

Sermon Summary – August 18, 2024



The Bible Doesn't Say That "God wants me to be happy."

The Equation of Happiness

Some Christians believe since sin can produce happiness, then all happiness must be a sin. To them the best Christian is one who is the most serious and not entertained or distracted by the pleasures of the world. Other Christians examine this philosophy and conclude it doesn't really square with Scripture. The Scripture talks often about joy, and blessedness (happiness) (the variations of the word joy – 245 times in the Bible, happy – 33 and bless – 428) (See John 15:11; Gal 5:22; Phil4:4). Solomon in Ecclesiastes encourages us to enjoy life and the gifts God has given us. So, for them the best Christian is the happy one.

Does God Want Me to be Happy?

Yes, but the goal of our life isn't happiness. Therefore, we shouldn't pursue happiness at any cost. God created Adam and Eve and put them in a garden that provided everything they needed to be happy. But they believed the lie that happiness only comes when we have everything we want, rather than everything we need. Happiness is an emotion that comes from feeling everything is right. And chasing happiness is always elusive because whatever we think will make us happy doesn't always do so. And the things that do usually make us happy for only a short amount of time.

What is the Goal of Life

God wants so much more for us than happiness. The goal of our life is to be like God. God says. Be holy as I am holy (1 Peter 1:15,16). Jesus says to seek the kingdom of God first before the wants and even needs of life (Matt 6:33). We are also told to submit to God (James 4:7), deny ourselves (Luke 9:23) and humble ourselves (1 Peter 5:16). How can we be happy if God wants us to deny what we want? When we pursue happiness in and of itself, we always come up short. But when we pursue God, and a right relationship with Him we become content and filled with joy and happiness (Phil 4:10-13; 1 Tim 6:6) So, we should never make decisions based on what will make us happy. We should make them based on what would make God happy.

Is God's Goal for all Christians to be Healthy and Wealthy

Some Christians teach God wants every Christian to experience complete health and abundant wealth. It's often called the prosperity gospel. In the prosperity gospel faith is seen as a spiritual law that guarantees health and wealth. If you wonder why some people are healed and others are not, the answer is the measure of faith someone has. Likewise, a Christian with great faith will be blessed with wealth, while a one with weak faith will linger in poverty. It should be clear from the examples in Scripture that many who were close to God suffered in poverty or died without healing. Jesus himself was poor and was executed on a cross. Also, God doesn't promise healing or wealth for the faithful, but contentment, God's presence, and God's promise of our heavenly home.