

Message Study Guide

(Scriptures & quotes from this week's message are available on thorncreek.church/live)

Warming up

1. Describe a happy time in your life.

Digging Deeper & Application

Take your time reading the scripture given. If possible look up the verses in different versions and pause at each verse and discuss it.

2. How would you define "happiness?" What was the last thing, event, or situation that generated happiness inside of you?
3. Aristotle said, "Happiness is the meaning and purpose of life, the aim and end of human existence." Would you agree or disagree?
4. Does God want you to be happy? Why or why not? Compare with our Declaration of Independence that says, "We as Americans are "endowed by [our] Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." What does this "pursuit of happiness" mean to you?
5. Our world has a theology of happiness. It says, "Whatever makes you happy must be right." Would you agree or disagree with this quote? What are the dangers of this world theology?
6. Please read Psalm 37:4. Which part do we naturally focus on? What is our part? What is God's part? How have we twisted this verse in our world today?
7. C.S. Lewis said, "The happiness which God designs for His higher creatures is the happiness of being freely, voluntarily united to Him and to each other in an ecstasy of love and delight compared with which the most rapturous love between man and a woman on this earth is mere milk and water." How does this quote compare to John 15:10-11.
8. Pastor Ruben shared five things that we shouldn't do to seek happiness. What were they? Compare with this quote from Steven Furtick, "The reason we struggle with insecurity is because we compare our behind-the-scenes with everyone else's highlight reel."
9. After King David confessed his sin with Bathsheba to the Lord, he documented his feelings. Please read Psalm 32:1-2. How is David feeling? Compare with this quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "What is happiness and unhappiness? It depends so little on the circumstances;

it depends really only on what happens inside a person. I am grateful for every day and that makes me happy.”

10. According to Hebrews 11:24-25, did Moses choose happiness? What was his choice? What does this tell us about pursuing happiness? Compare with this quote from C.S. Lewis, “We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”
11. How have we used happiness as a gauge in life? Have you ever heard the theology... “As long as you're happy?” “Whatever makes you happy.” How have we used someone's personal happiness as a gauge for what's right? Pastor Ruben said, “When we elevate our personal feeling of happiness above the personal blessing that comes from being right before God, then we fool ourselves. Don't convince yourself that God is okay with disobedience in your life because you are happy.” What are your thoughts?
12. According to these verses what does God want you to experience? Psalm 30:11; Romans 15:13; Nehemiah 8:10b; Acts 3:6-8; and John 10:10.

Application

Below are some of the points or quotes shared in the message. Discuss how they apply to your life.

- Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 37:4 (NIV)
- Don't compare your life to anyone on social media.
- Don't isolate yourself.
- Don't hang out with negative people.
- Don't try to control everyone around you.
- Don't overlook the goodness of God.
- Soul deep happiness is associated with a repentant heart that now lives for God.
- “The world looks for happiness through self-assertion. The Christian knows that joy is found in self-abandonment.” Unknown