

Think It Over: This section is about turning what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take your own next step. If you are leading a group through this guide, don't feel like you have to answer every question. Pick out those questions that will stir up conversation and action among your group.

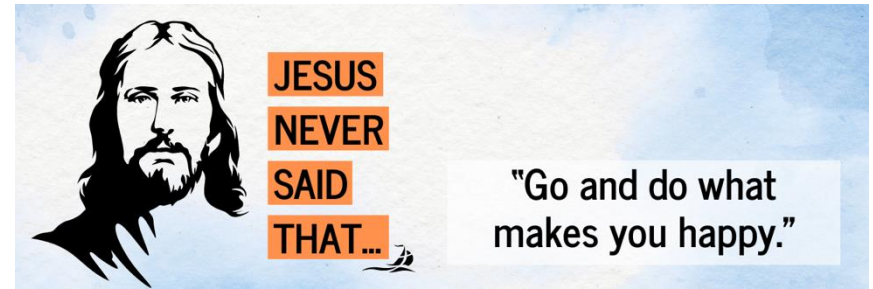
- What are some things that just plain make you happy? What does our culture say you need to be happy? How much of your day do you spend seeking out things that make you happy?
- If Jesus Never Said, "Go do what makes you happy," what does He actually say and what does He do?
- Read Proverbs 14:2. Think of a time you did something wrong or unwise in pursuit of happiness. Are you currently being tempted to do something wrong or unwise?
- What are some mini-gods in your life—stuff, perfection, having your way, control, feeling good? What is the scariest part about replacing the pursuit of happiness with the pursuit of God? What are some of the things in your life you think you should value higher than happiness?
- Read Psalm 37:1-7. Think about how you delight in the Lord. How have you experienced the blessings of God even when life isn't going the way you want?
- Extra Credit: How does one or more of the following Scriptures speak into the concept of happiness? Psalm 1:1-6; Ecclesiastes 7:14; John 16:33; Matthew 5:3-10; James 1:1-3; Proverbs 16:20.

Next Steps: Are you counting on something in the future like a job, spouse, house, or education to make life better? What step will you take this week to put your hope in Christ instead? Choose 1-2 things that you've been putting in front of God and skip them for a week. Replace them with time with God. As a Community Group, how can we model to each other what it looks like to delight in God instead of just pursuing happiness?

Changing Your Mind: Choose one of the verses listed in the Message Guide and commit it to heart.



If you missed a message,
visit www.scc.website
or request a CD at Guest Services.



¹²May all who are godly be happy... Psalm 97:12 NLT

The Culture of Happiness

- Whatever makes me happy must be right.
Whatever makes me unhappy must be wrong.
- Discomfort, delay, risk, suffering,
inconveniences, and obstacles
can't be God's will.
- Without knowing it, I begin to worship
the false gods of comfort, money,
pleasure, and things.

Jesus Doesn't Want You Happy...

²As we run, we must always look towards Jesus. He is the one who trusted God completely. Our faith starts with him, and he will help us to trust God all the way to the end. Jesus accepted punishment on the cross. He chose to receive much pain. He did not think about being ashamed to die like that. He knew that God had prepared something very good for him that would make him happy...
Hebrews 12:2 EEB

³When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!
Hebrews 12:3 MSG

²⁶For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 1 Corinthians 11:26 NIV

³⁰When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Matthew 26:30 NIV

³⁵But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same. Matthew 26:35 NIV

³⁶Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." ³⁹Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." ⁴⁰Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴²He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." ⁴³When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing. ⁴⁵Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

Matthew 26:36–46 NIV

☞ ...when it causes you to do something wrong or unwise.

¹⁵As obedient children, let yourselves be pulled into a way of life shaped by God's life, a life energetic and blazing with holiness. ¹⁶God said, "I am holy; you be holy." 1 Peter 1:15–16 MSG

☞ ...when it is only based on things in this world.

The World's Formula

Better possessions + peaceful circumstances
+ thrilling experiences + the right relationships
+ the perfect appearance = happiness

¹⁵Don't love the world's ways. Don't love the world's goods. Love of the world squeezes out love for the Father. ¹⁶Practically everything that goes on in the world—wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important—has nothing to do with the Father. It just isolates you from him. ¹⁷The world and all its wanting, wanting, wanting is on the way out—but whoever does what God wants is set for eternity.

1 John 2:15-17 MSG

Jesus Wants You

¹⁵Never give your hearts to this world or to any of the things in it. A man cannot love the Father and love the world at the same time.

1 John 2:15 Phillips

³⁴Jesus said, "The food that keeps me going is that I do the will of the One who sent me, finishing the work he started. ³⁵As the crowds emerged from the village, Jesus said to his disciples, "Why would you say, 'The harvest is another four months away'? Look at all the people coming—now is harvest time! For their hearts are like vast fields of ripened grain—ready for a spiritual harvest.

John 4:35 MSG, TPT

Jesus wants you
to be more than happy.

⁴Make God the utmost delight and pleasure of your life, and he will provide for you what you desire the most. Psalm 37:4 TPT

Bottom Line:

Giving yourself to Jesus,
not happiness,
will make you happy.

Pastor Dave often uses concepts and ideas from a variety of resources when writing a message. If you have any questions regarding these sources, please don't hesitate to contact Dave at daves@senecacommunitychurch.com.

To help you turn what God is saying to you into action steps, consider using the "Think It Over" section on the back.