, that it is from the hand of God" (Ecclesiastes 2:24). From these verses it is concluded that God desires that man work diligently and from the fruit of these labors he is to enjoy life. And we should always consider this as a gift from God. Thus a great lesson about life we need to learn is how to have a good time; how truly to enjoy life on this earth. And the individual who learns this great lesson can live a happy, productive, and successful life.

Today's Sermon:

The New International Version Proper translation of God's Word or Vile Work of Satan

But with the expression "have a good time" there is also a grave danger. The danger lies in the abuses. We do not have to be reminded that there is another side of the coin; that side being dissipation. This word means "excessive indulgence in luxury and vicious pleasures." So many today abuse the principle of having a good time and embrace the old Epicurean philosophy of "eat, drink, and be merry" in which this ancient Greek philosopher advocated, "the chief purpose of man is to achieve happiness, and true happiness is found in pleasure." And so many today, under the guise of "having a good time" have turned the God-given privilege of enjoying life under the sun into an excessive indulgence of the sordid pleasures of life. And when this philosophy is embraced, it always leads to that which is injurious and debilitating to our physical, mental, moral, and worst of all, our spiritual happiness and well-being.

So a real test is presented to the Christian. The challenge is for us to learn how to have a good time; how to enjoy the good life and the rich provisions God has provided for us. And while learning how to enjoy life we must, at the same time, learn to avoid that which is crippling to our physical, mental, moral, and spiritual health and happiness. And in order to meet this challenge we need to seek the proper guidelines for that which is proper. And certainly the guidelines are found in the word of God. We must, therefore, seek divine approval for all our recreational activities; the Bible does contain the answers. But while God's word is specific on certain things that are wrong and prohibited, not all the "do's and don't" are specifically spelled out for us.

But we hasten to declare that God has given us certain principles to direct us and help us in our search for what is right and what is wrong. And by applying these principles we can learn what constitutes recreation as well as what constitutes dissipation.

Certain questions need to be asked and God's counsel must be sought for answers pertaining to having a good time.

These questions and answers include:

(1) What about my companionships? *"Evil companionships corrupt good morals"* (1 Corinthians 15:33). So I certainly must choose good company in my recreational activities. When the Christian associates with evil people in recreational activities there is always the danger of moral erosion; thus we need to be reminded that we cannot *"run with them into the same excess of riot"* (1 Peter 4:4).



(2) What about my service to God? If having a good time interferes with my worship to God, my Bible study, prayer life, or any other phase of my growth and well-being as a Christian, it becomes wrong. It is wrong because I am devoting my service and allegiance to something other than God

and thus recreation becomes an idol.

(3) What about my influence? One of the most precious things the Christian can possess is a good influence. *“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches”* (Proverbs 22:1). I should never do that which brings reproach on my family name and posterity, and more so I must never do that which brings shame to the name of my Lord and Savior.

(4) What about the indecent? A lot of recreation is indecent. And if that recreation or entertainment puts me in a situation where speech, action, or conduct are vulgar and coarse, and where evil passions and desires are stirred, it should be avoided. As a Christian, I should desire to keep my heart pure and strive to keep my passions and evil desires in check.

(5) What about my financial means? I have a financial responsibility to material things (government, family, etc.) as well as a responsibility to God. And if I overload myself with “things” in order to have a good time and in so doing, strap myself financially, God is so often the one who is robbed (Malachi 3:8) because financial responsibilities hinder me from giving as I should.

My friend, God never expected nor intended that we give up all the fun and enjoyment of living because we are Christians. It is completely foreign to the life of the child of God to just endure a life of morbid gloom. Likewise, it is a mistaken notion that Christianity is just a lot of “don’t do this and don’t do that.”

These are distorted ideas and untrue concepts of true religion. Contrary to this, we should live radiant, happy, cheerful, and truly enjoyable lives. We should learn to have a good time; to “re-create” our bodies and minds. But let us always regulate our lives in this respect so as to *“prove all things; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil”* (1 Thessalonians 5:21- 22).

News N Notes

Remember these in your prayers:

- Dave & Wilma Harless as they travel
- Dave Brewer’s granddaughter—Cheyenne Elizabeth Brewer
- Lucille Harless, Dave Harless’ mother
- Blake Headen, Alberta’s husband.
- Blake Swanson, Dorothy Lancaster’s grandson
- Virginia Malick, Peggy Miller’s mother
- Trudell Tennant
- Bud and Merl Frey
- Tammy Garrison, Zeda Goddard’s daughter
- Audrio Gaudio, Nancy Morris’ great-granddaughter
- Marie Roberts, & Ed’s father, Jim Roberts.
- Ila Marshall, Harold Marshall’s mother
- Cary & Grace Lancaster

Nursing Home:

- Pauline Sellers
- Ethel Mahan

Shut-ins:

- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Pauline Midcap