



Week Three: *Happy with what you do*

Introduction

This week, we continue to explore the theology of happiness, contentment and joy. To recap, we started in Week 1 by examining the “why” of happiness. We saw that God himself is happy and that, as his people, we have greater reason to be happy than anyone else. The Bible is full of instructions calling us to be glad in God! Last week, we looked at the two primary areas in which we are tempted to look for happiness: who we are and what we have. Thus, we spoke of finding contentment in the good news of the gospel and who we are in Christ.

But what about finding happiness in all those things we “have-to-do”, that we pack into the limited time at our disposal each day? In truth, most of us live lives that are largely routine and mundane, and it feels as though happiness is something to be experienced only in occasional, fleeting moments that fall outside of those routines. Many of us would agree with the words of the psalmist who laments, *“It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil...”* (Psalm 127:2)!

So how are we to relate our God-given quest for happiness to the routine, quotidian tasks that we just have-to-get-done? This week, we will explore the life-changing truth that happiness is found, not in what we do, but for whom we do it. In 1 Corinthians 10:31, Paul instructs us to do all things *“to the glory of God”*: when we do even the most mundane things to the glory of God, we will experience real happiness. We have motive, model and method to be biblically happy in all we do!

Sermon Points

1. MOTIVE

- Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-24; 31-33; 11:1, Psalm 104:1-2, Revelation 21:23, Isaiah 48:11 and Romans 3:23

If we are to enjoy meaning and happiness in the mundane, we must consider our MOTIVE in doing the things we do. For us, that motive is the glory of God. God’s glory must be what you are living for and finding meaning in, if you are to experience true happiness in what you do.

- ❖ Q: The “right to happiness” is one of our culture’s highest priorities. Why, then, do you think we fail at it so much of the time?
- ❖ Q: Read the abovementioned verses from 1 Corinthians. What limitations does Paul place on the Christian’s right to do what makes him/her happy?
- ❖ Q: If we are to be truly happy, rejoicing always in the Lord, our underlying motive in whatever we do must be the glory of God. Explore what the scriptures mean by “the glory of God” (as a noun) and “glorifying God/ giving glory to God” (as a verb).
- ❖ Q: How is it even possible that performing our chores can be a God-glorifying activity (see Ecclesiastes 2:24-25)? Does this change your perception of daily life (and your understanding of worship)?



- ❖ Q: Our motives are what drive both our actions and the attitude with which we perform them. Make a note of the routine activities that you perform on a typical day. What are your usual, underlying motives for doing them? What are the emotions that tend to surface, as you go about them?
- ❖ Q: Now take one or two of those chores, and re-imagine them as things you do to glorify God. In what ways can they be God-glorifying? (Ask yourself, 'How does this behavior enhance God's reputation in the world?') Can you identify any habits that you need to change? (Ask yourself, 'Does this activity inhibit God's reputation in the world?')

2. MODEL

- Read John 17:4-8

To enjoy meaning and happiness in the mundane, we must remember the MODEL we have in the life of Christ. In Jesus's prayer in John 17:4-8, he tells us that his was a life of never-ending glory-giving to God.

- ❖ Q: According to this text, in what three ways did Jesus glorify God during his earthly life?
- ❖ Q: How do these three ways apply to your own life, as a disciple of Christ?
- ❖ Q: Why does glorifying God require us to be other-centred and servant-hearted?

3. METHOD

Now that we understand the motive for our daily actions, and have in our minds the example Jesus has given to us (the model), we need to adopt a METHOD of prayerful consideration of our routines and behaviours. We can group these routines and behaviours into the following categories:

- i. Work, rest and routine
 - ii. Leisure and entertainment
 - iii. Food and fellowship
 - iv. Suffering and success
- ❖ Q: Select two of the abovementioned categories of routines and behaviours.
 - Are any of these areas of your life marked by an undercurrent of unhappiness?
 - How is God calling you to glorify him in these areas of your life, by following Jesus's example of:
 - obeying God?
 - displaying God?
 - giving of yourself for the advancement of the kingdom of God?

You might wish to use the following sets of questions to dig deeper into these issues, and to guide you into a prayerful consideration of your daily routines:

- i. Work, rest and routine
 - How are you using your time at the office? (Do you do work at work?)
 - How are your best skills being utilised (i.e. are you a creative/structured)?
 - Are you adopting habits that optimise your skills and delivery?



- *Do you have a balanced routine of work and rest?*
- *Are you a dependable and helpful employee?*
- *What would it do to your colleagues view of God if they found out you were a Christian?*

- ii. *Leisure and Entertainment*
 - *Are the things you do for leisure/entertainment godly and honouring to God?*
 - *Are you substituting social media for real relationships?*
 - *How can you redeem your devices for the glory of God?*

- iii. *Food and fellowship*
 - *Do you have a healthy diet, as far as it possible for you, so that you're a better steward of your body as a temple?*
 - *How do you use your meal times to advance God's kingdom?*
 - *How can you direct your food resources towards the widows and orphans?*
 - *Do your family and friendship circles declare the gospel?*
 - *Who are you friends with, and how do you treat them? How do you behave towards people who aren't like you?*

- iv. *Suffering and success*
 - *What is your perspective in suffering? Do you use it as an opportunity to declare faith in God?*
 - *What is your perspective on the successes in your life? Are they a pool for your own blessing or a pipeline to bless others?*