

HAPPINESS



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Happiness Book Diagrams

Chapter 5, Page 42, Diagram 1

Diagram 1 depicts the contrast between joy and happiness as portrayed by many Christians. Joy, they suppose, is something substantial yet lacking emotional dimension. Happiness is seen as lightweight and temporary—a cloud soon blown away by the wind of circumstances.



DIAGRAM 1

Chapter 5, Page 42, Diagram 2

The contrast can be further portrayed as in diagram 2, with joy as three dimensional—something with depth. Happiness, meanwhile, is allegedly one dimensional and superficial.

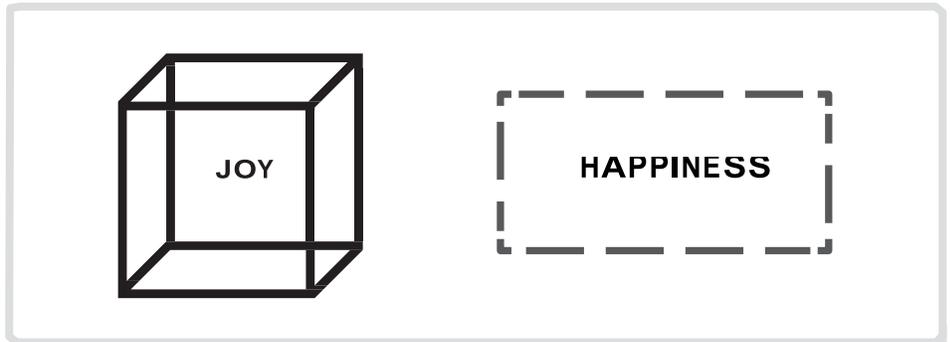


DIAGRAM 2

Chapter 5, Page 43, Diagram 3

Diagram 3 shows joy and happiness as commonly seen by evangelical Christians (but few others). The two separate circles show joy in the upper position—closer to Heaven, further from Earth—and thereby superior to happiness. Happiness is lower, smaller, demoted, and inferior—earthly, not heavenly. (Again, this is not my position but the predominant one among many Christians.)

If these three views of the relationship between joy and happiness are wrong—and I'm convinced they are—then what is the right view? According to the vast majority of the usages of these two words in (1) English history, (2) English literature, (3) Bible translations, and (4) English dictionaries, the words are synonyms with predominantly overlapping meanings. They have far more in common with each other than not. Hence, I depict them as two predominantly overlapping circles.



DIAGRAM 3

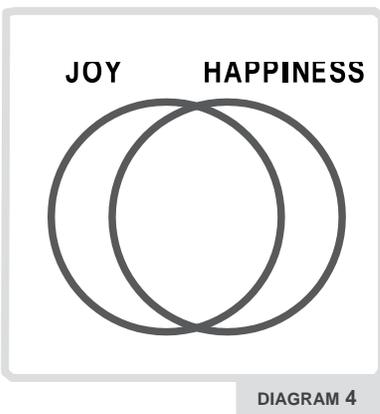


DIAGRAM 4

Chapter 5, Page 43, Diagram 4

This portrayal in diagram 4 stands in stark contrast to the modern evangelical belief about happiness—the one I was taught as a new Christian and have read and heard throughout my life. (I am an evangelical, so my issue isn't with evangelical theology in general but with this particular viewpoint on joy and happiness.)

Page 43, Diagram 5

This final illustration of overlapping word meanings includes not only *happy* and *joyful*, but also *glad*, *cheerful*, *delighted*, and *merry*.

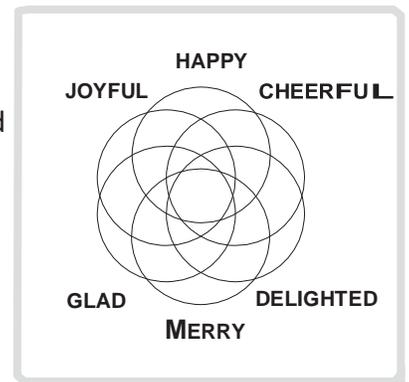


DIAGRAM 5

Chapter 10, Page 90, Diagram 6

In diagram 6, the person depicted as experiencing happiness may not realize that the entire circle of human happiness exists within the infinitely larger circle of God and his happiness.

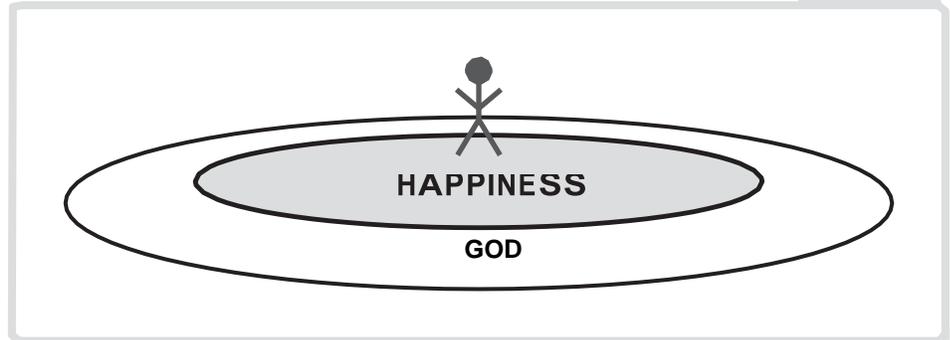


DIAGRAM 6

Chapter 19, Page 166, Diagram 7

WHERE DOES THIS THERAPY CALLED LAUGHTER COME FROM?

Scripture says of Jesus, “By him all things were created” (Colossians 1:16). Laughter comes from the Creator, who made us in his image! His laughter preceded our own laughter and is the ongoing source of it. We can be happy only because he’s happy; we can laugh because he laughs.

Human beings are recipients of happiness, not sources of it. All our delight and gladness come from God.

We cannot divorce our happiness from God’s happiness, because his happiness is foundational to ours.



DIAGRAM 7

Chapter 20, Page 180, Diagrams 8 and 9

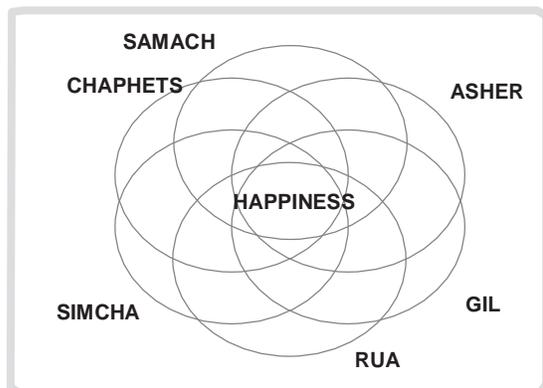


DIAGRAM 8

Diagrams 8 and 9 reflect the overlapping meanings of the Hebrew and Greek words for *happiness* in Scripture. There are far more words for happiness than depicted in each diagram. To be complete, the Hebrew diagram would need three times more circles, and the Greek about two times more.

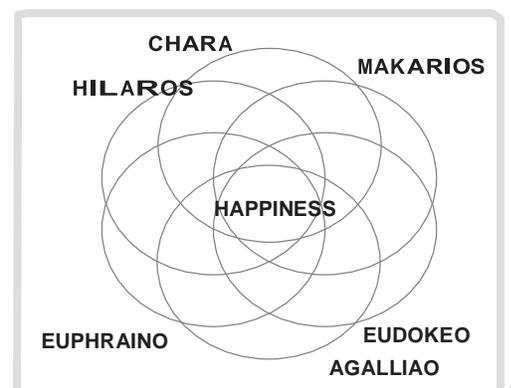


DIAGRAM 9

Happiness Book Tables

Chapter 22, Page 198, Table 1

The following table demonstrates how *asher* is translated in thirteen different Bible versions, with the numbers representing the number of times that *asher* is translated “blessed” as opposed to “happy”:

<i>asher</i> (אַשֶׁר) (44 uses)				
Version	blessed	happy	joyful	other
New American Standard Bible (NASB)	41	3		
New International Version (NIV)	38	6		
English Standard Version (ESV)	37	7		
King James Version (KJV)	27	17		
New Living Translation (NLT)	8	6	28	2
Jerusalem Bible (JB)	5	39		
New American Bible (NAB)	4	39		1
New Century Version (NCV)	4	35		5
Common English Bible (CEB)	3	41 (26 “truly happy”)		
Young’s Literal Translation (YLT)	2	42		
Good News Translation (GNT)	1	38		5
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)	1	43		
Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)	1	41	2	

Chapter 22, Page 200, Table 2

The following table shows how *makarios* is translated in different English versions.

You’ll see how dramatically the versions are split in their rendering. If *blessed* were a synonym of *happy* for modern readers, this wouldn’t matter much. (It would be no more significant than some versions using *sanctified* and others *holy*.) But because *blessed* is no longer a synonym for *happy*, the happiness connotations of *makarios*, like *asher*, are lost in many English translations, buried under the word “blessed.”

<i>makarios</i> (μακάριος) (50 uses)			
Version	blessed	happy	other
English Standard Version (ESV)	48	1	1
New American Standard Bible (NASB)	47	2	1
New International Version (NIV)	44	1	5
King James Version (KJV)	44	6	
Common English Bible (CEB)	9	33	8
Jerusalem Bible (JB)	6	41	3
J.B. Phillips New Testament (PHILLIPS)	6	35	9
Good News Translation (GNT)	5	40	5
Young’s Literal Translation (YLT)	2	42	6