

WHY AM I SO MISERABLE?

He was a young man, 17 years of age. His life was a mess and he was full of hate and vengeance. He sat in the counselor's office, looking down, and spoke, "I have been in depression for three years. On several occasions I have contemplated suicide." The young man had been in this state of mind since he was 14!

An older woman, responding to a compliment about how good she looked said, "I may look good on the outside but I have felt terrible on the inside for a long time."

"Even in laughter the heart may be in pain, and the end of joy is grief."
James 14:13

People live their lives, day in and day out, but miserable within. Many don't know why but simply try to exist from day to day. For some, it is an enormous battle to cope with. Why am I so miserable?

I. WHAT IS MISERY?

A. Definition: "A condition of great wretchedness of suffering; distress." (Webster's New World Dictionary)

B. Misery is a state of being that involves emotional stress.

C. Describe your inner feeling when you are miserable:

II. WHAT IS THE MAIN CAUSE OF MISERY?

A. Misery may be caused by physical illness, such as, migraines, toothaches, etc.

B. As hard as it is for many to accept, most misery is self induced and self maintained.

1. It stems from selfishness.
2. When we don't get what we want, we begin to experience the pain and hurt.

ILLUSTRATION:

A football team was winning by a large score and had just scored again. They were penalized for having too many men on the field and lost that opportunity. The crowd booed and booed the referee and began throwing things onto the field. The referee was doing the right thing but the crowd could not stand not getting what they wanted when they wanted it! They expressed their disgust and hurt by pouring out their anger on one fellow who was doing right.

3. The more one desires something, the harder it is to accept not getting what we desire.

ILLUSTRATION:

A young lady wants a husband so badly that she attempted a false suicide when a young man refused to marry her. In her mind, it didn't matter to her if he wanted to marry her or not. All that mattered to her was that **she got what she wanted!**

4. The more selfishness gets ingrained in our being; the more opportunity comes to be miserable.

ILLUSTRATION:

Have you ever seen a little child throw a temper fit when they didn't get what they wanted? Why did they throw such a fit? What's the only difference between them and us?

5. If we would learn to forget about our selfishness, do what is right and go on our way, would we feel better? Would our self induced pain leave? Is selfishness a major problem for us?

C. Wrong reactions to what others do to us leads us into more pain!

“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel?”

James 4:1-2

1. Resentment, bitterness, quarreling, hate and malice are the reactions we experience when others do us wrong.

2. What is the source of quarrels and conflicts?

ILLUSTRATION:

A wife said the following about her husband of 18 years, “He has put me through so much agony and pain. I'm bitter toward him, hate being married to him and wouldn't care if something happened to him!” Why is she so miserable? Where does she lay the blame?

Have you ever heard the expression: “Blind With Rage.”?

3. Wrong reactions to what others do to us may temporarily seem satisfying but they cost us dearly within our being in terms of prolonged and constant misery.

ILLUSTRATION:

A sweet, enthusiastic grandmother came up to the preacher after the evening services and grabbed his hand. He could see that she of all people was troubled. He could feel her

pulse beating like a jack hammer. She spoke softly, "What do I do? I am beginning to feel resentment towards someone." The preacher asked, "How do you feel right now?" A scowl came across her face and she replied, "Miserable!"

4. Did you know that when you do or think something that is wrong, especially when it involves others, that you are suppose to feel miserable and worthless?

III. WHY DO I FEEL MISERABLE?

A. The function of the conscience.

(14) "For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, (15) in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them."

Romans 2:14-15

1. In this text, Paul is comparing the Gentile to those Jews under the Law of Moses.
2. The Gentiles were trying to keep things in the Law, even though they were not under the Law.
3. They made the Law their standard to live by, which means, if you violate a standard that you live by, something will happen inside you.
4. What is the function of the conscience (v.15)?
5. What does it mean to "bear witness?"
6. Did God create our conscience as a type of tribunal within us, to accuse or defend our actions?
7. According to the verses, why do you think people try to justify their actions?

ILLUSTRATION:

Sometimes we find ourselves in situations that bring back memories of a past standard that we have broken. We feel the pain within our beings, even though no one else knows but you!

8. Every person has a conscience and it screams within our beings when we violate a known standard.
9. It's the conscience's role to make clear what is right and wrong, so if we violate a known standard, what can we expect the conscience to do?

10. Will our conscience sit back and take it easy or bring it to our attention?

11. What if we ignore it, can we expect to be happy or miserable?

12. If one succeeds in short-circuiting its alarm, will it become easier for you to become more hateful and bitter, which leads one to misery?

"There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

Romans 2:9-10

13. Where are the troubles (tribulation) and distress going to take place at? Where will peace take effect?

14. Everything takes place within our being.

B. The function of God's law.

(7) "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. (8) For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit real eternal life." Galatians 6:7-8

1. Can **anyone** fool God (v.7)?
2. Why?

ILLUSTRATION:

When farmers plant a crop, do they reap more than they plant? Is this a lesson to learn that we always reap more than what we sow to?

3. If one sows (gives into) to their own fleshly desires, what will they reap as a harvest within themselves (v.8)?
4. Does it make a difference what you sow to?
5. This is an invisible law that God will not allow any person to violate. **God is not mocked!**

“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Galatians 5:19-21

6. We are told how we can know if we are sowing to the flesh. Do you find any of these in your life?
7. Our own fleshly nature produces these desires, and if we sow to any of these, will we get better or worse?
8. What do you think, according to the above verses, is the cause of strife and disputes in the world today? Why are so many people miserable?
9. Can one expect to end up with God in the end if they continually sow to these things?

IV. WHAT IS THE SOLUTION TO MISERY?

A. It always is solved through God.

“But I say walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”

Galatians 5:16

1. What is God's answer for our problem?

2. Do we have to be sincere in our walk with God?

Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.”

Acts 3. In the first sermon preached after the death of Jesus, Peter told the people the response God was looking for as a result of the death of Jesus. Notice they were promised the gift, the Holy Spirit. Upon baptism is when one receives the Spirit of God. The Spirit is given in conjunction with the forgiveness of sins.

“For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.”

Galatians 5:17

4. What is the purpose of the Spirit?

5. How useful is our flesh to God?

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

Galatians 5:22-23

6. What can we expect the Spirit of God to produce in our lives if we yield to Him?

7. One way produces misery, the other way is from God. Which are you following?

CONCLUSION:

God is trying to take our lives to something better, but if we refuse to follow and do things God's way, we can't ever expect to get any better. The longer one walks in misery, the deeper they get grounded in it, the more selfish they become and the more hostility they show because things don't go their way.