

The 2011 Shreveport Bible Conference

The Copacetic Christian

How to Be Happy in the Devil's World

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I. Nomenclature:

When I was a young boy walking through town with my dad, it was not uncommon for someone to ask, “Speed, how’s it going?” to which he’d respond, “Everything is copacetic.”

I didn’t know what copacetic meant but it was obvious by the expression on his face when he said it and the body language that accompanied it, that he considered his lot in life to be mighty satisfactory.

This attitude was captured by James Baskett in his rendition of Allie Wrubel and Ray Gilbert’s Oscar winning song, “Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah” from Walt Disney’s *Song of the South*:

Zip a dee doo dah, Zip a dee ay,
My, on my, what a wonderful day!
Plenty of sunshine, headin’ my way,
Zip a dee doo dah, Zip a dee ay!

Mister Bluebird on my shoulder;
It’s the truth, it’s actual,
Everything is satisfactory.

Zip a dee doo dah, Zip a dee ay,
Wonderful feeling, Wonderful day!

“Zip-a-dee-doo-dah” and “satisfactory” are not found in dictionaries but were used by Wrubel and Gilbert to facilitate the rhyme scheme of their song and whose message communicates a state of complete happiness.

Mick Jagger and Aretha Franklin each professed, “I can’t get no satisfaction,” back in the ’60s, but that’s because “the times they *were* a-changin’” from the halcyon days of the ’40s when Uncle Remus found everything “satisfactory.”

The word “copacetic” is classified as slang by etymologists and here is an explanation of why:

This slang word for excellent, topnotch or first-rate was labeled in one of our earlier books the probable invention of Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, one of the great black entertainers of this century and certainly one of the greatest tap dancers who ever lived.

At least one reader challenged that attribution, saying that he had heard comedian Joe Frisco use the term in 1911. That may well be, but since Bojangles was probably active also at that time, all we can prove is that the word was well known in show business circles and that, while Robinson may not have invented it, he surely did much to popularize it.¹

Therefore, Copacetic is indicated as slang in English dictionaries and defined as follows:

Very satisfactory; excellent; first-rate; in excellent order; fine and dandy; as it should be; cool.

The best analysis of the word, and as a result, how it plays into the title of our study, is found in *Word Mysteries & Histories*:

All is not copacetic when we consider how little we know about the origin of the word *copacetic*, meaning “excellent, first-rate.” Is its origin to be found in Italian, in the speech of southern blacks, in the Creole French dialect of Louisiana, or in Hebrew? John O’Hara, who used the word in *Appointment in Samarra* \sa-mär'-ra\,² later wrote *copacetic* was “a Harlem and gangster corruption of an Italian word.” O’Hara went on to say, “I don’t know how to spell the Italian, but it’s something like copacetti.” The spelling is now fixed, however, as *copacetic*, even though the origin of the word has not been determined.

The Harlem connection mentioned by O’Hara would seem more likely than the Italian, since *copacetic* was used by black jazz musicians and is said to have been southern slang in the late nineteenth century. If *copacetic* is Creole French in origin, it would also have a southern homeland. According to this explanation, *copacetic* came from the Creole French word *couper-sète*, which meant “able to be coped with,” “able to cope with anything and everything,” “in good form,” and also, “having a healthy appetite or passion for life and love.”

Those who back the Hebrew or Yiddish origin of *copacetic* do not necessarily deny the southern connections of the word. One explanation has it that Jewish storekeepers used the Hebrew phrase *kol bēsedeq*, “all with justice,” when asked if things were O.K. Black children who were in the store as customers or employees heard this phrase as *copacetic*.

¹ William Morris and Mary Morris, “copacetic,” in *Morris Dictionary of Word and Phrase Origins* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1977), 152.

² North northwest of Baghdad, on the east bank of the Tigris River; head of navigation for small vessels. In 9th century, residence of Ab-bassid \a-bas'-idz\ rulers; sacred to Shiite Muslims.

No explanation of the origin of *copacetic*, including the ones discussed here, has won the approval of scholars.³

A word is ultimately defined by its usage and the definitions just mentioned and the Creole French meaning, “able to cope with any and everything” indicates a mental attitude anchored in doctrine so that, whatever the circumstance, its daily conclusion is the same as James Baskett’s, “Everything is satisfactual.”

If a believer is steeped in doctrine, enjoys the prosperity of the sophisticated spiritual life, and has become habitual in his use of problem-solving devices, then it can be said he is a copacetic Christian. Ergo, a copacetic Christian possesses true happiness in his soul.

True happiness may be defined as follows:

Happiness is an inner resource developed from maximum Bible doctrine resident in the soul and is so advanced in its grace orientation to the plan of God that all aspects of life are evaluated with regard to eternal rather than temporal implications. Consequently, happiness is the penultimate problem-solving device.

Unfortunately the world is filled with unhappy people. The paradox is that each and every one of them is enmeshed in a frantic search for happiness. As in all things worth having, only a few actually achieve the objective that is so universally pursued.

In order to demonstrate the futility of the world’s fruitless but perpetual effort to find happiness, let’s take a look at what the great philosophers of the past have had to say on the subject.

Some of these sages’ ideas are rational on the level of human viewpoint, but each falls short of achieving the prize since true happiness can only be obtained by the believer in Jesus Christ.

³ David A. Jost, et al., eds., “copacetic,” in *Word Mysteries & Histories: From Quiche to Humble Pie* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1986), 51–52.

II. The Philosophers:

John Locke observed that men place themselves in miserable circumstances because of poor decisions; decisions entered into originally with the hope of acquiring happiness.

Locke further observed that happiness for one man may be quite different for another. He defined happiness as being the utmost pleasure we are capable of and misery as being the utmost pain.

Happiness and misery are responses to either internal or external influences. We look on that which produces happiness as good and that which causes misery as bad or evil.

Plato of fifth-century B.C. Greece defined happiness as “spiritual well-being.” He classified it as a harmony in the soul, an inner peace which results from the proper order of all the soul’s parts. **(Good definition; wrong source.)**

Plotinus \plō-tī'-nas\, who started Neoplatonism⁴ in the third century A.D., made the accurate statement that “nothing external can separate a virtuous man from happiness.” **(Good definition; impossible to attain.)**

Sigmund Freud muddled the waters with his observation that the happy man has found a way to master his inner conflicts and to become well-adjusted to his environment. But Freud was a modern thinker and thus confused by his own pseudo-intellectual arrogance. The ancient muses were far closer to an accurate definition.

NOTE: Man cannot be the lone source of mastering his inner conflicts. Environment is not an issue in the development or maintenance of true happiness.

Visual #1:
Intrinsic &
Extrinsic
5th Columns

⁴ “Conceives of the world as an emanation from an ultimate indivisible being with whom the soul is capable of being reunited in trance or ecstasy” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th., ed., s.v.: “Neoplatonism”).

Such as **Lucretius Carus** \lü-krē'-shē-as kar'-us\, a first-century Latin philosopher, who made this insightful comment, "That which we desire seems the most desirable thing in the world; then, when we have got it, we want something else; 'tis ever the same thirst."

(Defines the frantic search for happiness and unrealistic expectations.)

Socrates said that the happy are made happy by the possession of justice and temperance. **(Valid components, but absent the origin.)**

Julius Caesar also showed wisdom in his analysis of the subject: "'Tis the common vice of nature, that we at once repose most confidence and receive the greatest apprehensions from things unseen, concealed, and unknown."

Blaise Pascal, a seventeenth-century French philosopher who happened to be a believer, said about happiness:

All men seek happiness. There are no exceptions. However different the means they may employ, they all strive towards this goal... The will never takes the least step except to that end. This is the motive of every act of every man...

"Yet for very many years no one without faith has ever reached the goal at which everyone is continually aiming. All men complain: princes, subjects, nobles, commoners, old, young, strong, weak, learned, ignorant, healthy, sick, in every country, at every time, of all ages, and all conditions.

"A test which has gone on so long, without pause or change, really ought to convince us that we are incapable of attaining the good by our own efforts. But example teaches us very little. No two examples are so exactly alike that there is not some subtle difference, and that is what makes us expect that our expectations will not be disappointed this time as they were last time. So, while the present never satisfies us, experience deceives us, and leads us on from one misfortune to another until death comes as the ultimate and eternal climax.

"What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him, seeking in things that are not there the help he cannot find in those that are, though none can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words by God himself.

"God alone is man's true good, and since man abandoned him it is a strange fact that nothing in nature has been found to take his place.⁵

Solon \so'-lan\, one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece, once told Croesus \krē'-sus\, king of Lydia, that he would not call him happy "until I hear that you have closed your life happily ... for oftentimes God gives men a gleam of happiness and then plunges them into ruin. For this reason, in judging of happiness ... it behooves us to mark well the end." **(This philosophy makes happiness a slave to circumstances, but in prosperity or ruin, true happiness is unaffected.)**

Spinoza \spa-nō'-za\, a Dutch philosopher of the seventeenth century, places happiness in intellectual activity of so high an order that the happy man is almost godlike. The way to happiness must indeed be difficult since it is so seldom discovered. **(This is the attitude possessed by the anointed who view themselves as the elite whose intelligence qualifies them to run the lives of the benighted.)**

Michel Montaigne \mē-shel män-tān'\ a humanist writer of sixteenth-century France, stated that "learning how to face death well seems indispensable to living well." **(Correct, but no mention of how.)**

This is in agreement with Lucretius who once observed that "what happiness men can have depends on their being rid of the fear of death."

There is one consistent thread which links all these philosophers together in their analyses of happiness: pleasure versus pain.

Pleasure is the feeling of satisfaction which accompanies the possession of objects desired. Pain is the frustration which comes from the denial of these pleasures.

⁵ Blaise Pascal, University of Tennessee, School of Business, <http://bus.utk.edu/stat/mee/books/p1.html> (accessed September 16, 2011).

John Locke commented that “happiness becomes an existence exempt as far as possible from pain and as rich as possible in pleasures.” Thus the philosophers succeed in beating around the bush. Some have better ideas than others but none of them is able to define happiness. Unfortunately the devil’s world has come to accept the general definition of happiness as being the status in which pleasures are maximized while pain is minimized.

In a humanistic environment in which absolutes are rejected out of hand, then one man’s pleasure amounts to another man’s pain. American satirist, **Ambrose Bierce** \biers\ sarcastically defines happiness in his *The Devil’s Dictionary* as “an agreeable sensation arising from contemplating the misery of another.”

When the public mind-set becomes committed to the concept of equality in its pursuit of happiness, then no matter what their desires happen to be they must be provided. This effort has led to the rise of privacy rights.

The rhetorical veil of the socialist system of government is to promise maximum pleasure to every group in order to minimize its pains. Chaos always results, but this does not dissuade Progressives from promoting the elusive Utopian state. The result is the legalized plunder of the haves to assuage the have-nots: *panem et circenses*, bread and circuses: provision of the means of life and recreation by government to appease discontent.

The rationale for this is the myth that all must be guaranteed the attainment of happiness. What the law should provide is the environment of freedom where one might be left free to pursue happiness.

When a client nation drifts away from the basic principles of biblical Christianity, then the universal desire for happiness ceases to be a personal objective but rather becomes a one-against-all competition.

German author Helmut Schoeck calls this envy and defines it as follows:

Envy expresses that vindictive and inwardly tormenting frame of mind, the displeasure with which one perceives the prosperity and the advantages of others, begrudges them these things and in addition wishes one were able to destroy them.⁶

Schoeck also writes that envy is a basic part of human existence and is a profoundly destructive force that eats away at happiness, success, progress, and civilization.

Thus when the majority of the people begin to seek happiness – a happiness defined as the maximizing of pleasures while at the same time minimizing pains – then the means they will use to reach that end is envy.

Socialism will take from one who has in order to alleviate the pain of another. Frederic Bastiat \bäs-tya\ called it “plunder.” His comments on the subject of acquiring happiness through legal mandates are very instructive:

Man can live and satisfy his wants only by ceaseless labor; by ceaseless application of his faculties to natural resources. This process is the origin of property.

But it is also true that a man may live and satisfy his wants by seizing and consuming the products of the labor of others. This process is the origin of plunder.

Now since man is naturally inclined to avoid pain—and since labor is pain in itself—it follows that men will resort to plunder whenever plunder is easier than work. History shows this quite clearly. And under these conditions, neither religion nor morality can stop it.

When, then, does plunder stop? It stops when it becomes more painful and more dangerous than labor.

It is evident, then, that the proper purpose of law is to use the power of its collective force to stop this fatal tendency to plunder instead of work. All the measures of the law should protect property and punish plunder. (p. 10)

But ... the fatal tendency that exists in the heart of man is to satisfy his wants with the least possible effort. (pp. 10–11)

It is impossible to introduce into society a greater change and a greater evil than this: The conversion of the law into an instrument of plunder. What are the consequences of such a perversion?

In the first place, it erases from everyone's conscience the distinction between justice and injustice. (p. 12)

⁶ Helmut Schoeck, *Envy: A Theory of Social Behavior* (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1966), 24.

When law and morality contradict each other, the citizen has the cruel alternative of either losing his moral sense or losing his respect for the law. These two evils are of equal consequence, and it would be difficult for a person to choose between them. (pp. 12–13)

The nature of the law is to maintain justice. This is so much the case that, in the minds of the people, law and justice are one and the same thing. There is in all of us a strong disposition to believe that anything lawful is also legitimate. This belief is so widespread that many persons have erroneously held that things are “just” because law makes them so. Thus, in order to make plunder appear just and sacred to many consciences, it is only necessary for the law to decree and sanction it. Slavery, restriction, and monopoly find defenders not only among those who profit from them but also among those who suffer from them. (p. 13)

... imagine that this fatal principle has been introduced: Under the pretense of organization, regulation, protection, or encouragement, the law takes property from one person and gives it to another; the law takes the wealth of all and gives it to a few—whether farmers, manufacturers, ship owners, artists, or comedians. Under these circumstances, then certainly every class will aspire to grasp the law, and logically so.

The excluded classes will furiously demand their right to vote—and will overthrow society rather than not to obtain it. Even beggars and vagabonds will then prove to you that they also have an incontestable title to vote. They will say to you:

“We cannot buy wine, tobacco, or salt without paying the tax. And a part of the tax that we pay is given by law—in privileges and subsidies—to men who are richer than we are. Others will use the law to raise the prices of bread, meat, iron, or cloth. Thus, since everyone else uses the law for his own profit, we also would like to use the law for our own profit. We demand from the law the right to relief, which is the poor man’s plunder. (p. 17)

To obtain this right, we also should be voters and legislators in order that we may organize Beggary on a grand scale for our own class, as you have organized Protection on a grand scale for your class.” (pp. 17–18)

But how is this legal plunder to be identified? Quite simply. See if the law takes from some persons what belongs to them and gives it to other persons to whom it does not belong. See if the law benefits one citizen at the expense of another by doing what the citizen himself cannot do without committing a crime.⁷ (p. 21)

⁷ Frederic Bastiat, *The Law* (Irvington-on-Hudson, NY: The Foundation for Economic Education, 1979), 10–13; 17–18; 21.

Such is the result of applying the philosophers' definitions of happiness. The desire to maximize one's pleasures while minimizing one's pain results in an evil system of plunder – all in the name of “pursuing happiness.”

Our entire society is pursuing happiness in all the wrong places. In order to acquire this false happiness, free people are willing to sell their very souls.

John Locke wrote, “He that has his chains knocked off and the prison doors set open to him, is perfectly at liberty, because he may either go or stay as he best likes; though his preference be determined to stay, by the darkness of the night, or illness of the weather, or want of other lodging. He ceases not to be free; though the desire of some convenience to be had there absolutely determines his preference and makes him stay in his prison.”

This is an excellent way to describe the doctrine of redemption: The saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross whereby every human being is purchased from the slave market of sin with a view toward setting him free. Redemption is realized when a person is born again by faith alone in Christ alone.

The undeniable point is that mankind has historically rejected freedom and the reason is because freedom demands from the individual a responsibility for his decisions and accountability for his actions.

Further, freedom requires of the individual that whatever property he owns must be the product of his own labors.

Hard work, responsibility, accountability, virtue, integrity, rectitude, and probity – all these are the requirements of freedom. These are the things of which true happiness is made.

Consequently, freedom is the environment necessary to acquire true happiness. To reject freedom is to reject any possibility for true happiness. And the freedom to which I refer is not political freedom but soul freedom.

Men who cast the responsibility of their livelihood onto society are men who are already into soul slavery. Political slavery is merely the logical result.

Aristotle introduced the principle of virtue into the discussion of the philosophers: "The virtuous man is one who finds pleasure in the things that are by nature pleasant. The virtuous man takes pleasure only in the right things and is willing to suffer pain for the right end. Virtue is the principle means to happiness because it regulates the choices which must be rightly made in order to obtain all good things."

Such is the mental attitude of the unbeliever who can achieve a measure of happiness through positive volition toward the laws of divine establishment. However, none of these definitions by any of the great philosophers comes close to recognizing the true happiness available to the Church Age believer.

In our study we will analyze the principle of perfect happiness in order to demonstrate the fallacy of the philosophers.

III. Principles for Developing True Happiness in the Soul:

1. Happiness is the result of right thinking. A right things done in a right way is right. This principle of protocol applies to thought, decision, and action.
2. Error occurs when man assumes that happiness can be pursued in and of itself.
3. But happiness cannot be found by pursuing it.
4. Happiness is a mental attitude – an inner resource – that develops when one pursues truth.
5. In order to pursue truth, one must first establish the source of truth.
6. If one is successful in locating the source of truth, then certain results follow. First of all, the source of truth becomes the source of absolute norms and standards.
7. For truth to be truth it must be absolute. It must be as true tomorrow as it is today.
8. The discovery of absolutes reveals principles of right and wrong by which we may direct our lives.
9. When we subscribe to these standards we associate our thoughts, decisions, and actions with these standards.
10. If we make a habit of making right decisions, then we associate ourselves with right action.
11. Over time, this association with right action builds spiritual self-esteem and camaraderie with the Source of truth, God the Father.
12. From this advance we learn there are absolutes which define human choices (sinful) and absolutes which define divine choices (righteous).
13. We are able to conclude that God made choices based on absolutes and has set up standards that even He is unable to violate.

14. For example, because of physical birth and the imputation of human life, we become objects of divine selection.
15. At gospel hearing, man is left free to make a choice between heaven and the lake of fire by either accepting or rejecting the gospel as an absolute truth.
16. Those who accept through faith that the gospel is absolute truth are the only ones God is free to elect. We can see attention to this absolute standard expressed by John the Baptist in:

John 3:36 - "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

17. The Lord stresses both the positive and negative aspects of gospel hearing in:

John 15:16 - "You did not elect Me, but I elected you."

v. 19 - "If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have elected you out of the world. This is why the world hates you."

18. For those who trust God as the Source of truth, both confidence and happiness will gradually define their lives.

Romans 15:13 - May the God of confidence fill you with happiness and prosperity as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with confidence by means of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.

19. Knowledge of truth results in motivational love for God which in turn creates a desire to acquire more knowledge.
20. The tandem problem-solving devices result from this advance: (1) personal love for God, followed by (2) unconditional love for all mankind.

21. These are the categories of virtue love which, when facilitated into character traits, produce true happiness in the soul.
22. Colossians 1:8–13 describes the nuances of spiritual growth:

Colossians 1:8 - (Epaphras \ěp'-a-frās\), gave us a written report about your unconditional love which the Holy Spirit produced in you.

v. 9 - Because of this [**unconditional love**], from the day on which we heard, we have not stopped praying for you and asking, that you might be filled with the *epígnōsis* knowledge of His will [**spiritual maturity**] by means of all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

v. 10 - that you conduct yourselves worthy of the Lord, seeking to please Him in every way [**function inside the operational divine dynasphere**], bearing fruit by every good work [**application of doctrine**], always making progress [**continuous spiritual growth**] in the sphere of the knowledge that comes from the source of God;

v. 11 - that you might be constantly made strong [**advance by means of doctrine through the areas of momentum testing**] by means of every enabling power—in keeping with His sovereign power which has His essence as its source [**delegated power through the filling of the Holy Spirit**]—in order that you might always have endurance, stability, and patience with happiness [**the stability of spiritual maturity**]

v. 12 - constantly being thankful to the Father, the One Who made it possible for you to share in the inheritance of the saints [**divine operating assets**] in the sphere of the Light [**operational divine dynasphere**].

v. 13 - For He [**God**] rescued us from the authority of darkness [**the Satanic Academy of Cosmic Didactics**], and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love [**adoption into the royal family and enrollment into the Divine Academy of Grace Didactics**].

IV. Exegesis of 1 Peter 1:7-8:

1. True happiness is the mental attitude possessed by Christ while being judged for the sins of the human race.
2. He was sustained by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit and the Lord's doctrinal and grace orientations were motivated by His unconditional love for all mankind.
3. This happiness is made available to us through the execution of the ten problem-solving devices.
4. Knowledge of doctrines which teach about the Lord's uses of these devices enables the believer to do the same by means of the Holy Spirit's power.
5. The problem-solving devices utilized by our Lord on the cross are the subject of the first chapter of Peter's first Epistle.

1 Peter 1:7 - The proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

v. 8 - and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory. (NASB)

1. Verse 7 concludes by referencing the Rapture of the church: "at the revelation of Jesus Christ." In verse 8, the personal pronoun "Him" refers to the Lord.
2. The initial verb in verse 8 is the aorist active participle of the verb ὁράω (*horáō*) accompanied by the negative conjunction οὐκ (*ouk*).
3. This is translated, "you have never seen Him." That we also have never seen Jesus Christ becomes a major issue in the Christian way of life for we must learn about Him from Scripture in order to know Him.

**Visual #2:
The Ten
Problem-
Solving
Devices**

4. We can only know Christ by studying the Bible and from that revelation we are able to acquire personal love for Him, the present active indicative of the verb **ἀγαπάω (agapáō)**.
5. The present is durative for an action or state that began in the past and continues into the present for those who are advancing in the plan of God at problem-solving device #7.
6. *Agapáō* is the main verb and the action of the aorist participle, “not to see,” precedes the act of loving Him.
7. Therefore, we come to love a Person whom we have never seen. Having never seen Christ is important since the action of the constative aorist of *horáō*, to see, views the action of the verb in its entirety.
8. Since we have never seen Him, but yet love Him, then we have advanced to problem-solving device #10: occupation with Christ.
9. Although we have never seen Him, we acquired personal love for Him. This is the first increment of the believer’s staying power inside the operational divine dynasphere.
10. *Agapáō* is the main verb and refers to these believers’ virtue love: (1) personal love for God which must precede (2) unconditional love for all mankind. Virtue love demands grace and doctrinal orientation for it to be sustained.
11. As the verse continues we have a second participle. The first was the aorist active participle of *horáō* with the negative *ouk* indicating we “have never seen Him.”
12. The second is the present active participle of *horáō* but this time the negative conjunction is **μή (mē)** plus the adverb **ἄρτι (árti)** and is translated “although you do not see Him now.”

**Visual #3:
Map of
Asia Minor**

13. Peter's First Epistle was written circa A.D. 65 to the Jewish Diaspora in several provinces of Asia Minor: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia (the province that includes Phrygia, Mysia \mīsh'-i-a\, Caria \kā'-ri-a\, and Lydia), and Bithynia \bi-thin'-i-a\.
14. Jesus Christ, has never been visible to these Jews but they continue loving Him, and although He is not visible to them now, they continue believing.
15. There are two present active participles placed back-to-back in the Greek text: **(1) ὁράω (horáō)**, "(not) to see," and **(2) πιστεύω (pisteúō)**, "to believe."
16. Peter indicates a circumstance that the world views as a problem. Jesus Christ is not visible to anyone nor has He been since the apostles observed His ascension from the Mount of Olives in A.D. 33 and recorded in Acts 1:9-11.
17. The Church Age was not prophesied in the Old Testament therefore, a mystery dispensation until it was inaugurated in Acts 2. Although today the organizational church is visible to all, to unbelievers the organism of the universal church remains a mystery and, I might add, to far too many believers in the twenty-first century.
18. This is reflected by their complete ignorance of Christian theology. Ignorance solicits fear and fear makes Progressives Christophobic which, according to their lexicon followed by logic, ought to be a hate crime.
19. Romans 1:22 maintains that those who profess themselves wise, become fools, but the wise ones are those who have never seen Christ and do not see Him now, yet continue loving Him and continue believing in Him.
20. Here is how the passage reads for as far as we have gone in our exegesis:

1 Peter 1:7 - ... that the proof of your faith being much more precious than gold, which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; (NASB)

v. 8 - and though you have never seen Him, you continue loving Him, with reference to whom at the present time you continue believing through faith perception ... (EXT)

1. What is in play here is the advance to the sophisticated spiritual life which is the status of our Lord while being crucified.
2. Our Lord willingly went to the cross as is indicated by His prayer in Gethsemane in which He characterized the imputation of our sins upon Him as drinking from a cup:

Matthew 26:39 - "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."

v. 42 - "If this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done."

3. Once on the cross, Jesus had to endure the imputation and judgment of our sins while also enduring the physical agony that accompanies the act of crucifixion.
4. To accomplish the objective He could not sin nevertheless, He not only willingly received the imputation of our sins, but also their judgment while remaining impeccable.

Hebrews 12:2 - Be concentrating on Jesus [His true humanity], the founder and perfecter of our faith [mystery doctrine of the Church Age], Who, because of His exhibited happiness [χαρά (*charā*): PSD #9] He endured the cross [staying power from the tandem PSDs of personal love for God & unconditional love for man], disregarding the shame [of being identified with our sins], and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God [session].

**Visual #4:
Staying
Power of
Our Lord on
the Cross**

5. The Lord willingly received the imputation of our sins motivated by His unconditional love for mankind.
6. Jesus willingly received the judgment of our sins motivated by His personal love for God and commitment to His plan for salvation.
7. Disregarding the shame of the experience indicates His maintenance of perfect happiness while being judged for our sins.
8. These three problem-solving devices constitute the Lord's staying power on the cross.
9. Our verse reads this way to this point in our exegesis:

1 Peter 1:8 - and though you have never seen Him, you continue loving Him, with reference to whom at the present time you continue not seeing Him yet constantly believing through faith perception ... (EXT)

10. Next in the verse is an unusual construction in the Greek, so unusual that two of the major English translations take a pass. The King James and NASB go with "rejoice with joy."
11. So what is it that the believers in Asia Minor are experiencing? The answer is provided by examining the use of an uncommon grammatical construction in this verse.
12. The phrase in question looks like this in the Greek text: ἀγαλλιᾷσθε χαρᾷ (*agalliásthe charái*): the present middle indicative of the cognate verb ἀγαλλιᾶω (*agalliáo*), translated "rejoice."
13. The present tense of *agalliáo* is durative indicating that these believers are to keep on rejoicing. The middle voice is deponent therefore active in meaning: believers are to produce the act of rejoicing. The indicative mood establishes this as a fact. This is followed by the cognate dative noun χαρᾷ (*chará*), translated "joy."

**Visual #5:
Cognate
Dative:
Formal &
Conceptual**

14. These two words form the uncommon grammatical structure in the Koine Greek of the “cognate dative”:

The dative noun is cognate to the verb either formally (where both noun and verb have the same root [e.g., the noun *χαρά* (*chará*) and the verb *χαίρω* (*chairō*)] or conceptually (where the roots are different [e.g., the noun *χαρά* (*chará*) and the verb *ἀγαλλιάω* (*agallιάō*)]). (p. 168)

The force of the cognate dative will be primarily to *emphasize the action of the verb* [*agallιάō*]. When an author chooses his words so that the noun in the dative [*chará*] is cognate to the verb, this is a clue that the cognate idea (i.e., that of emphasizing the action of the verb) is the main thrust of the dative.⁸ (pp. 168–69)

15. What this means is that Peter intentionally used a “conceptual” cognate dative instead of a “formal” cognate dative. He uses the verb *agallιάō* rather than *chairō*, but it has the same definition.
16. This puts stress on the verb *agallιάō* and the translation must reflect this. The accompanying cognate noun *chará* throws light on the verb so that it must be interpreted from the standpoint of the passage’s context.
17. *Agallιάō* can be translated into the English by the word “joy,” but this word, which has become trite, really doesn’t capture the essence of the context.
18. In the preceding verse we have this statement by Peter:

1 Peter 1:7 - The proof [*δοκίμιον* (*dokímion*)] of your faith [*πίστις* (*pístis*): doctrine], being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested [*δοκιμάζω* (*dokimázō*)] by fire, may be found [*εὕρισκω* (*heurískō*)] to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation [**Rapture**] of Jesus Christ;

19. The word “proof” is the noun *dokímion* and the word “tested” is the verb *dokimázō* and they have to do with testing designed to result in blessing.

⁸ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 168–69.

20. The purpose of the believer's faith being tested is for the purpose of purification. In all circumstances of life we are to regard difficulties both small and large as an opportunity to use doctrine rather than emotion to resolve an issue.
21. The purification of our faith is more precious to us than gold which is perishable. Nevertheless, gold can be purified by means of fire.
22. When discovered in the earth, gold is often alloyed with other metals which means its value is reduced by being mixed with less valuable elements.
23. When the gold alloy is placed over fire then a separation occurs. This is called assaying. The heat separates the gold from the metals with which it is alloyed producing scoria [σκωρία (*skōría*): the dross or slag]. Once the scoria is removed, the gold can then be formed into bars or ingots called bullion which is virtually pure, however gold found in jewelry is always an alloy:

Most gold used in jewelry is alloyed with silver, copper, and a little zinc to produce various shades of yellow gold, or with nickel, copper, and zinc to produce white gold. Most of this gold is of 14-karat quality, the karat representing a measure of purity in a scale of 1 to 24; thus 14-karat gold contains 14/24 or 58.35 percent gold.⁹
24. Gold tried in fire is purified. Believers are also purified in the fires of momentum testing and as spiritual growth is accelerated and their inventory of ideas is broadened then they acquire maximum doctrine in their streams of consciousness resulting in blessing.
25. This inventory is going to be challenged during the course of testing as the believer uses doctrine to resolve issues in his life. The discovery is noted by the verb εὕρισκω (*heurískō*).

⁹ Edmund Merriman Wise, "Gold Products and Production," in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Macropaedia*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1979), 8:239.

26. *Heurískō* is used metaphorically for learning by experience and therefore coming to realize a personal gain as a result.
27. Three things mentioned in verse 7 are: (1) praise: **ἔπαινος (épainos)**: originally “applause” but later “commendation” or “approval”; God applauds with approval the believer’s advance, (2) glory: **δόξα (dóxa)**: the act of showing recognition to God by subscribing to His Word in thought and deed, and (3) honor: **τιμή (timē)**: respect from inner integrity.
28. These things occur at the “appearing of Jesus Christ” which make reference to the Rapture of the church and the subsequent Nike Award Ceremonies at the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ.
29. But the joy spoken of in verse 8 is available only to believers who utilize the same problem-solving devices employed by our Lord while on the cross.
30. We have noted our Lord’s use of the tandem problem-solving devices, but their use indicates the presence of the extremely significant problem-solving device of true happiness.
31. While facing the most intense suffering ever recorded in human history, our Lord never lost His happiness.
32. Unconditional love for mankind was necessary for Him to agree to receive the imputation of all the sins of human history.
33. Personal love for God was necessary for Him to be motivated to die spiritually for them.
34. To be successful, the Lord could never submit to any sinful reaction to the imputation or the judgment which means that during the events of the cross He never lost His true happiness.
35. Together, these three problem-solving devices provided our Lord with His staying power on the cross.

Visual #6:
Harmony:
Outer &
Inner

36. Two terms in the Greek exemplify this accomplishment: (1) ἑξωτερικὴ ἁρμονία (*exōterikē harmonía*): outer harmony and concord with others which produces (2) ἐσωτερικὴ ἁρμονία (*esōterikē harmonía*): inner harmony of the soul.¹⁰
37. Note that outer harmony must be accomplished before inner harmony can be achieved which is pure happiness: PLG + ULM + PH or ExH equals EsH: inner happiness.
38. In other words, you can never be truly happy until you have *exōterikē harmonía* with others, a relationship with God based on reciprocal love and a relationship with mankind based on unconditional love.
39. When these two devices are achieved then the soul is freed from all stress factors and pure happiness is the result.
40. It is this pure happiness that Peter is attempting to relate in his phrase “rejoice with joy inexpressible”: ἀγαλλιάω (*agalliáō*) plus χαρά (*chará*).
41. That our Lord maintained *esōterikē harmonía* during the events of the cross means that His happiness was unalloyed.
42. Peter’s use of the verb *agalliáō* in verse 8 helps correlate this conceptual cognate dative with the illustration given in verse 7. This verb and its cognates:

Ἀγάλλω [*agállō*] in Greek literature. Ἀγάλλω means “to make resplendent” or “adorn.” What the term denotes is not so much a mood of satisfied joy as a consciousness of joyful pride expressed in the whole attitude. The expression of this joy, to which there does not have to be any reference in the word, has the character of demonstration rather than impartation.¹¹

¹⁰ Adapted from: Steven Pressfield, *Gates of Fire: An Epic Novel of the Battle of Thermopylae* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 80–81.

¹¹ Rudolf Bultmann, “ἀγαλλιόμαι, ἀγαλλίασις,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 1:19.

ἀγαλλιάω and ἀγαλλίασις ... occur only in the language of the Bible and the Church, and speak of the joy which encompasses the whole person and radiates from the person.¹²

43. From this we conclude that the use of this verb by Peter stresses a type of happiness that is visible although it is internal to the one that possesses it and impossible for him to define in human terms.
44. Since the cognate noun *chará* emphasizes the action of the verb, then we can arrive at the following translation from the illustration given in verse 7 of unalloyed gold: "unalloyed happiness."
45. For the believer to acquire this level of pure happiness then he must follow the example of Jesus Christ on the cross.
46. First from spiritual growth through Bible study, he must develop personal love for God which is problem-solving device #7.
47. Secondly, from the motivation of this personal love for God, the believer must develop unconditional love for mankind which is problem-solving device #8.
48. Having accomplished these two goals then he has eliminated all distractions from *cosmos diabolicus*. All thought, system, people, and disaster testings offer challenges to doubt God or judge people.
49. Without the distractions that these externals provide and internals magnify, the believer is in status quo happiness.
50. Inside the operational divine dynasphere, he shares the happiness that Jesus Christ possessed in His true humanity while being imputed human sin and suffering their judgment.

¹² Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, eds., *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 1:8.

51. The conceptual cognate datives *agalliáō* and *chará* are so profound that Peter adds another qualifier to this level of happiness, the noun **ἀνεκλάλητος** (**aneklálētos**), translated “inexpressible.”
52. The verse concludes with the verb **δοξάζω** (**doxázō**), translated “glory,” but it emphasizes the honor that accompanies the believer who possesses unalloyed happiness that cannot be described in human terms.
53. Here is the completed expanded translation of the verse:

1 Peter 1:8 - and though you have never seen Him, you continue loving Him, with reference to Whom at the present time you continue not seeing Him, yet you keep on believing with sublime unalloyed happiness that is inexpressible and full of resplendent glory.

V. Doctrinal Analysis of True Happiness:

1. *Exōterikē harmonía*, personal love for God and unconditional love for mankind, in association with *esōterikē harmonía*, sharing the happiness of God, were the problem-solving devices used by our Lord on the cross.
2. This combination of virtue love and pure happiness is the formula that resulted in the Lord's victory on the cross.
3. Because of *exōterikē harmonía* our Lord possessed *esōterikē harmonía*.
4. Because of the impeccability of Jesus' true humanity, His inner harmony of soul was pure and, like gold tried by fire, was unalloyed.
5. This disposition of soul, utilizing these three problem-solving devices, is evident in:

Hebrews 12:2 - Be concentrating on Jesus [His true humanity], the founder and perfecter of our faith [mystery doctrine of the Church Age], Who, because of His exhibited happiness [χαρά (*charā*): PSD #9] He endured the cross [staying power from the tandem PSDs of personal love for God & unconditional love for man], disregarding the shame [of being identified with our sins], and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God [session].

6. The verse documents the Lord's staying power on the cross as the combination of virtue love and unalloyed happiness.
7. Since the Lord's prototype spiritual life has been bequeathed to believers in the Church Age, then the same system that provided the Lord His staying power on the cross is the same system that enables us to have staying power in the relentless combat of the Invisible War.

8. In 1 Peter 1:8 we find the conceptual cognate dative construction of the verb *agalliáō* and the noun *chará* which places special emphasis on the verb.

Remember the definition of this case's structure:

The force of the cognate dative will be primarily to *emphasize the action of the verb* [*agalliáō*]. When an author chooses his words so that the noun in the dative [*chará*] is cognate to the verb, this is a clue that the cognate idea (i.e., that of emphasizing the action of the verb) is the main thrust of the dative.¹³

9. The context of the passage informs us of the action being emphasized. In verse 7a we learned that “the proof of our faith” is determined by testing.

10. The word for “proof” is the noun *dokímion*:

In 1 Peter 1:7 ... it reflects an adjectival sense which means genuine or approved. In New Testament times it was used of metals that were without alloy. Peter uses the word as a substantive referring to the genuineness of faith.¹⁴

11. In verse 7b, the smelting of gold is inserted as an example of genuineness produced by means of fire. During this process the scoria is separated from the gold – the metals with which it was alloyed.

12. Therefore, it is through testing that our faith is proved genuine. Faith is transitive and requires an object. The object of our faith that is tested is volitional loyalty to our doctrinal inventory.

13. It is from this resource that we grow in grace and enter into the sophisticated spiritual life which is characterized by the final four problem-solving devices: (1) personal love for God and its tandem (2) unconditional love for mankind – *exōterikē harmonía* – produce (3) unalloyed happiness – *esōterikē harmonía* – resulting in (4) occupation with Christ.

¹³ Wallace, *Beyond the Basics*, 168–69.

¹⁴ Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1993), 476.

14. Execution at this level of spiritual sophistication results in “praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7c).
15. The following excerpt sums up the impact of the cognate verb *agalliáo* in verse 8:

When the believer uses divine assets under extreme stress, not only is God’s perfection demonstrated to Satan, but the marvel of God’s grace is also made dramatically clear to the mature believer himself. His occupation with the person of Christ sustains an inner happiness [*esōterikē harmonía* or unalloyed happiness] that is the greatest of all problem-solving devices.

Whether enjoying prosperity or coping with adversity, the mature believer has access to all the problem-solving devices of the entire divine dynasphere. Using the tremendous assets of his palace, he sustains his spiritual momentum throughout his life and handles suffering with such confidence that he becomes a maximum demonstration of God’s perfect grace and integrity.¹⁵

16. This maximum execution of the plan of God includes a type of happiness that is not only purified by testing so that it is unalloyed, but also is so sublime that it is described in the NASB as being inexpressible, the instrumental singular noun **ἀνεκλάλητος (*aneklálētos*)**.
17. The concept here is that once a believer advances to this level of spiritual maturity it is impossible to explain it to someone who has not experienced this type of happiness.
18. “Sublime” is the best English word to describe this idea and it is defined as:

Sublime verb 2a (1): to elevate or exalt especially in dignity or honor (2) to render finer (as in purity or excellence) b: to convert something inferior to something of higher worth.

Sublime adjective 1a: lofty, grand, or exalted in thought, expression, or manner b: of outstanding spiritual, intellectual, or moral worth c: tending to inspire awe usually because of elevated quality or transcendent excellence. Synonym at “splendid”: SUBLIME implies an exaltation or elevation almost beyond human comprehension.¹⁶

¹⁵ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Christian Suffering*, 3d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2002), 15.

¹⁶ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.vv.: “sublime,” “splendid.”

19. Once a believer passes the testings that God has decreed for him to endure and overcome, he enters into the rarified atmosphere of unalloyed happiness that is so sublime it is virtually impossible to describe.
20. The expanded translation of 1 Peter 1:7-8 reads as follows:

1 Peter 1:7 - that the genuineness of your doctrinal inventory, being much more precious than gold, which is perishable, even though tested by fire for the purpose of approval, may be discovered to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

v. 8 - and though you have never seen Him, you continue loving Him, with reference to Whom at the present time you continue not seeing Him, yet you keep on believing with sublime unalloyed happiness that is inexpressible and full of resplendent glory.

Visual #7:
Expanded
Translation
of 1 Peter
1:8

21. When the believer advances to spiritual maturity he does so as a result of being tested for the purpose of approval. The development of a biblical inventory of ideas means a renovation of thought has occurred that pleases God.
22. It is not the believer that is praised but the doctrine in His soul. God has the truth and desires that His creatures acquire it and use it.
23. When this is accomplished, then He praises the effort that brought glory to Him and respect to His Word.
24. The believers in Asia Minor who made this advance had never seen the Lord but had come to see Him emerge in their mind's eye from their study of Scripture.
25. As the image of Jesus began to emanate from the Word, His glory began to be reflected in the face of these believers who possessed sublime unalloyed happiness in their souls.

VI. Biblical Principles for the Copacetic Christian:

1. True happiness occurs when the believer fulfills the plan of God for his life. This happiness is made available by learning the details of that plan revealed only in the Word of God.

1 John 1:4 - We write these things to you in order that your state of happiness [*χαρά (chará)*] might be complete [**unalloyed**].

2. Suffering for blessing produces happiness and results in generosity. Believers in Macedonian churches, e.g., Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea were experiencing a shortage of logistics but nevertheless remained exceedingly happy, so much so they contributed financially to fellow believers in the Jerusalem church:

2 Corinthians 8:1 - Now we make known to you, fellow believers, the grace of God given to the churches of Macedonia,

v. 2 - that during a severe ordeal of suffering, their abundant happiness [*χαρά (chará)*: **esōterikē harmonía**] and their extreme poverty have overflowed in the riches of their generosity [**exōterikē harmonía**].

3. Consequently, the philosophers' ideas that happiness is the maximizing of pleasure while minimizing pain is the opposite of what the Bible teaches.
4. Scripture informs us that happiness is built from the strength accumulated from successfully using doctrine to endure testing for blessing. When we see doctrine work we are motivated to study and that study results in momentum.

James 1:2 - Fellow believers, after weighing the facts, conclude it all happiness [*πᾶς χαρά (pás chará)*] whenever you become involved in the various categories of testing,

v. 3 - knowing that the testing is for the approval of your doctrine producing patience.

v. 4 - But let patience keep on having quality production, so that you may be mature and undamaged, being deficient in nothing.

5. This leads us to the conclusion that happiness is the ultimate problem-solving device as demonstrated by our Lord in:

Hebrews 12:2 - Be concentrating on Jesus [His true humanity], the founder and perfecter of our faith [mystery doctrine of the Church Age], Who, because of His exhibited happiness [χαρά (*chará*): PSD #9] He endured the cross [staying power from the tandem PSDs of personal love for God & unconditional love for man], disregarding the shame [of being identified with our sins], and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God [session].

6. Perseverance under pressure produces blessing from God which indicates His recognition of your loyalty to doctrine:

James 5:11 - We consider happy [μακαρίζω (*makarízō*)] the ones having endured. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

7. The word we translate "happy" in James 5:11 is not *chará* but the verb *makarízō* which is translated "blessed" in all the major English translations with the exception of the King James which happens to get it right. Here's why:

The special feature of (*makarízō*) in the New Testament is that it refers overwhelmingly to the distinctive joy which accrues to man Thus the verb is used of the blessing ... in James 5:11 of the righteous who endure.¹⁷

8. Integrity, which is loyalty to doctrine in all circumstances, demands that the believer stand fast under pressure. Therefore, loyalty to truth accrues happiness from the source of divine blessings:

1 Peter 3:13 - Who is going to harm you if you are devoted to what is good?

v. 14 - But in fact, if you happen to suffer for doing what is right, blessed [plural of the noun μακάριος (*makários*): **happineses**] are you. But do not be terrified of them or be shaken.

9. Suffering for blessing is a necessary part of learning how to utilize doctrine under the pressure imposed from the Invisible War. Passing momentum tests are prerequisites for acquiring inner happiness.

¹⁷ F. Hauck, "μακάριος," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 4:367.

1 Peter 4:12 - Dear friends, stop being shocked by the maximum pressure you face that is coming to you for your benefit, as though some unusual event has caught you off guard.

v. 13 - But keep on rejoicing [χαίρω (*chaíro*)], because you have in common the sufferings of Christ, that even in the reveling of His glory that your happineses [plural of χαίρω (*chaíro*)] may be unalloyed [ἀγαλλιάω (*agalliaō*): sharing the happiness of God and Christ].

v. 14 - If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed [plural of the noun μακάριος (*makários*): **happineses**], for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you [the indwelling of the Holy Spirit].

10. Pastors receive happiness when they become aware that their students are growing in grace and advancing in the plan of God:

3 John 4 - I have no greater happiness [χαρά (*chará*)] than to hear that my students are walking [περιπατέω (*peripatéō*): **facilitated wheel-tracks of righteousness**] according to truth.

11. Trusting in God through loyalty to His Word allows the Father to make you happy by means of divine blessings:

Romans 15:13 - May the God of confidence fill you with great happiness [χαρά (*chará*)] and prosperity as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with confidence by means of the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

12. The Psalmists often commented on the status of happiness and a good example of the Hebrew concept of unalloyed happiness expressed in reciprocal expressions of gratitude to God is:

Psalms 100:2 - Serve the Lord with super-abundance of happiness [שִׂמְחָה *simchah*]; come before Him with joyful exuberance [רִנָּה *renanah*].

13. This overflowing confidence combined with overflowing happiness produces a major problem-solving device against the disillusion of life – contentment:

- (1) The disillusion of circumstances:

Visual #8:
Eph. 1:19's
Four Power
Nouns

Philippians 4:11 - Not that I am speaking with reference to poverty, for I have learned in whatever circumstances I am to keep on being content.

v. 12 - In fact, I have come to know how to be debased under discipline, and I also have come to know what it is to live in prosperity following recovery. In every place and in all circumstances I have been instructed in both how to be well-fed with truth and to hunger for it.

v. 13 - I have the endowed power [ἰσχύς (*ischús*)] to obtain all things by means of the One Who keeps on pouring the power [ἐνέργεια (*enérgeia*): **operational power of the Holy Spirit**] into me.

(2) The disillusion of the details of life:

Hebrews 13:5 - Let your lifestyle be free from the love of money [**logistics**]. Constantly keep on being content with what you possess; for He Himself has said, "I will not ever abandon you, neither will I ever desert you" (Deuteronomy 31:6).

v. 6 - So that being confident we say, "The Lord is my Helper, and I will not be afraid of what man can do to me" (Psalm 118:6).

(3) The disillusion of *cosmos diabolicus*:

James 1:2 - Fellow believers, after weighing the facts, conclude it all happiness [πᾶς χαρά (*pás chará*)] whenever you become involved in the various categories of testing,

v. 3 - knowing that the testing is for the approval of your doctrine producing patience.

v. 4 - But let patience keep on having quality production, so that you may be mature and undamaged, being deficient in nothing.

14. These passages just noted emphasize the principle that the believer in Jesus Christ who has developed the "staying power" of *esōterikē harmonia* — personal love for God, unconditional love for mankind, and unalloyed happiness — is not influenced by the world's allurements of a false happiness.
15. The lure of maximum happiness and the desire for minimum pain is a lifestyle that functions under the principle of the frantic search for happiness.

16. William Wirt¹⁸ addresses the contrast between the person of honor who strives for excellence by taking advantage of his advantages and the dishonorable person who fails to advance by forgoing to take advantage of his advantages. Whether in the mundane affairs of living one's life or the challenge to take advantage of divine operating assets to acquire divine thought from Scripture, the lone issue that separates winners from losers is volition. Wirt's essay on this subject appears in William H. McGuffey's *The Eclectic Fourth Reader*:

No Excellence without Labor

The education, moral and intellectual, of every individual, must be, chiefly, his own work. Rely upon it, that the ancients were right—both in morals and intellect—we give their final shape to our characters, and thus become, emphatically, the architects of our own fortune. How else could it happen that young men who have had precisely the same opportunities, should be continually presenting us with such different results, and rushing to such opposite destinies?

Difference of talent will not solve it, because that difference is very often in favor of the disappointed candidate. You shall see issuing from the walls of the same college—nay, sometimes from the bosom of the same family—two young men, of whom the one shall be admitted to be a genius of high order, the other, scarcely above the point of mediocrity. Yet you shall see the genius sinking and perishing in poverty, obscurity and wretchedness; while on the other hand, you shall observe the mediocre plodding his slow but sure way up the hill of life, gaining steadfast footing at every step, and mounting, at length, to eminence and distinction, an ornament to his family, a blessing to his country.

Now, whose work is this? Manifestly their own. They are the architects of their respective fortunes. The best seminary of learning that can open its portals to you can do no more than to afford you the opportunity of instruction. It must depend, at last on yourselves, whether you will be instructed or not, or to what point you will push your instruction.

Of this be assured—I speak, from observation, a certain truth: **THERE IS NO EXCELLENCE WITHOUT GREAT LABOR.** It is the fiat of fate from which no power of genius can absolve you.

¹⁸ “William Wirt (b. 1772, d. 1834) was born in Bladensburg, Md. He was admitted to the bar in 1799, and afterwards practiced law, with eminent success, at Richmond and Norfolk, Va. He was one of the counsel for the prosecution in the trial of Aaron Burr for treason. From 1817 to 1829 he was attorney-general for the United States. In 1803 he published the ‘Letter of a British Spy,’ a work which attracted much attention, and in 1817 a ‘Life of Patrick Henry’” (William H. McGuffey, *McGuffey's Fifth Eclectic Reader*, rev. ed. [nd], 230).

Genius, unexerted, is like the poor moth that flutters around a candle till it scorches itself to death. If genius be desirable at all, it is only of that great and magnanimous kind, which, like the condor of South America, pitches from the summit of Chimborazo \chēm-bō-rā'-zōl,¹⁹ above the clouds, and sustains itself, at pleasure, in that empyreal region, with an energy rather invigorated than weakened by the effort.²⁰

17. Allow me to interrupt Mr. Wirt's essay by expanding on his point. Note that the eagle's effort is not affected by the 20,561 foot height of Chimborazo but is rather invigorated by it rather than weakened. Let's take this example and apply it to the human body's ability to function at such a height. For this we consult Lance Armstrong's LiveStrong Web site and the article:

High-Elevation Training

Overview: If you are planning an excursion to a higher altitude, your body will need time to adjust. The higher you go in elevation, the more spread out oxygen molecules become. Improving your cardiovascular fitness is one way to train for high altitudes. You will also need a period of acclimatization at a higher altitude to avoid high-altitude sickness. Living and training at various elevations may also improve your overall athletic performance.

Atmospheric Pressure: The atmosphere holds approximately 21 percent oxygen at any given elevation; however, the atmospheric pressure influences the amount of oxygen you take in during an inhalation. The higher the pressure, the closer together the oxygen molecules. At sea level, or zero degrees altitude, atmospheric pressure is approximately 760 mmHg,²¹ whereas at 12,000 feet it is only 483 mmHg. There are roughly 40 percent fewer oxygen molecules per breath at 12,000 feet. Your body's demands for oxygen remain consistent, so your breathing rate speeds up in an attempt to compensate for the lack of oxygen. If you perform any type of athletic activity, from hiking to extreme sports, your body will need time to adjust to your current oxygen intake.

¹⁹ "Chimborazo. Peak, west central Ecuador \e'-kwe-dōr\; highest point in the Cordillera Real \ōr-yen-tāl' rā-äl\, 20,561 ft.; an inactive volcano" (*Merriam-Webster's Geographical Dictionary*, 3d ed., s.v.: "Chimborazo.")

²⁰ William Wirt, "No Excellence without Labor," in *The Fourth Eclectic Reader*, William H. McGuffey (Cincinnati: Truman and Smith, 1838, repr., Milford, MI: Mott Media, 1982), 238–39.

²¹ mmHg indicates the millimeters of atmospheric pressure on mercury at various altitudes. Also referred to as a pascal.

**Visual #9:
PSDs & the
Spiritual
Advance**

Living High, Training Low: Because your body increases its red blood cells at high altitude, training at various elevations may positively affect your athletic performance. A study published in the "Journal of Applied Physiology" in June 2006 found that athletes who lived at approximately 8,000 feet and trained at levels around 3,000 feet for 24 days saw improvements in running times.²²

18. In a believer's spiritual advance, he cannot function in the empyreal elevations of the condor without the basic-training at lower altitudes of spiritual growth. Slugging it out in the basic-training categories of problem-solving devices is imperative for acquiring the capacity to function in the sophisticated spiritual life.
19. **Spiritual Childhood:** Excellence in the elementary problem-solving devices: (1) Rebound, (2) Filling of the Holy Spirit, and (3) Faith-Rest Drill.
20. **Spiritual Adolescence:** Excellence in the secondary problem-solving devices: (4) Grace Orientation, (5) Doctrinal Orientation, and (6) Personal Sense of Destiny.
21. **Spiritual Adulthood:** Excellence in the sophisticated problem-solving devices: (7) Personal Love for God, (8) Unconditional Love for All Mankind, and (9) Sharing the Happiness of God.
22. **Spiritual Winner:** (10) Occupation with Christ: flying with the eagles with the imputation of escrow blessings in time.
23. Continuing now with Mr. Wirt's "No Excellence without Labor":

It is this capacity for high and long-continued exertion—this vigorous power of profound and searching investigation—this careering and wide-spreading comprehension of mind—and those long reaches of thought, that

"Pluck bright Honor from the pale-faced moon,
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom line could never touch the ground,
And drag up drowned Honor by the locks—" ²³

This is the prowess, and these the hardy achievements, which are to enroll your names among the great men of the earth.²⁴

²² LiveStrong.com, "High-Elevation Training," <http://www.livestrong.com/article/438685-high-elevation-training/> (accessed September 15, 2011).

²³ William Shakespeare, *First Part of Henry IV*, act 1, scene 3, lines 202–205.

²⁴ Wirt, 239.

VII. Inner Happiness and the Copacetic Christian:

1. True happiness is an inner resource that is not affected by anything externally from the world or internally from the lures of sin, human good, or evil.
2. It is only the staying power from Bible doctrine that can lead a person to the status of unalloyed happiness.
3. The apostle Paul exhorts us in:

Philippians 3:1 - Keep on having inner happiness [*χαίρω (chaírō): esōterikē harmonía*] in the Lord. To be writing the same things again [Paul had already used the words *chaírō* and *συγχαίρω (sunchaírō)* five times in the Epistle] to you on the one hand is not troublesome while on the other hand it is a safeguard from falling into reversionism for you.

4. Paul uses *chaírō* four more times in Philippians including:

Philippians 4:4 - Keep on having inner happiness in the Lord at all times! Once more I repeat the command: keep on having inner happiness!

5. Fulfilling Paul's command means that we must make the commitment to appropriate time for, interest in, and the concentration on the daily intake of Scripture under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.
6. This process, if pursued without wavering, will lead us to the possession and utilization of the same problem-solving devices that provided our Lord with the staying power to complete the work of our so great salvation on the cross.
7. His personal love for the Father motivated the Lord to be judged for the sins of the world while his unconditional love for the human race motivated Him to receive the imputation of these sins.
8. His staying power was enabled by the presence of unalloyed happiness in his soul so that nothing associated with the imputation or the judgment caused Him to lose that happiness.
9. If you want to be really happy – a happiness that will provide the staying power to endure all the challenges and tests common to man – then this is the winning formula:

Visual #10:

Inner
Happiness
of the
Copacetic
Christian

PLG + ULM + UH or ExH = EsH or CC:

Personal Love for God, plus Unconditional Love for Mankind, plus Unalloyed Happiness or *Exōterikē Harmonia*, equals *Esōterikē Harmonia* or the Copacetic Christian.

10. Your loyalty to the Word of God will fulfill Paul's mandate to keep on having inner happiness. For those who have made that advance and for those who are well on the way, let it be known that when in this status quo you will consider yourself to be a Copacetic Christian.
11. The Copacetic Christian's unalloyed happiness causes him to respond emotionally in his thanksgivings to the Lord and an appropriate means of such an expression of reciprocity is that of singing.
12. Unalloyed happiness is said to be inexpressible, yet the Psalmists instruct us to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord." Here is an example of how B. E. Warren made the effort to do so in his hymn "Joy Unspeakable" in which he references the words of 1 Peter 1:8:

I have found His grace is all complete,
He supplieth every need;
While I sit and learn at Jesus' feet,
I am free, yes, free indeed.

It is joy unspeakable and full of glory.
Full of glory, full of glory;
It is joy unspeakable and full of glory,
Oh, the half has never yet been told.

I have found the pleasure I once craved,
It is joy and peace within;
What a wondrous blessing! I am saved
From the awful gulf of sin.

I have found the joy no tongues can tell,
How its waves of glory roll!
It is like a great o'erflowing well,
Springing up within my soul.

It is joy unspeakable and full of glory.
Full of glory, full of glory;
It is joy unspeakable and full of glory,
Oh, the half has never yet been told.²⁵

(End SBC11-01: The Copacetic Christian.)

²⁵ B. E. Warren, "Joy Unspeakable," in *Inspiring Hymns*, comp. Alfred B. Smith (Grand Rapids: Singspiration Music, 1951), 297.

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