

06/06/04 – “HAPPINESS IS A BY-PRODUCT”

Romans 10:8-17

What is it that makes you happy?

Is it getting your own way – Being the boss – Popularity – Honor – Having no stress – Having more money? Me, me, me etc.

John B. Rockefeller, a Christian millionaire, said, *“I have made many millions, but they have brought me no happiness. I would barter them all for the days I sat on an office stool in Cleveland and counted myself rich on three dollars a week.”* Broken in health, he employed an armed guard.

W.H. Vanderbilt, *“The care of 200 million dollars is too great a load for any brain or back to bear. It is enough to kill anyone. There is no pleasure in it.”*

Henry Ford, *“Work is the only pleasure. It is only work that keeps me alive and makes life worth living. I was happier when doing a mechanic’s job.”*

“Too many people are spending money they haven’t earned, to buy things they don’t want, to impress people they don’t like.” – Will Rogers

Our worth cannot be based on wealth, achievements, ancestry, public acclaim? – Our identity & value is in Christ

It is God who gives us worth & purpose regardless of circumstances - **Happiness is a by-product of life & not an end in itself**

If we are seeking happiness, at some point along the way we are not going to have it...Happiness is a result not an aim

Jesus never tells us to seek happiness. He said, **“Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.”** – Matt.6:33

If we are not seeking God’s kingdom first, then our priorities are misplaced – If He’s not first, then what or who has that claim in our lives?

We don’t come to Jesus to get a life – We had a life & are to lose it in order to find it – **He gives us life & life more abundantly**

Signed up for **Jesus Christ, Himself** - Everything else has been added – **All these things** - career, family, church, calling, direction etc.

What will make us happy is what makes God happy – **Without faith it is impossible to please God - Hebrews 11:6** – Faith pleases God!

Abraham believed God & it was reckoned to him as righteousness – He is called the Friend of God – Abraham the believer

The way we start the journey (by faith) is how we are to continue in the journey, **living by faith & serving through love**

Freedom, Love & Forgiveness

“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery – Galatians 5:1

God has made us free from ceremonial law which was a type & foreshadowing that ended with the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ

Called to freedom, **but through love serve one another.**” Gal. 5:13

Can misuse freedom by denying moral law to please ourselves – What we do is to be based in love - If it’s not about love, then we’re missing the mark

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” – John 13:34-35 – To often **we want to be loved** more than we want to love?

It is by our love that the world will believe that Jesus was sent by the Father... **The leanness of our love** causes so much of our problems

We are warned that love can “wax cold” - **Love is a choice** – It takes God’s grace to choose love – **Love never, never, never fails**

We are commanded to love! – **Let the love of the brethren continue** – We’re to love enemies & non-Christians

Love is the bridge between Corinthians 12 & 14 in the Bible – **Chapter 13 which is about love is the bridge that spans the gifts of the Spirit**

Every gift we have will one day be gone – **The only eternal perpetual grace is love** – There is no gift of love, it is a fruit of the Spirit

We are to be rooted & grounded in love - Eph. 3:17 - We are to owe no man anything **except to love him** – Romans 13:8

To walk in God’s love on a daily basis – **Love is the perfect bond of unity** – **Colossians 3:14** – Love of Christ controls us – 2 Cor. 5:14

At the heart of the Gospel, **we love because we are forgiven** – **We forgive because we love** – **We love because He first loved us**

It is a choice to forgive – 7 x 70 – Forgiveness is the antidote to bitterness, resentment & demonic influence - We are commanded to forgive

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and every one who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” – 1 John 4:7-8... **God is love** – not just one of His attributes, but His very nature

An old song says it well, *“I’m so happy, so very happy, I’ve got the love of Jesus in my heart!”*