

Meaning of happiness by socrates



Everyone is constantly searching for the true concept of happiness in their lives. Many pursue fame, money and material goods in order to gain that satisfaction, but others believe that satisfaction from fame, money and material good is only temporary. Many philosophers, specifically Socrates believes that a good life is the true concept of happiness.

However, Socrates warns the Athenians and us that we may be looking for happiness in all the wrong places if we have our priorities and our desires in the wrong order. There were many people in Athens and there still are many people today who think that the acquisition of fame, power or wealth is the key to happiness, but they are confusing worldly success and material prosperity with genuine happiness. In this argumentative essay, I will explain Socrates's view of happiness as I believe that virtue and wisdom are absolutely necessary for the true concept of happiness through including evidence from Plato's Apology.

Socrates's definition of happiness is living a life that is right and good and its relationship with virtue and wisdom. He knows that fame, power or wealth can make one think that they are happy, however, the real concept of happiness is much more than that. As Socrates said , " The Olympian victor makes you think yourself happy; I make you be happy" (Apology, 36e-37a). This is said because Socrates believes that he actually helped the people of Athens move towards happiness through self-examination and wisdom as showing others that the city is using them and giving false information. Socrates explains to the people that the true happiness is more than just wealth and power. As he says, " Wealth does not bring about excellence, but excellence makes wealth and everything else good for men" (Apology, 30b).

In other words, money can't make people be experts in things because only excellence means being good or expert at things. But being an expert or good at a profession makes wealth for you.

In order to achieve the true concept of happiness, Socrates believes that people first need to be virtuous which means to do and be good always because that will fill one's heart and soul with good deeds and morality. Those are important in peoples' lives because it can help, he/she decide between the good and the bad. It is also a way of building an individual's character and spirituality. For example, being respectful, honest and caring to others and things. As Socrates says this is the most precious quality one can have, I went to each of you privately and conferred upon him what I say is the greatest benefit, by trying to persuade him not to care for any of his belongings before caring that he himself should be as good and as wise as possible (Apology, 36c). And by being good or virtuous, it allows people to go on the pathway of happiness and create good relationships with each other's. The goodness and virtue are much more than the ones who think that the acquisition of fame, power or wealth is the key to happiness. Socrates says, " A good man cannot be harmed either in life or in death"(Apology, 41d). This means that no matter what, a good man can never be treated badly even afterlife. As he said, a better man cannot be harmed by a worse" (Apology, 30d). Having the virtue in life, gives people a true concept of happiness that is well beyond wealth, fame or and any goods.

Being virtuous and doing a virtuous act once, doesn't mean that an individual has gained the accurate meaning of happiness. In order to get the <https://assignbuster.com/meaning-of-happiness-by-socrates/>

perfect happiness it requires people to be virtuous and being virtuous requires wisdom which makes virtuous and wisdom important components of happiness. Wisdom is defined as the quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgment (Dictionary). As Socrates says, the unexamined life is not worth living (Apology, 38a). This means that to understand what you are living for is more important than actually living. Sometimes people do things to impress others and not really express their true self as to not get judged by others. Some think that gaining the acceptance from others might give them the pleasure in happiness which they been constantly searching but in reality, they are wasting their lives because of no good judgement or self-knowledge. Life is not worth it when someone has no purpose to reach its goals in life. Therefore, Virtue can't be developed without wisdom because they are both necessary for happiness and wisdom is needed to show people if they know whether what they are pursuing in their lives will really bring them the genuine of happiness. As Socrates says, discuss virtue every day (Apology, 38a).

Nowadays, getting fame, wealth or power has become much easier to gain than compared to few years ago. People can upload videos of them just doing basic things in life, such as eating, shopping or running errands and could become famous and rich. For example, Trisha Paytas is a famously known Youtuber who has a net worth of \$4 million and all she does is uploading videos of her eating according to celebritynetworth.com. Some might think Trisha's life is full of happiness since she has fame and wealth but in reality, she is not. Often, she has said that she is depressed and feels lonely and fame and money only gives Trisha a temporary joy (YouTube).

However, some believe that pursuing fame, money and material goods is the true satisfaction of happiness. Money doesn't buy you happiness is often used a lot to explain how wealth doesn't solve all the problems but in fact it does. Everybody in the world needs money for basic needs and also for others as well. Money is the main source of power and fame where people have the ability to live a good life. Without money, people won't be able to have food, water or shelter, which are the basic components of happiness. Sure, having virtuous and wisdom can make an individual a better person but is that really going to help him/her get food, water or shelter? Although this may seem true, it is not because being happy is more important than being successful. Chasing after the fame and wealth is not the way to live life as Socrates say, Esteemed friend, citizen of Athens, the greatest city in the world, so outstanding in both intelligence and power, aren't you ashamed to care so much to make all the money you can, and to advance your reputation and prestige-while for truth and wisdom and the improvement of your soul you have no care or worry? (Apology, 23a). He believed that pathway to happiness is much more than unnecessary things.

In conclusion, people pursue what they think will make them happy as some may pursue fame, money and material goods in order to gain that satisfaction, of happiness. However, others believe that those things will only give a temporary joy in life. According to Socrates, he believes that people may be looking for happiness in all the wrong places. Therefore, in this essay, I explained the aforementioned idea of Socrates's view of happiness as I believed that virtue and wisdom are absolutely necessary for the true concept of happiness through including evidence from Plato's Apology. The

Socrates main purpose was to tell people that happiness is all about living life that is right and good and its relationship with virtue and wisdom. As it can be seen, the end goal in finding happiness is to know the purpose of our lives. As we pursue our goals, knowledge, experience and kindness, it will help us find true and absolute happiness. The development and betterment of life is what causes happiness to exist.