

**Candidacy 2 St. Thomas Aquinas
Treatise on Happiness
Ms. Renee Valenzuela, OP
18 Oct 2020**

Question 3: What is happiness?

Article 4: Whether, if happiness is in the intellective part, is it an operation of the intellect or of the will?

Happiness consists of two parts: its essence and the delight that accompanies it. Its essence is the attainment of the last end, to be eternally connected to God. I cannot will this into being for myself. If I could, there would have been no reason for Jesus to die on the cross for me. So, obviously, happiness cannot be willed.

Yet, my will does play an important role in my quest to attain happiness. The will has a direct effect on one's disposition toward or away from God. So, my will plays a significant role in my own attainment of the last end through my disposition. Am I disposed toward or away from God? I can analyze this best by using a thorough examination of conscience and frequenting the sacrament of reconciliation. If I am disposed toward God, these tools will help me cooperate with the grace that God freely gives me. The last end, true happiness will be possible for me, and I can taste the delight that accompanies me on that journey. My love and desire for God is evident in my free will to move toward Him.

Knowing that a proper disposition is necessary to attain my desired end and how to use the tools that the Lord has given me are both operations of my own intellect. They are part of my reasoning, the unique intellect that God has given to humans. My intellect is also used when reading scripture or learning about the lives of saints or evaluating my own experiences and reactions with those of the saints. My intellect allows me to understand my faith, in my relationship with God, all that He has given me in my life and all that He offers me in eternal life. This essence of happiness is found in my intellect, while the delight that accompanies it is found in my will to attain it. Therefore, happiness is both a function of one's will and one's intellect. The combination of both the essence of happiness and the delight that accompanies it is Joy.