

“Amplified Bible” adds, **“To be envied”**. It is what we all want but few of us ever find.

Happiness begins with **humility**. In the Old Testament, the word used to describe “poor” people financially, was also used to describe those who humble themselves before God.”

“This is what the Lord says / I esteem those who are humble (poor) and contrite in spirit, who tremble at My word.” (Isaiah 66:2, *NIV*)

The best translation is, “those who know their need of God, who knows their spiritual needs”.

Humility is the first step in **coming to Christ**. We know we do not deserve forgiveness, but we ask God to give it to us. Spurgeon says we come for salvation “with the noose around our neck, saying ‘Guilty!’”. Salvation is by “grace” (a gift) (Ephesians 2:8-10); and grace means, “Something we need but do not deserve”.

It is also the first step in **living the Christian life**. Even *after* we are converted, only God can give us the *continual* desire and the power to live like this sermon tells us to live. Jude says God “**keeps us from falling away**” (Jude 24).

The humble person - humble before God and others - will **find true happiness**. To people in Jesus’ day and in ours, humility is not a virtue. It is the attitude of the weak and cowardly.

And most of us believe – to do things like, “turning the other cheek” or “walking the second mile” most of the time, in our daily relationships, is **NOT** the way to happiness. If you think this, look at what Adrian Rogers calls, “The Miracle Mile”.

Jesus tells us, “**If anyone compels (forces) you to go one mile with him, go two miles**” (Matthew 5:41). In the Roman Empire, a Roman soldier could compel the people in conquered countries to carry their baggage one mile. It was said that, every Jewish person knew the

exact spot on the roads from their house that was one mile away.

Picture this: a young Jewish boy is playing in the fields with his friends and his dog; and a Roman soldier gets his attention, and makes him carry his baggage. He mutters, “Stinking Roman dog!” He picks up the bag, says nothing, and keeps his eyes on the road ahead. At the exact spot he knows, he drops the baggage and starts to walk away, hoping and praying the soldier will believe they had gone a mile.

He got home mad, told his dog to “get away” and at the supper table had nothing to say. When he was asked what was wrong, he said, “Stinking Romans, I’ll be glad when the Messiah comes and sends them all to hell. It’s just not right that we have to carry their stupid bags.” His day was ruined.

But suppose that young man had struck up a conversation as he and that soldier walked. What if they talked about their families and he learned that the soldier had not seen his family for a year and was worried about his eight-year-old-son who was sick when he left home.

Suppose the young man offered to pray for his little boy; and the soldier, brushing back the tears, thanked him. Suppose the young man forgot all about the “mile mark” and the soldier had to remind him he had gone a mile. The soldier shook his hand and wished him well.

When he got home, he patted his dog and ate his Mama’s fried chicken and gravy like boys always do. Maybe he said, “You know, all Roman soldiers are not bad. I met one today who really seemed to care about our people and what we are going through.”

“Our problem is – we put our happiness in the hands of others and in the hands of circumstances, and let them ruin our days”.