

Text: Philippians 4:10-20

Meaning: Paul shared with the church the secret to happiness

Big Idea: There are underlying principles that lead to happiness

Objective:

Theme:

THE PATH TO HAPPINESS

CHINESE PROVERBS

Happiness is someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for.

If you want happiness for an hour — take a nap.

If you want happiness for a day — go fishing.

If you want happiness for a year — inherit a fortune.

If you want happiness for a lifetime — help someone else.

Nehemiah 8:10

The joy of the Lord is your strength

Psalm 16:11

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Paul says there are things that lead to Joy in your life:

In order to have joy, Paul says we must be...

1. **CONTENT IN EVERY SITUATION**

Content – speaks of being completely self-sufficient, not dependent on anyone or anything else. Paul didn't need more money, more possessions, or more influence to be happy; nor did Paul need the validation or affirmation of others. He had learned to be content in whatever situation he was in.

1 Timothy 6:6-8

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. If we have food and covering with these we shall be content.

Matthew 6:31-33

Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Learned – key word here. In other words through each and every situation, no matter whether bad or good in our physical eyes, we have the opportunity to learn something about God, about ourselves, and about life.

ROM 8:28 – God causes all things to work together for our good

CONTENTMENT IS A LEARNED TRAIT! Contentment is something we learn by trusting God through the circumstances of life.

Jeremiah Burroughs (Puritan Pastor)

Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God's wise and fatherly disposal in every condition.

The literal translation of verse 11 – I HAVE LEARNED TO BE CONTENT WITH WHATEVER.

GRATITUDE IS THE SERVANT OF CONTENTMENT, BECAUSE THE GRATEFUL PERSON IS THE ONE WHO IS MOST CONTENTED WITH WHAT HE HAS BEEN GIVEN IN THIS LIFE.

True contentment means I'm grateful for my **LOCATION, VOCATION, SITUATION, AND MY RELATIONS**

CONTENTION IS THE OPPOSITE OF CONTENTMENT. WHERE THERE IS CONTENTION THERE IS A LACK OF CONTENTMENT.

Contentment also grows when we realize THIS WORLD IS NOT OUR HOME!

Contentment is desiring LESS IN THIS LIFE because you know that MORE IS COMING IN THE NEXT LIFE.

HOTEL ILLUSTRATION

Think of contentment in terms of a hotel. Whenever you travel you like to stay in a nice clean hotel. I want a nice comfortable bed, clean room, no noise, and free breakfast ought to be a given. BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY – NO MATTER HOW NICE THE HOTEL IS – I DON'T WANT TO LIVE THERE – I'D MUCH RATHER GET BACK HOME.

CHURCH – THIS WORLD IS JUST OUR HOTEL. WE'RE ONLY TRAVELING THROUGH. HEAVEN IS OUR ETERNAL HOME. AND EVERY DOLLAR WE GIVE TO MINISTRY, EVERY PRAYER WE PRAY, EVERY HOUR WE GIVE IN SERVICE TO GOD AND OTHERS, AND EVERY CONVERSATION WE HAVE WITH SOMEONE ABOUT CHRIST – ARE INVESTMENTS IN OUR ETERNAL HOME!

Are you content with: YOUR SPOUSE, YOUR CHILDREN, YOUR JOB, YOUR CHURCH, AND YOUR POSSESSIONS?

Secondly, Paul reminds us that...

2. CHRIST IS OUR STRENGTH

True Joy and Happiness only come when we find our identity completely in CHRIST and Him alone. Paul says that the reason He was truly content is because His identity was in Christ.

No matter what circumstance he found himself in He could declare – **GOD WILL GIVE ME THE STRENGTH TO DO THIS.**

PHIL 4:13 – Athletes get this verse tattooed on their chest. Tim Tebow wrote it under his eyes. Steph Curry wears it on his shoes. We frame it and put it up on the wall at home.

I CAN WIN THIS GAME! I CAN GET THIS PROMOTION! I CAN ROCK THIS WORKOUT! I CAN ACCOMPLISH THAT GOAL!

It's a verse most people use to DECLARE VICTORY OR SUCCESS!

FOR PAUL IT WAS MORE LIKE WEDDING VOWS. THINK OF IT MORE LIKE VOWS.

Wedding Illustration

I Bobby take you Susie to be my wife and I promise before God and these witnesses to be your loving and faithful husband IN PLENTY AND IN WANT, IN JOY AND IN SORROW, IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH – FOR AS LONG AS WE BOTH SHALL LIVE!

Declaring I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST means JESUS I WILL FOLLOW YOU NO MATTER WHAT; IN PLENTY AND IN WANT, IN JOY AND IN SORROW, IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH – FOR ETERNITY!

The Good News is JESUS IS A GROOM THAT WILL NEVER LEAVE NOR FORSAKE YOU!

Consider our **IDENTITY IN CHRIST:**

LOVED – Psalm 59:16

FORGIVEN – Psalm 103:12

PROVIDED FOR – Psalm 84:11

PROTECTED – Psalm 34:7

ACCEPTED – 2 Cor 5:18

WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD I EVER WANT TO GIVE MY HEART TO SOMEONE OR SOMETHING ELSE?!

The Lord invites us to...

3. CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUPPLY

Paul finishes the letter by commending the church at Philippi for their generosity. Paul came to Philippi along with Silas and Timothy on his second missionary journey. They began to share Jesus with folks and a wealthy business owner named Lydia came to faith and a church was formed. From the very beginning, the heart of this first convert and the heart of this body of believers was to bless the work of God financially.

Responsibility – Partnership

Reward – Fruit and increase

Reason – fragrant aroma, sacrifice

Paul says the church gave a generous gift to expand his ministry. He called it a fragrant aroma, a sacrifice which was pleasing to God. In the Jewish Temple right outside the Holy of Holies sat the altar of incense, and the priests at the Temple were to keep the altar of incense burning continually. This incense was for no other purpose than for worship and obedience.