

What Would it Take?

What would it take to make you happy? A million dollars? A professional athletic career? Fame? The Memphis Commercial Appeal had a small article in 2002 on the passing of Sam Walton, Jr., (no relations to the retail store founder) who played with Joe Namath on the New York Jets only Super Bowl Champion team in 1969. Mr. Walton, a Memphis native, was recently found dead in an abandoned apartment at the age of 59. It appears that he was homeless. Marton Beloch, his son, says that Sam Walton would never stay at his house or anywhere else very long. He was a drifter who always just felt the need to be on the move. According to his son, the only time Mr. Walton was happy was when he was showing the neighborhood children his Super Bowl III championship ring. "You could tell that something bad had happened to this man who was once a pro football player" a neighbor of his for many years said. "Whatever it was, you could see the hurt in his eyes as he roamed the streets and hung out on the corner." This man, who once had so very much and such famous friends, died alone with very little. A collection was taken up from his more successful teammates for his burial expenses but few came to the funeral.

Perhaps we find ourselves wondering about what would make us happy. Would it be a promotion at work? Or would we be satisfied with a bigger house, a faster car or a fatter wallet? Too many people believe that some material possession is all that it would take to make them happy. Yet even the richest billionaire is still in search of another dollar, the greatest sports champion is still looking forward to next year's competition and the most famous person is trying to find out the next way she can be in the news once again before she is forgotten. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon searches to find the secret to contentment and success. He tries human relationships, the pursuit of raw pleasure and great accomplishments and finds in them nothing more than a deep sense of nothingness. Truly everything under the sun is vanity. Finally Solomon writes, "*Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is man's all.*" Paul called all of his earthly accomplishments rubbish and said, "*I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.*" *Philippians 4:14*. Do you want true happiness? Are you searching for that one thing missing in your life? True fulfillment and success are found only in Jesus Christ.

—Mark Ray