

# Walk the Path: Finding Happiness

## by Chris Famisaran

Oh, it's so good to see you all. How y'all doing? Can you hear me? Okay? That's all right. Let's begin with prayer. Father, we thank you for the opportunity to once again come together and to worship. So be with us now. In Jesus name, amen.

Princess Aurora, Snow White, and Cinderella. What are they all have in common? Actually, a couple of things. They were all Disney Princesses, right? And like a lot of Disney stories. There's some unknown or not unknown, but some known tragedy generally. Either they lost a parent or both parents. They had to have some kind of struggle. And then when it comes to another similarity, what is the closing statement to at least these three stories? they all lived happily ever after. Right? Some of you I know are chuckling because the truth of the matter is that real in real life. Maybe for some, but I know that for many people, life is not always happily ever after. It's a struggle, amen. And life again. Yes, life is filled with many challenges, and sometimes it's easy to become jaded to become critical.

Yet we can find joy, we can find happiness. In fact, in Proverbs, there are a number of texts that will just glanced over that talks about happiness. So for the word first one he who heeds the word wisely will find good. And whoever trusts in the Lord happy is he. There's also where there is no revelation that people cast off restraint. But happy is He who keeps the law. A happy heart makes the face cheerful. But heartache crushes the Spirit. The discerning heart seeks knowledge, but the mouth of a fool feeds on folly. All the days of the oppressed are wretched, but the cheerful heart has a continual feast. Finally, a cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit drives up bones. And so I believe it's God's desire that we be happy. In fact, there's other passages in Psalm 144:15. It says, happy are the people whose God is the Lord. And I think there's one more here. Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say it again, rejoice. Rejoice in the Lord. Always. I will say it again. Rejoice. It's God's desire that not only we'd be happy. But there's something to be said, as well as disciples for God. If you want to minister, should not our countenance reflect our faith? And is our desire? We truly love God and are following God? Would that not bring a sense of joy and happiness in our heart? In fact, if we're minister and if we got to, if we're trying to minister yet we have such an angry face? Is that going to draw people in to the Lord?

I've known many I've known several angry Christians. Sometimes they stand on corners, or even in your own church. And maybe well meaning but mercy. I wouldn't want to spend lunch with them. And ultimately, we're called to be disciples to go forth to teach, preach and baptize right And our relationship should be a reflection of what God is doing in our life. And not only that, we should rejoice, we should be happy.

Let's go to a story in the book of Luke, okay? Open up your Bibles. So one of the things at times we are going to show some verses, okay? But we want you to bring your own Bibles. Or if you have your phone or your tablet, okay, we want to make sure that you're also practically opening up your Bibles. So let's go to Luke, Luke 12, verses 13 through 21, Luke 12:13-21. And there's a parable here that Jesus gives to a man. Jesus say, as usual, is he's teaching, he's preaching, he's in the middle of sharing words of wisdom. All right. We all there. Okay. And in Luke 12, Someone in the crowd said to him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me. I don't know about you. But to me, that's kind of a bold claim to tell

Jesus, he's not really asking, right? He's forcing him to go over, tell his brother, hey, you need to give me my due. So the message starts off a little awkward. Jesus replied, man, who appointed you, I sorry, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you. Now, at the time, so the man referred to Jesus as teacher, that's another way of saying, Rabbi, and the rabbis at the time, had some knowledge, if not, they're pretty knowledgeable about the law. So this guy thinks that Jesus is going to be able to help resolve his situation, because he's supposed to be knowledgeable, maybe even an expert in the law. Then Jesus says, Hey, watch out, be on your guard against all kinds of greed. Life does not consist in an abundance of possessions. And then he tells him this parable, the ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. And he thought to himself, what shall I do, I have no place or room to store my crops. And then he said, This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns, and build up bigger ones. And there, I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, you have plenty of grain laid up for many, many years, take life, easy, each drink and be married. But God said to him, You fool, this very night, your life will be demanded from you, then who will get what you have prepared for yourself. This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves, but is not rich toward God.

That can be kind of a little bit of a troubling, troubling parable. Because especially for the guy who just comes up, he's thinking, I need to get my just due. Doubt, more than likely what's happening here is there was probably this guy's father had probably died. And there was no will, either spoken or written down. So naturally, what happens to the estate, it goes to the oldest brother. Okay, much like as well, the product parable of the prodigal son only dad was really kind of generous and actually gave his share ahead of time, to his younger son, this son got no such opportunity. And so he's angry. He's feeling that justice has not been done. And so he probably sees Jesus, Jesus is well spoken. Maybe he truly believes that he's also the Son of God, well, who better than to help resolve my issue? And yet, Jesus comes back with a bit of a different thought. And he refers to him as man. Now, unlike, you know, when when Jesus refers to a woman as woman, it's a term of endearment here, in this case, it's not a positive response. It's more a matter of really, Jesus is not happy that this guy has just basically told him you're gonna help me fix my domestic argument with my brother. So Jesus responds with Who, who, who made me a judge or a divider over you.

It's Jesus's intention instead of trying to just, you know, tell the other brother to give his brother his do he wants to bring healing into this relationship. You know, when you have been wronged or let's just say even betrayed? Is it easy to forgive? Especially when you've been betrayed? Let's be honest. No, it's not easy sometimes, especially in fact, when it's your own family and your own blood. And Jesus here, however, Jesus wants to help mend and repair this relationship. So he gives a parable that's talking about stuff, material gains. And in this parable of, of this man, who, you know, he had already been pretty successful. And yet, Jesus is saying, hey, greed, be careful of the greed that could come out of you. And, and he says, life does not consist in abundance of possessions. And in the parable, there's a certain rich man, okay, it's already indicated, he's already well to do, he's got enough. Yet, it's not enough for him. So he wants to build upon more and more and more. So he demolishes his barns, and he builds a bigger ones, building up excess after excess, all for himself. And for him, happiness and joy and pleasure is making sure that he can have all of this, not just because of, he'll have more than enough to live out his life. But he just wants to keep building and building and building. There was a sense of pride that he could build so much, and yet, had no idea of who God was, or God was not important. And it's here that Jesus says, Hey, you fool, this very night (your life) is going to be demanded of you. Then

who will get what has prepared for yourself? He could be the richest person in the world. But if you have no one around you, was that really a life well lived.

Scrooge McDuck. DuckTales, right. He wanted to be the richest man, he always made sure he could have as much money. And it wasn't until his nephews came in that there was some semblance of joy in his life, or what's the what's the what's the other story Scrooge? Scrooge. I'm getting my stories mixed up the Christmas one. Scrooge. Thank you. I apologize. I'm just, you know, this is a ad libbing. And so, you know, he, he realized that just living a life for himself was not going to be satisfactory, should be lived with others to have joy. Because really, he was a Scrooge. He had a dark heart, cold. Jesus saying, Hey, man, look, stuff is stuff at the end of the day, you can have all the material possessions in the world. But if you don't have love, it's nothing.

So material possessions. Material possessions only provide short term happiness. Sure, you could get a boat, you could have your brand new car. But if you drive your car, let's just say every day for an hour or two, how long does it take before it feels like it's just a car. Anybody experienced that? Or, you know, you can get a boat, get a bike, you could get an Xbox, you could get whatever is nice in your life, what you think? And maybe you could you could take care of it. But if we just continue to accumulate, accumulate and accumulate, it just becomes stuff and by the way, when you die. What good is it? Are you gonna carry it on with you to the next part? No, the only thing you have is your character and ultimately, relationships. So, yeah, material possessions can bring short term happiness, but they're not going to bring lifelong fulfillment. It won't make you happy forever.

Our mindset, of course, in anything should be that of Christ. How do we view the world? Is everything that I do, and my thoughts, am I honoring God? And of course, Christ is our greatest example. And, how did Christ live his life should be something that we should emulate. And I truly believe that Christ, he had to have laughed. I mean, he hung out with kids. And kids are the greatest example of finding joy and happiness because kids, they just want to have fun, right? And so Jesus not only wanted to hang around them, but he actually fought for them. And that's something that we're actually going to talk about next week. In our next series, we're going to be talking about faith. We're next week, we're going to talk about what it means to have a child like faith.

Now, something that we have to ask ourselves, what's robbing us of our joy and happiness? Well, what are you feeding in your mind? And your heart? What are you listening to? What are you watching? And are you watching it all day? How long are you on your phone? How long are you spending time in your important relationships? We have some passage we read earlier is Proverbs 17:22. a cheerful heart is good for is good medicine, but a crush spirit dries up bones. You know, when I was I probably was about I had to have been about 17. I remember this moment in my life distinctly. I can't remember because it was so long ago. But I was in a period of my life. I was a teenager. And I thought my whole world was like, Oh, it's it's, it's over. I thought I knew everything. And there was a period of my life where probably for a couple of months, I just was in a funk. I probably was depressed. And I remember being in my friend's Suburban, Bjorn Gunderson the Gunderson family, they had a silver Suburban, think what was white, and I was sitting in the backseat. And he and his brother were talking, they were fighting. And then some one of them said something really funny. And I started to laugh. And not just like any Haha, like the contagious laugh, like, you just you can't stop laughing because it was so funny. And I remember it being what a joy it was to finally just laugh and had been months since I had, you know, really

experienced joy. And, you know, they kept feeding me with funny stuff. And I kept laughing I probably laughed literally for five to 10 minutes around that time. And just constantly and I the euphoria and the joy that I felt afterwards was just so contagious. And I thought, Man, I feel great. And I believe God is God's desire that we have that same joy, that same euphoria. So find things that are fun to do. Whatever it is that brings you joy and happiness, God desires that you also do those things. So, but be mindful as well. You know, I love comedy. Unfortunately, there's not a lot of good quiet clean comedy out there, right? You can't just Google comedy. Because depending on what something comes up, usually doesn't take very long for somebody to be saying something that's totally inappropriate. But there are good clean comedians out there. So maybe, maybe find something that just is a good thought, every day in the morning especially to give you to start your day off right with a good thought. And a good laugh.

Of course. Oh, I did have it there. We can find happiness by looking at the positives. There's always something good in everything and an opportunity to grow. I know a lot of people this year apparently they learned how to bake bread. I didn't learn how to bake bread. But I rediscovered a love of playing the guitar and not only just playing the guitar but really like doing a deep dive on learning different types of tone especially on electric guitar or acoustic guitar. And, and you know, I've been playing guitar for 26 years. And I thought okay, I've learned a few things but And just to, to Google and do a deep dive on just all the little things about how you can make your sound better. And I started doing all these things, and my creative outlet grew. And I'm excited about playing music again. And that has brought me joy. So just for an act, quick, something to do think about right now. Just think about the next 5-10 seconds. What is something that you have learned to do that maybe perhaps in the last even six months, or a year that you didn't know how to do? And how did it cause you joy, and happiness? So think about that?

And what were the benefits, that brought that joy, and that happiness? I want to encourage you always find new things to do. Don't be just doing the same thing over and over. Because when we challenge ourselves, when we when we learn to try something new, okay, whether it's cooking, or knitting or speaking, whatever it may be, it's not always going to be easy at first. In fact, some people say, hey, if you really truly want to grow, find something that you're not good at, and just intentionally learn. And by that you learn from the positives as you grow along. And it's not something that it's going to happen, perhaps overnight, it might take a couple days, it might take years. But it gives you purpose. And there's joy in that journey. And I think that's something that we don't necessarily talk enough about, as well. You know, when you've been on a trip, maybe you went on a hike, and it was all day, and it was miserable. You didn't have enough water, you didn't bring enough sunblock. And you're thinking, you know, 10 hours in this is the most ridiculous dumbest thing I've ever done. Of course, you come back from the trip, you rest up, maybe even by the end of the week, or maybe a month later, you thought that was the most epic trip ever with my friends. Because even though it was miserable, it was something that we did together. And so do things together, with your friends, with your family. Because in that the journey, even though there's sometimes can be struggle makes it that much better.

And Philippians four, verse eight, talking about mindset, it says, What brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things. And it's something that I think we have to be cognizant of, again, going back to what are we feeding our hearts and our minds is be cognizant of what you feed your self, not just physically but mentally. Now, I'm not saying Of course, that you just deal with all the negativity because there's just challenging things out there. But to be cognizant of the

fact of, Hey, what are you feeding yourself, feed yourself healthy stuff and in with the challenges. By having a positive mindset, we can face those uncomfortable, challenging situations. We can find happiness in the scriptures and living as Christ did. You know, there are plenty of lessons that we can glean from Jesus alone. And if we truly emulate him, if we learn to speak well of others, to not being worried about judging others and having this 10 foot log coming out of our eye, you know, Jesus talks about the plank, it's literally plank, you know, and of course, when you look around, everybody notices it's that uncomfortable situation where you're saying something, but you know, every everybody knows that you're just as much of a hypocrite right? Or are being salt and light. Or even if you really, truly want to live a great life. Follow the 10 commandments, by loving God with everything and loving your neighbor as yourself. There's true freedom in that because you don't have to worry about Oh, if I treat everybody well. I'll be treated well. Now we can find half happiness and family and community. We are not called to go through life alone. We are built for committee. Unity. In fact, in the Bible, the very beginning, what does God do? He creates this whole world, and Adam and Eve for community. And again at the end, what is the last picture in Revelation? God being with who? God's people. So it's something that I know we've talked about earlier. But just as a reminder, happiness is found in family and community, there's much joy and happiness when you're around your family, and especially your friends, because what do you want to do you want to have fun, share a meal, share jokes, watch a funny film, whatever it may be.

There's a there's a story told of a little girl and they were, she and her mother. Were in a restaurant and they were having breakfast. And when they walked in, there was just a somber, somber mood, the regulars were in there. And there was in particular one guy who was at the counter and he was stirring his drink. It was either coffee or tea. And when they sit down, they ordered they get their food. And when their food is presented them, the mom begins to eat and the little girl says, Mom, why didn't we pray? And everybody, like, kind of perked up. And, and the waiter, or the waitress, she says, Oh, honey, you could pray? It's okay. So everybody in unison, just collectively bowed their heads. And a little girl. So cute. She said her prayer. God is great. God is good. Let us think and for food. Amen. How many of you learned that prayer growing up? Okay, there's a handful of you. All right. I didn't learn that growing up other than when my little sister who went to a little, I think it was a Lutheran Church preschool, learned it there. And so she shared she always was the one who prayed I think in the mornings, and it's something that has stood by. And after this, the mood in the diner changed. And the waitress thought, Man, this is great. Maybe we should do this for every meal. But there was by her example, the man who was stirring his drink, he said, all of a sudden, sorry, my, we all of a sudden, my whole frame of mind started to improve from that little girl's example, I started to thank God for all that I did have and stop majoring in all that I didn't have, I started to choose happiness. Now, this one little girl, because she was out with her mom, set an example, spending time and there became this little community here in this diner. And one little thing led to growth and happiness, especially for this man. So having a heart of gratitude, being thankful, brings joy, and happiness. And by our example, people are going to have to think about, hey, perhaps I want that what makes them different.

Finally, we can find happiness in giving and serving others. There was actually a survey and a study done many, many, many years ago, based on the golden rule. I think it was, it was done by the child behavior research, researcher, Bernard, Rimland, and his point was the happiest people are those who help others. And so everyone who was asked to be a part of this study, were asked to list write down 10 people who they knew best and then labeled them as happy or not. And they were to go through the list

again, and labeled them as selfish or unselfish. And then with the this definition of a stable tendency to devote one's time and resources to one's own interest in welfare and unwillingness to inconvenience oneself for others. And after going through all of the results in all the surveys Rimland found that people labeled happy were also generally unselfish and he wrote those whose activities are devoted to bringing themselves happiness are far less likely to be happy than those whose efforts are devoted to making others happy. His point, do unto others as you would want them to do to you. There is great joy in being able to serve and help others.

As a kid, I thought, oh, Christmas in my birthday. are great. But as I've gotten older, I found far more joy in being able to serve. Frankly, I mean, you all are a reflection of that. Every October that I've been here, you have lovingly affirmed the ministry that I've been here by just sending me notes, little things. And it's been such a huge not only vote of confidence, but also to see, I'm not trying to do this, because.... I'm just doing it because it's a labor of love. I love being here. And I love working with you all. You all make this so great and so much fun. And when it's truly from the heart, man, I'm not motivated by money not motivated for... it's because I want to be here. And because I want to serve alongside all of you.

And so giving, serving, may You not only find joy and happiness, but share that with others, find ways to serve others, and bring joy and happiness to others. And with that, to close with. What's not here Philippians 4:11 through 13 says, Not that I speak in regard to need for I have learned in whatever state I am to be content. I know that I know how to be a base, a base and I know how to abound. Everywhere in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to a bound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. I hope and pray that this series in the book of Proverbs has been a joy and in a journey. I hope that for those of you who've been reading a proverb, a day has brought much joy and fun. Prod your minds. May you be blessed. Next week, we're going to talk about faith. And I look forward to continuing this journey with you all let's begin with prayer. I mean end with prayer.

Father, we thank you for the opportunity to come together today once again. We just ask that you will continue to be with us. Help us Lord to seek your wisdom as Proverbs so clearly states. Help us to make great decisions. And Lord above all, help us to be a people that is not only joyful but happy and to share that joy and happiness with others. May we not be caught up in just buying and accumulating but having relationships and sharing and giving with others in Jesus name. Amen.

Grace and peace, everybody.