

Bad Lip Reading: God Just Wants me to be Happy - Jeremiah 17:1-10
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

One of the statements we hear in our culture is that God wants us to be happy. One that is closely tied to it is that in order to be happy one should follow their heart. In other words, you do you. That sounds great.

However, when this is lived out in our culture, we will always live in a way that runs from God. We see this in any number of ways. Some examples are:

- Gender questioning/fluidity. - People questioning their gender and changing their gender to what they think it should have been. Or being fluid and not identifying as any gender or multiple genders.
- Sexually perverted relationships (Polyamory/throuples/open relationships, etc.).
- Divorce - People abandoning their marriages because they are no longer "happy" or fulfilled.
- Absentee parents - A mom or dad abandoning their family (physically or mentally) because it doesn't make them happy.
- Trusting in your own performance. How much you're doing for God (bible studies, acts of service, etc.). You're doing the list and checking off all the boxes.

Scripture tells us something completely different. In Jeremiah 17:9, we're told that the heart is deceitful and desperately sick. This verse is one among many from which we get our doctrine of total depravity. That doctrine simply says that there isn't any aspect of our being that has not been affected by sin. Our hearts are so incurably sick, we don't even realize when we're being deceived. Because our hearts are sick, we by default choose to trust in ourselves and our own strength. When we do, we are likened to a bush in a barren land. They are dry, brittle, and bear no fruit.

When we repent and turn to trust the Lord, we are likened to a tree planted by a stream. The tree doesn't fear during difficult times and continues to be green and bear fruit. Why is that? Is there something special about the tree itself? No. The reason it can stay green and bear fruit is because its roots are plugged into the stream. That water gives the tree the live-giving nutrients it needs. It's the same way for followers of Jesus. If we stay plugged into Christ by spending time in his Word and prayer, we too will drink of that living water.

That still doesn't answer our main question. Does God want us to be happy? The simple answer is no. Our happiness is based on our circumstances and He has something so much better for us. The word "happy" actually only occurs 8 times in the ESV and only in the OT. However, joy occurs 171 times, glad and gladness: 138 times, delight: 74 times, and rejoice: 154 times.

Our happiness is based on our circumstances, so it's fleeting. But when we have real, glory-filled inexpressible joy, nothing can take that away. Peter's first letter to the 1st century believers spread across modern day Turkey, states that he knew how tough their lives were. They were grieved, not just put-out or inconvenienced, by various trials. These trials were persecutions to varying degrees up to and including crucifixion for following Jesus. Yet, through all of this, he reminds them, and us, that we've been born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ and that we rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

How we display this will differ based on our season of life. If we're going through a season where we're seeing lots of blessings and not much hardship, we may be more

excited, exuberant, and dance and sing. If, however, we're in a season of great difficulty, this may look more like tearful rejoicing on our knees, pleading with the Lord to intervene in our situation but at the same time, rejoicing with great joy knowing that we have Him and he is better than anything else.

God designed us to find our hope, our joy, our contentment, our satisfaction, our fulfillment, our "happiness" in Him alone!

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Exodus 39	Exodus 40	Romans 1	Romans 2	Romans 3	Romans 4	Romans 5

Reading from this past week: Jeremiah 17:1-10

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: 1 John 2:1-6

Family Worship

Song - *Behold Him*

https://youtu.be/izK4kl_wmA

Gospel Project

Story: God provided Isaac

Big Picture Question: Who is in control of everything?

Answer: God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. Nothing is outside of God's good plan.

Scripture: Genesis 21-22

New City Catechism

Question #44: Is baptism with water the washing away of sin itself?

Answer: No, only the blood of Christ can cleanse us from sin.

Verse: Luke 3:16

Scripture

Jeremiah 17:1-10

- Why might "following my heart" actually be the opposite of seeking my own happiness?
- What is the problem with the pursuit of happiness? What is God's alternative?
- What is the path to experiencing joy according to our text this week (especially v. 7-8)?

Prayer

*Pray that we would find our joy and happiness in God.

*Pray for the persecuted church. Make sure you check out the website for Voice of the Martyrs and I Commit to Pray.