

THE BIG IDEA: Happiness isn't a feeling based on circumstance, but a fact based on the cross.

The Take-Off

Did you know that if you type in the word "happiness" on Google, you'll get over 342 MILLION search results?

That there are currently over 68,000 titles on Amazon related to happiness?

Phil Robertson got it right: clearly, we all want to be "happy happy happy!" (or at least we don't want to be unhappy)

And we'll do all kinds of things to try to find happiness, won't we?

We'll take a job or quit a job. We'll marry or maybe remarry. We'll keep our money or give our money.

Last year, a man you've never heard of walked away from 1 MILLION dollars because he wasn't happy.

John Moffitt went home when the Denver Broncos had their bye week and never went back. All because he wasn't happy playing football anymore.

And that sounds good, but what happens the next time he isn't happy?

The point here is that all of us can chase happiness, and there is something in us that equates Christianity with the end of happiness.

Where did we get the idea that happiness and holiness couldn't go together?

I'm not sure, but this morning, let's start by asking the obvious question:

1. Does God want us to be happy?

- a. Hey men, what does it mean when your wife tells you something 3 times in 3 minutes?
- b. What does it mean when your boss brings the same thing up at every meeting for a month?
- c. Right, it means it's important, and we should probably pay attention.
- d. In Matt. 5, at the beginning of the most famous sermon ever preached, Jesus says "blessed" 9x in 9 verses
- e. The word He used for blessed can also mean "happy"
- f. Does God want us to be happy?
- g. Still not convinced, are you? Here's a few more Scriptures to drive this home:
 - Luke 14:14 - Jesus said "you will be blessed (happy)"
 - Acts 26:2 - Paul considered himself blessed (happy) to stand on trial before King Agrippa
 - Romans 4:7-8 tells us that forgiven people are blessed (happy)
 - James 1:12 reveals that it's possible to be blessed (happy) because we stood faithful in trials
 - Finally, James 1:25 promises us that we can be blessed (happy) in everything we do
- h. I would say that the overwhelming evidence in Scripture answers a resounding "Yes!" to our question!
- i. God wants us to be happy.

2. The why are there times when we aren't happy?

- a. We'll take a much more in depth look at this question in week 3, but let me give you three quick answers: sin, situations, and stupid people
- b. Sometimes we sin and put ourselves in position for a bad paycheck (Romans 6:23)
- c. Sometimes we find ourselves in situations that just aren't good (Psalm 22)
- d. Sometimes we end up in bad places because we're with bad (stupid) people (Proverbs 13:20)
- e. Again, we'll dive into the deep end on this in a couple of weeks.
- f. For now, just know that we aren't a church that pretends that people never have bad days.

3. What can we do to stay happy?

- a. Simply put, attach our happiness to something that will never change.
- b. When we seek happiness in things that change, we'll always experience the drastic ups and downs
- c. Let me give you the Big Idea, and then we'll talk through it and close: **Happiness isn't a feeling based on circumstance, but a fact based on the cross.**
- d. I need to make sure that all of us understand what happened at the cross, and to do that, we need to learn a fancy theology word: propitiation
- e. In Webster's, propitiation means "to propitiate" which isn't helpful at all
- f. In Scripture, it means to atone and appease the wrath of God against sin
- g. It's found in Romans 3:24-25 and also in 1 John 4:10, and when Jesus said "It is finished" He meant the appeasement of God's wrath

- h. What that means is that God isn't mad anymore. If He is, then Jesus lied when He said it's finished.
- i. So the way to stay happy (blessed) is to attach my happiness to what Jesus accomplished on the cross.
- j. The work of Jesus on the cross was SO GOOD that there isn't enough BAD LEFT to nullify it!
- k. That is something that can make those trusting Jesus "happy happy happy!"

The Landing

As we close this out, let me make a bold statement: you can't really be happy without trusting in what Jesus did on the cross.

You can try, but eventually, the things you hope will make you happy will change.

You're fired. Your team loses. You can't stop doing the things that you secretly hate being a slave to.

But when you're sentenced to die and someone else takes your place?

It's hard to have a really bad day when you keep remembering what was done for you on that one really good day.

Happiness isn't a feeling based on circumstances, but a fact based on the cross.

So this morning - on the first day of this series about being and living blessed - I'm calling you to choose to follow Jesus. To trust what He did for you.

What he did will never change, and Romans 4:7 says that when our sins are forgiven, we're blessed.

Or, in the words of Phil Robertson, "happy happy happy!"

Let's pray.