

STRONGHOLDS: HAPPINESS

INTRO:

DRAPER QUOTE

- "You should be happy" is the air we breathe
- THIS IS LIKE A STRONGHOLD FOR ALL OF US

REVIEW:

STRONGHOLDS

→ Difficult than a struggle

- ENTRENCHED, INCORRECT THOUGHT PROCESS THAT INFORMS PASSIONS, WHICH CAN LEAD TO SIN
- PEOPLE, ENVIRONMENT, TRAUMA
- EVIDENCED BY:
 - 1) OBESSESSIVE SINS
 - 2) FAILED STRATEGIES
 - 3) UNWILLINGNESS TO EXAMINE

TYPES

- EXTERNAL
 - WORLDVIEWS + GARRISONS (PLACES)
- INTERNAL
 - MANY SPECIFIC, WE HAVE FOCUSED ON COMPREHENSIVE-THEMES
- TODAY: HAPPINESS - "It feels good/right"

JOHN 15:1-11

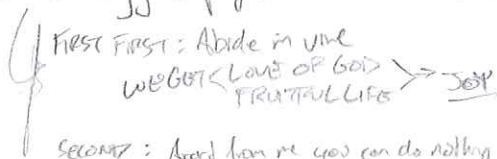
- OUR ABIDING, OBEDIENCE, LIFE IN GOD
- NOT A DECAYING, COLD TRANSACTION
- BUT A LIVING, VIBRANT RELATIONSHIP MEANT FOR JOY



- GOD IS JOYFUL AND DESIRES JOY FOR HIS PEOPLE
- BUT → GOD WANTS US TO PURSUE THE DEEPER JOY.

- CS LEWIS - "Put first things first and we get second things thrown in. Put second things first and we lose both first and second things"

- JESUS analogy is perfect - we are branches



Endure in trials "in this life you will have trouble"

Second: Apart from me you can do nothing
 A branch removed is beautiful for a time, but it eventually withers

DEFINITION: HAPPINESS

The joy that is found in fully engaging with the grace provided by God through Christ

- EVERYONE WHO IS A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST IN HERE WOULD AGREE WITH THIS ... WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

- WE AREN'T HAPPY → STRONGHOLD
- WE ARE SO EAGERLY CHASING THE SECOND THINGS THAT WE NEGLECT THE FIRST

GOD IS A GOD OF JOY,

BUT WE ARE A PEOPLE OF SHORTCUTS

↳ What we seek isn't what we actually want

DEFINING HAPPINESS

CLARITY:

(TURN THE DIAMOND)

1) TOO MUCH, TOO LITTLE

- Hedonism/Prosperity → Hiding behind false security
- Suffering/Poverty → Hiding behind false holiness when will the other foot drop?

- impossible in a dark world

2) Happiness vs Joy

- Happy = fleeting, Joy = deep abiding
- WE MEAN: Seeking only happiness is foolish
- it concerns: world is slightly happy and we are to be delightfully right

3) Happiness is a common grace

"No happiness in world without God" ⇒ NO!

DAVID MURRAY - SIX KINDS OF HAPPINESS

- 1) NATURE HAPPINESS - outside food
- 2) SOCIAL HAPPINESS
- 3) Vocational
- 4) Physical
- 5) Intellectual - understanding
- 6) Humor

JESUS PROVIDES A SEVENTH

- 7) SPIRITUAL
 - SALVATION
 - IDENTITY
 - COMFORT
 - PEACE

EVIDENCED IN SCRIPTURES

② DEFERRING TRUE HAPPINESS

① WE DON'T TAKE GOD AT HIS WORD

GEN 3:17

JOHN 10:10 - life + life abundant

- GOD'S PLAN IS HUMAN FLOURISHING, IN HIS TIME, IN HIS WAY, BUT WE TRY TO FLOURISH ON OUR OWN TERMS BECAUSE WE DON'T TRUST THAT HE IS GOOD.
- WE WANT IT NOW.

- GOD CARES ABOUT EACH AREA OF YOUR LIFE AND ACTUALLY DESIRES GOOD FOR YOU.

→ BUT WHEN WE DON'T TAKE HIS WORD SERIOUSLY, WE END UP FARTHER FROM HIM

- Money, dithe vs hoard
- Achievement - first last
- Relationships - mutual submission
- Food, drink ed - things taste better when you don't depend on them

- If happiness is our goal instead of God, we will take the shortcut to the feeling every time, and end up farther from God

② WE DON'T ESTEEM HOLINESS OVER HAPPINESS

- ROM 1 - exchanged truth for lie, even though they knew God!

MOST PEOPLE WANT TO BE LIKE CHRIST

- What we really want is evidenced in the fruit of our lives

→ I would venture that few people are more conflicted, frustrated, confused, sad than a Christian pursuing happiness outside of Christ.

→ Pursue happiness - just, but conflicted relationships, fighting, free time

→ Pursue holiness - happiness comes in holy identity. See the above, rightly better equipped to serve, love, give.

③ WE DON'T DISRUPT LEISURE FOR MINISTRY

MATT. 16:24-25

- There is a difference between disrupting Sabbath - disrupting leisure
- Also a difference between living life from leisure to leisure instead of being attentive to what God is doing around you.
- often our happiness must be put on hold for the greater good and guess what, the deeper joy of joining God in his work!

(2)

③ DEFEATING FALSE HAPPINESS (2 COR 10:3-7)

① SPIRITUAL AWARENESS

- "I'll stop" → won't work
- Pay attn to heart - what sparks joy? what brings happiness?
- Then, honestly - where does following this all the way end? Flourishing or death?

② TAKE THOUGHTS CAPTIVE

③ DESTROY ARGUMENTS

- WHO TOLD YOU THAT YOU DESERVE ANGER ALL THE TIME?
- WHAT IF YOUR PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS COMES AT ANOTHER'S EXPENSE?
- WHAT WE THINK WE WANT IS HAPPINESS
- WHAT WE REALLY WANT IS A SETTLED SOUL.

Also, SCRIPTURE CLEAR THAT LIFE IS HAPPY BUT CHRIST GIVES THAT we may end up

④ DON'T GO AT IT ALONE

- "Hey, am I caught up?"
- You need others

⑤ LOOK AT GOSPEL IN FRONT OF YOU

HEBREWS 12:2

- CHRIST MOTIVATED BY OBEEDIENCE, BUT ALSO THE JOY SET BEFORE.
- We have the most to rejoice in.
- GOD MOTIVATED BY JOY FOR US AND FOR OTHERS

SET TABLE

Advertising is based on one thing: happiness. And do you know what happiness is? Happiness is the smell of a new car. It's freedom from fear. It's a billboard on the side of a road that screams with reassurance that whatever you're doing is OK. You are OK.

John 15:1-11 – "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

Definition of happiness: the joy that is found in fully engaging with the grace provided by God through Christ.

Genesis 3:1-7 – Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.

Matthew 16:24-25 – Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

2 Corinthians 10:3-7 – For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete. Look at what is before your eyes. If anyone is confident that he is Christ's, let him remind himself that just as he is Christ's, so also are we.

Hebrews 12:2 – looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.