

How I Found Lasting Happiness

as told by Roy Brewer

MY FIRST glimpse of Walt Disney in 1954 was quite a thrill! Here was the man with whom I had associated happiness ever since my childhood—the artist who had brought to the movie screen Mickey Mouse, Snow White and Bambi. And now here I was, employed as a film editor, working in his motion-picture studio in Burbank, California. For the next 30 years I would daily be in touch with all the fantasy of his creations.

Life at the Disney Studios was exciting! My eyes were continually bulging in awe of the many movie stars and the fantastic movie sets constructed to shoot a picture. For instance, there was the day when an entire sound stage was swamped with water and blown about by six powerful wind machines in order to create a fearful storm atmosphere. In the midst of all of this, actor Kirk Douglas harpooned a giant squid to save the submarine *Nautilus* from being sent to the bottom. Perhaps you remember the picture, called *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. It was based on a novel by Jules Verne.

Every day seemed a dream come true. My work was more like a hobby than a job. And I was being paid for it. There was something noticeably different about the people too. They seemed genuinely happy in their work! The 40 acres of sound stages, artists' quarters, technical and executive buildings, were constantly aglow with a kind of team spirit. Smiling people were happy to be a part of Walt's world. I felt I was happy then. But one day I would discover what true happiness was all about.

The "Magic Kingdom" and Happiness

Starting with his Mickey Mouse films in 1928, Walt Disney contributed to the pleasure of hundreds of millions of people. In 1937 he completed the first feature-length animated motion picture—*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. It became a box-office smash and is still being re-released about every seven years to a new generation of children who, along with their parents, are utterly delighted!

Another development for Disney was designing entertainment parks. Amusement parks have existed for decades in places as wide apart as Coney Island, U.S.A., Blackpool, England, and Tibidabo, Barcelona, Spain. But Disney's inspiration was his entertainment parks with a theme. The first to open was Disneyland in California in 1955, and then in 1971 the Walt Disney World with its "Magic Kingdom" in Florida. In 1982 EPCOT (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow) was added. Since 1983 the Japanese have their own Tokyo Disneyland as a reality.

Over the last three decades, more than 335 million people have purchased tickets to the Disney parks, to be charmed by the vision come true that Disney called his MAGIC KINGDOM! And as promised, once you're inside, problems are usually forgotten. Happiness takes over.

A Happier Kingdom Possible?

Happiness is something everybody wants. It is what some film producers try to offer to those who wish to buy it. It is expensive to produce but also very profitable. But is it true happiness? Is it lasting? Consider.

When a person leaves the movie theater, shuts off his television set or walks out of an amusement park, the fantasy disappears! Harsh reality hits him again. The few hours of pleasant entertainment become a happy memory. Once back in the real world the ugly problems come flooding back—the economy, crime, sickness and, of course, death. Entertainment is not lasting happiness. It's just an interlude.

I often wondered, Wouldn't it be nice to be invited into a land of trouble-free activity, where every day brings a joyful new encounter with life's happy things and none of its ailments—a land where not only do you never grow old but you never have to die, where you could truly "live happily ever after"? If that were possible, how many people do you suppose would be willing to make sacrifices to get into that kind of kingdom? Would you?

The fact is, millions have already indicated their desire for such a place. Although it is still on the "drawing board," its construction is guaranteed. According to Bible prophecy, there is still a limited

time to take advantage of such an offer. It is not a “Magic Kingdom.” It is the earth transformed by God’s Kingdom. There, according to God’s promise, happiness truly will be forever!—Revelation 21:3, 4; Titus 1:2.

Soon the entire earth will be restored to a Paradise. Vigor and vitality will be renewed. Even the animals will no longer inspire fear or be afraid. Every waking hour will absolutely be filled with happiness and a sense of accomplishment that will bring joy to all. Does it sound like a Utopian dream? It did to me at one time.

A New Look at Life

Formerly I was a member of the First Christian Church in Grand Island, Nebraska. So when I began studying the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses back in 1970, the thought of living forever on earth was new to me. As my study progressed I found that God had certain standards regarding the conduct of people who sought comfort in the worship of him. I started making changes in my life. Such things as flying a private plane, promoting music concerts, playing tennis and other hobbies in which I had heavily indulged took on less and less importance as God’s purpose regarding the earth and mankind became evident to me and my family.

The Bible clearly revealed how my previous religion had failed to teach me the truth regarding God’s purposes and what his Kingdom really means. There is no hellfire! No immortal soul that slips out of a body at death! God is not Jesus but Jehovah, the Almighty Creator. Jesus is the Son of God, not God the Son.—Ezekiel 18:4, 20; 1 John 4:15; Psalm 83:18.

I also came to realize that Jesus never took part in political affairs. He knew that God’s purpose was to remove man’s governments eventually in order to make way for the Paradise that would even see the dead resurrected. How could I, then, continue supporting politicians who were trying to perpetuate this decadent system of high crime, poor health, bankrupt economies and certain death, when I could choose, instead, a loving arrangement that promises everlasting life? I began telling everyone I could that God’s government was soon going to satisfy the desire of every living thing! —John 18:36; Daniel 2:44; John 5:28, 29.

Most people believe that there is a Utopia in a spirit world for everybody after death. The Bible doesn’t say that! Here on earth is where Adam and Eve could have lived forever if they had chosen to obey God. Because of their rebellion God was obliged to execute justice. Imperfection led to a temporary flourishing of wickedness that is rising to a peak and then will suddenly get cut off! That peak has just about been reached. The cutting off spoken of so often in the Bible is soon to happen. —Luke 21:29-36.

I became something of a novelty to those who had known me as a sports enthusiast and social swinger who delighted in playing dixieland trombone and talking politics. A confider told me of people who ridiculed my efforts to put on a new personality of good habits. Interestingly, though, to my face I encountered a new respect, something I had not seen before. Certain ones would even stumble in their speech in order to change a cussword into something nice. They did not want to offend me. God’s Word began making a difference!

True Happiness Still Available

It has been 12 years since I became a baptized Witness. My wife and three children are all lovers of Jehovah. We have found a happiness we thought was not possible during this chaos they call civilization. Our life has a purpose! Our spiritual needs are being more than satisfied. We are very thankful for the many blessings we have experienced within God’s true organization.

What a joy to know that there is, not a transient “Magic Kingdom,” but a righteous Kingdom, a government, that will soon take control worldwide. What a thrill to anticipate having happiness forever under truly the happiest Kingdom ever!—Matthew 6:9, 10; Revelation 21:3, 4.

True, some movies and entertainment centers help to take our minds off our daily worries and problems. But, as I have seen, the effect is short-lived. Therefore, why not investigate for yourself, even as I did, how you, too, can participate in a *permanent* relief from wickedness and sorrow?

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