

the good life

HAPPINESS REFLECTION GUIDE

The culture we live in tells us that happiness comes from our circumstances and achievements. As children, we're coached to fight for happiness by attaining certain accomplishments in our lives. During my years of football, the targets of my life were doing and achieving. These were the measuring stick for my happiness. We all walk around with these statements swimming in our heads:

I could be happy if...

I know I should be happy but...

I should've been happy when...

I know I'll be happy if...

I thought I would be happy by now.

When am I going to be happy?

I am never going to be happy unless...

I know I should be happy but I'm not.

My desire to be happy, started off with good goals, but soon they became idols. I call it chasing shadows. We chase happiness the same way children chase shadows. It's never ending. We're quick to place our happiness benchmarks on the throne of our hearts, the throne that rightly and only belongs to King Jesus.

I quickly realized that even in achieving some of what I'd thought would bring me happiness, I was still empty. I still couldn't find what I was looking for. The longing for happiness that we experience can only be found and fulfilled in King Jesus. He knew the way to true happiness and left it for us in the Beatitudes. Happiness is and has always been about becoming who we were meant to be in Him.

Below are a few prompts to guide you through a time of reflection. This can be done by yourself or with a friend. Use this time to allow His words of truth to wash over you.

HAPPINESS CONTINUUM CHART

First, take some time to reflect on these different stages of life and what happiness looked like or what you think it will look like:

Childhood: _____

Teenage years: _____

Young Adult: _____

Mid-adult years: _____

Late Adulthood: _____

God's happiness for you was never dependent on achievements in different life stages. There's nothing wrong with having desires and expectations, but that desire can't be greater than your desire to know the Father and become more like Him. When we look to Him, we begin to look more like Him. This comes from being in relationship with Jesus. True happiness is found in Him.

WE'VE ALL AT SOME POINT ASKED THE QUESTION, "IF THIS IS THE GOOD LIFE, THEN WHY AM I LET DOWN?"

1. I think the good life is or should be: _____

King Jesus says the good life is (use Matthew 5:3-12 as a reference): _____

2. God didn't send Jesus to die for our momentary happiness, but for abundant life.

Read Psalm 16:11, Psalm 51:1-3; 10, John 10:10, and Matthew 6:33. How can you live the good life today?

3. Internal happiness is not dictated on what is happening, but who we are becoming.

Read Romans 8:29, Ephesians 2:22, Philippians 2:5-11. What does Jesus say about who we are becoming?

Soul Tattoo: Stop and ask yourself, "Have I been defining happiness incorrectly? What do I need to do to shift my perspective?"

Prayer: King Jesus, you came to this world so we could live the good life. As I grow into who You created me to be, I know that I will discover the good life along the way. Thank you for Your love, sacrifice, and guidance. Help me to embrace true happiness that can only be found in You. In Jesus' name. Amen.