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True Happiness

Why Are Human Beings Still Empty Even When They Have Everything?

This English text is a close, literal translation prepared to help English-speaking missionaries understand the meaning and structure of the original Thai text. It is intended as a reference translation rather than an independently adapted English edition.

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Introduction

The Question Human Beings Do Not Want to Answer

There is one question that is very short and very simple, yet so deep that many people do not want to answer it honestly. That question is, “Are you truly happy?” It is not the happiness shown in front of other people, not the smile in a photograph, not the sound of laughter among friends, and not the temporary enjoyment that comes from eating, traveling, watching movies, using a phone, or receiving praise from others. Rather, it is the happiness that exists deep within the heart. When you are alone, when there is no music, no phone, no entertainment, no friend, no one praising you, and nothing to help you forget yourself, is your heart still at peace?

Many people cannot answer this question because, if they answer honestly, they must admit that although they may look fine outwardly, inwardly they are not at peace at all. Today the world is full of smiles, but not every smile comes from a truly happy heart. Many people laugh in front of others but cry when they return home. Many

people post a life that looks perfect online, but when they put down their phones, they feel empty again. Many people work so hard that they have no time to think about the meaning of life. Many people use entertainment to escape from silence, and many people run after love, money, fame, or success because they hope that those things will be able to fill their hearts.

Some people go to temples, make merit, chant prayers, ask for blessings, consult fortune-tellers, wear amulets, or hope to depend on sacred powers so that their lives may become better, their hearts may become peaceful, or their inner fear may decrease. But after everything has passed, their hearts remain the same. They are still afraid, still empty, still uncertain, and still without true peace. Why are human beings like this?

The reason is that the true problem of human beings is not merely poverty, stress, an imperfect family, insufficient money, or an unsuccessful life. The true problem of human beings is “sin” and the fact that human beings are separated from God, who created them. The God proclaimed by the Bible is not merely some power in the universe, and He is not a sacred being with whom human beings can bargain by means of merit, offerings, or rituals. He is the holy and righteous God who knows all things and judges every human being. God created

human beings to know Him, love Him, obey Him, and give glory to Him. But human beings turned their backs on God, chose to live for themselves, and raised other things up to take His place. This is the root of sin.

The Bible says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Human beings may try to silence the voice of conscience with money, success, pleasure, love, religion, or merit, but deep within the heart a voice still cries, “Something is wrong.” Human beings may not want to speak about sin, death, judgment, or hell, but refusing to speak about the truth does not make that truth disappear. If your heart is still not at peace before God, you will never be able to find true happiness.

Chapter 1

The Happiness of the World Is Only a Temporary Shadow

The world tells us that if we have more, we will become happier. If we have more money, a better job, a larger house, more love, greater fame, or more acceptance, then our lives will probably become happier. But is that really true?

If money can give true happiness, why are many wealthy people still unable to sleep? If fame can give true happiness, why do some celebrities and famous people still face depression? If success can give true happiness, why do many successful people still feel empty? And if enjoyment can give true happiness, why does the human heart become lonely again when the enjoyment ends?

Money can buy good food, but it cannot buy a clean heart. Money can buy a large house, but it cannot buy peace in the conscience. Money can buy medicine, but it cannot buy eternal life. Fame may cause people to applaud you, but it cannot cause God to declare you

righteous. Enjoyment may cause you to forget suffering temporarily, but it cannot remove the guilt within your heart.

Many people are living like someone who is seriously ill but takes only a painkiller instead of treating the disease. They use music, entertainment, gambling, alcohol, sexual indulgence, shopping, excessive work, or using a phone throughout the night to make themselves forget their emptiness. But those things are only painkillers. They may reduce the pain temporarily, but they cannot cure the real disease.

Many people are afraid of silence because silence causes them to hear the voice of their own hearts. Many people are afraid of being alone because, when nothing disturbs them, they must face important questions: “Where is my life going?” “Am I ready to die?” and “If I must stand before God, how will I answer Him?”

Therefore, the happiness of the world is not secure because it is built upon things that are decaying. Beauty will disappear, the body will grow old, and health will decline. Money may run out, loved ones may leave, children and descendants may not become what we hoped, a job may be lost, a house may collapse, and in the end we ourselves must die. The Bible says, “The

world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:17).

How, then, can human beings build permanent happiness upon temporary things? If the foundation is collapsing, how can the house built upon it remain secure? If the things to which you have entrusted your heart must change, decay, disappear, and one day be taken away from you, how can your happiness endure?

Some people may say, “At least I am happy now.” But ask yourself more deeply. Are you able to look directly at your past? Do you have the courage to remember the sins you have committed? Can you look toward your future? Can you think about death? Are you ready to stand before God?

Happiness that cannot look directly at death is not true happiness. Happiness that can be maintained only by escaping from the voice of conscience is not true happiness. And happiness that collapses immediately when money is gone, health declines, or a loved one leaves is not true happiness.

Chapter 2

Merit Cannot Remove Sin

When human beings begin to feel guilty, they often try to solve the problem through good works or religion. Many people think, “If I live well enough, God will probably accept me,” or, “If I make more merit than the amount of sin I commit, the final result will probably not be too bad.” Such thoughts may sound reasonable in human eyes, but they do not understand either the seriousness of sin or the holiness of God.

God is not like human beings. He is not a judge whose heart can be won by gifts, and He is not a ruler with whom people can bargain through religious rituals. He is perfectly holy, He hates evil, and He judges with perfect justice. God does not look only at outward actions but also looks at the heart. He sees what other people cannot see. He sees the pride hidden within polite words, the greed hidden behind a smile, and the jealousy that no one knows. He sees sexual impurity in thoughts, hatred within the heart, small lies that we think no one will

notice, and selfishness that we have decorated to look like goodness.

You may never have killed anyone, but have you never hated someone within your heart? You may never have robbed another person's house, but have you never desired something that did not belong to you? You may never have committed physical adultery, but are your heart and your eyes truly pure? You may appear to be a good person in the eyes of society, but if God revealed all your thoughts to everyone, would you still be able to say that you are a good person?

Human beings like to compare themselves with people who are more evil and comfort themselves by saying, "I am not that bad." But God does not compare one human being with another. God judges human beings according to the standard of His own holiness. Before that standard, every human being is a sinner.

No matter how much merit a person makes, merit cannot remove sin, because good works cannot remove wrongs that have already been committed. Think of a thief who must stand in court. He may say to the judge, "I helped poor people, donated money, cared for my parents, and did many good works." But can those good works remove the guilt of stealing, killing, or harming others?

Would a just judge release a guilty person simply because he had done some good things? If even an earthly judge must punish wrongdoing, how could the holy and righteous God ignore sin?

Therefore, the human problem is not merely that people “lack merit,” but that they are “actually guilty.” Human beings do not need only advice telling them to become better people; they need forgiveness of sin. Human beings do not need only religious rituals; they need a Savior. This is what religions that depend upon human good works cannot provide. Merit may make people feel good temporarily, but it cannot make a sinner righteous before God. Religious rituals may bring temporary peace to the heart, but they cannot cleanse the conscience. Good works may cause other people to praise us, but they cannot remove the guilt that God sees.

What will you bring when you stand before God? Will you bring your good works and bargain with the holy God? Will you use your merit to cover all the sins that God sees? Do not deceive yourself. The day of God’s judgment will certainly come, and no one can escape it. Death does not ask whether we are ready. It does not wait until we have accumulated enough merit, and it does not wait until we have completely put our lives in order. One

day all of us must leave this world, and after that we must meet God. Are you ready to die?

Chapter 3

Jesus Christ Is the Only Hope of Sinners

The good news of the Bible begins here. Although human beings are sinners, although human beings have fled from God, and although human beings have no way at all to save themselves, God has not left human beings to perish. God is merciful, and He has already prepared the way of salvation.

That way of salvation is not human merit, not religious ritual, not merely an outward change of religion, and not an attempt to do more good. That way of salvation is Jesus Christ. Jesus is not merely a teacher of religion, merely a prophet, merely an example of a good person, or merely a moral leader. He is the Son of God who came into the world to save sinners. He is perfectly holy and never committed sin even once. He loved God perfectly, obeyed God perfectly, and did everything that all human beings failed to do.

Yet He who had no sin willingly accepted being crucified on the cross. Why did Jesus have to die? He did not die because He had done wrong, and He did not die merely to show an example of love. He died to receive punishment in the place of sinners. The Bible says, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). Death and judgment are what every human being deserves. But on the cross, Jesus received judgment in the place of those who believe in and trust Him.

This is the heart of the gospel. God is holy and righteous, and therefore He does not ignore sin. But God is rich in mercy, and therefore He sent Christ to receive punishment in the place of sinners. At the cross, God’s justice and love appeared together. Sin was truly punished, and sinners truly received grace.

Jesus shed His blood to cleanse sin, and on the third day He rose from the dead. His resurrection proclaims that He has conquered sin, death, and judgment. He is not a Savior who has died and remained dead, but the living Savior.

This is not a matter of accumulating merit; it is a matter of grace. Merit is something human beings try to accumulate while expecting to receive a reward. Grace,

however, is mercy that God gives to those who do not deserve it. Salvation is not the wage of good people but a gift given to sinners who repent and believe in and trust Jesus Christ.

Understand this clearly. Jesus is not calling you to add Him to your former life, as though you were adding one more sacred object to protect your life. He is not calling you to use Him in order to become wealthier, healthier, or more successful. He calls you to repent, abandon sin, abandon pride, abandon the hope you placed in your own goodness, and come to Him with a humble heart.

To believe in Christ is not merely to change the name of one's religion, but to acknowledge that Christ is the Lord who rules over one's life. It means that a life once lived for oneself becomes a life submitted to God, that a heart once loving sin becomes a heart that begins to hate sin, and that a person once depending on himself becomes a person who depends on Christ.

You may know many things about religion and still not know God. You may have practiced religious rituals throughout your life and still never have truly repented. You may have tried to become a good person but never have come to Christ as a sinner who needs a Savior. Even today, Christ calls sinners to come to Him.

Chapter 4

Christ Did Not Come to Give a Comfortable Life, but to Save Sinners

Today many people speak about Jesus as though He were merely a shortcut to a better life. Some people think that if they believe in Jesus, they will become wealthier, healthier, obtain a better job, have a better family, or become more successful. But that is not the gospel taught by the Bible.

Jesus Christ did not come merely to make human life more comfortable, but to save sinners from the wrath and judgment of God. He did not promise believers that they would have no tears, no sickness, no problems, or no suffering. But He promised that those who come to Him will receive forgiveness of sin, be reconciled to God, and have eternal life.

We must speak about this clearly because people prefer religion that serves their own desires. Human beings want a God who makes their lives easier, but they do not want the God who rules their lives. Human beings want

blessings but do not want to repent. They want help but do not want to abandon sin. They want heaven but still want to remain in control of their own lives. This is not true faith but the use of religion to satisfy oneself.

Christ did not come to support human greed, to cause human beings to love money more, or to cause human beings to trust themselves more. He came to save human beings from sin, guilt, death, and judgment.

Therefore, a true Christian is not a person who has no problems, but a person who has already been reconciled to God. He may still cry, become sick, lose a loved one, be misunderstood, or be poor. He must also continue to struggle against the sin within his own heart. But deep within, he has something that the world cannot give: peace with God.

His sins have been forgiven and cleansed. His conscience no longer has to be continually eaten away by guilt as before. He can look at the past without despair because Christ has cleansed his sins. He can look toward the future without fearing the day of judgment as before because Christ received punishment in his place. He can also look at death with hope because, for him, death is no longer a door leading into hell but a way entering into eternal life with God.

This is true happiness. It is not enjoyment that must be purchased with money, confidence that depends upon health, or happiness that depends upon the praise of other people. It is also not temporary peace gained from religious rituals. True happiness is the peace that comes from being reconciled to God.

A person without Christ may laugh, but he cannot escape from his own conscience. He may possess money, but he cannot buy the forgiveness of sins. He may receive praise from human beings, but he cannot escape the eyes of God. He may temporarily avoid the question of death, but one day he must inevitably face death.

But the person who is in Christ has a hope that the world cannot take away. Even if all his money disappears, Christ remains. Even if his health declines, Christ remains. Even if a loved one leaves, Christ remains. Even if the whole world changes, God's promises still stand firm. God is his Father, Christ is his Savior, the Holy Spirit dwells with him, and heaven is his eternal home.

Chapter 5

True Happiness Changes Life

Some people may misunderstand and think that if salvation is grace and not the result of merit or good works, human beings may believe in Jesus and then continue living in sin. This is a very serious misunderstanding.

The grace of God is not a license allowing human beings to continue loving sin. Rather, it is the power that helps sinners repent and begin a new life. A person who has truly been forgiven will not want to continue embracing sin as before. A person who has truly seen the love of Christ revealed on the cross can no longer regard sin as a small matter.

A true Christian does not immediately become a perfect person. He is still weak, still falls, and must continue to struggle. But the direction of his life has already changed. He begins to hate what he once loved and begins to grieve over the sins in which he once took pride. He

begins to desire to know God, to obey God, and to live for the glory of God.

This is the result of true happiness. True happiness does not make human beings more selfish, but causes them to love God more. It does not cause human beings to love the world more, but causes them to see more clearly the value of eternal things. It also does not cause human beings to boast in themselves, but makes them humble because they know that they have been saved not because of their own merit or good works, but because of the grace of God.

Beware of false faith that does not change life. Beware of religion that gives you a comfortable feeling but never calls you to repent. Beware of teaching that speaks only about blessings, success, and a better life but does not speak about sin, judgment, the cross, and submission to Christ.

Christ does not call human beings merely to feel better, but to be born again. He does not call them merely to change to another religion, but to return to God. He does not call them to accumulate religious merit, but to believe in and depend upon His grace.

If you say that you believe in Jesus but continue to love sin as before, refuse to repent, and do not want God to

rule your life, you should seriously ask yourself whether you truly know Christ. True faith is not merely words coming from the mouth, but a life that has turned back to God.

Conclusion

How Will You Answer God Today?

Ask yourself seriously: Are you truly happy today, or are you using money, entertainment, work, love, religion, merit, religious rituals, amulets, fortune-telling, or busyness in order to escape the truth within your heart? Are you ready to meet God? If tonight were the final night of your life, how would you answer Him?

Will you say to God, “I have lived well enough”? Will you bring your merit and bargain with the holy God? Will you use religious rituals to remove all the guilt that God sees? Or will you use the praise of human beings to cover your sin before God?

Do not deceive yourself. You may deceive other people, deceive society, and even deceive yourself for a time. But you cannot deceive God. Death may come sooner than you think. No one knows whether he will live until tomorrow. And after death comes judgment.

But there is still hope today. Jesus Christ still calls sinners to come to Him. He does not call you to become good

enough first. He does not tell you to accumulate enough merit first, and He does not tell you to come only after completely repairing your life. He calls you to repent now and come to Him now. Abandon the hope you have placed in yourself and depend upon His grace.

Jesus said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Are you tired of trying to make yourself look good? Are you tired of running away from the guilt within your heart? Are you tired of seeking happiness from things that can never fill your heart? Are you tired of trying to accumulate merit while still having no assurance?

Come to Christ. He is the Savior of sinners. He is the only way that brings human beings back to God, the only One who can cleanse sin, and the only One who can give true peace.

True happiness does not begin with money, fame, success, love, religion, or merit. True happiness begins when a sinner is reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. This is the happiness that the world cannot give. This is the peace that death cannot destroy. And this is the one true hope of humanity.

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