

Hungering for God
Hungering for Happiness
Psalm 16, Revelation 21:1-8
Sermon Outline

Introduction: According to the United States Declaration of Independence, one of our unalienable rights is ‘the pursuit of happiness.’ What does God think about this? How do we find it?

I) God is for happiness

- 1) Psalm 16.6, 11: The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places...In your presence is fullness of joy...
- 2) Rev 21.4: ...He will wipe away every tear...

Hard to believe?

II) We will not find happiness if we make it the main thing

Psalm 16.4: The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply
The perils and frustrations of ‘happiness hoarding’

- Circumstances and things that are supposed to deliver happiness are fragile
- Drugs and entertainment wear off
- Peace at all costs with friends and family yields long-term sadness
- Running from the sadness around us yields loveless, lonely, and joyless lives

III) How do we find happiness?

A) Through contentment with God himself

- 1) David’s contentment: v. 6: I have a beautiful inheritance
 - 2) David’s secret: v. 2, 5: I have no good apart from you... The LORD is my chosen portion
- Wee hour soliloquies: v. 7: ...in the night my heart instructs me
Worst case scenarios: v.10:...You will not abandon my soul to Sheol

B) Through loving what pleases God

Rev. 21.8: As for the cowardly, the faithless...their portion will be...the second death
We cannot have the end of tears without having the end of the evil that makes us weep
Wrestling hard to do the right thing does not earn heaven...but it is still worth the effort

C) Through drinking at the Messiah’s fountain

Rev 21.6: ...To the thirsty I will give from...the water of life without payment
Happiness beyond our reach
Only one man (not even David) can say, I have set the Lord always before me.
This man gave up all his joy to secure ours

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) Read over Psalm 16 and Revelation 21:1-8. List all the evidence for God's determination to give us joy. Thanks him for what you find.
- 2) Psalm 16:4 warns us that if we makes being happy too important our 'sorrows will multiply.' Try to identify ways in which you are a 'happiness hoarder.' Ask a friend to help you.
- 3) Identify ways in which hoarding happiness actually strips happiness from us.
- 4) The key to David's deep happiness (seen in his contentment, v 6, and his joy, v 9) is his determination to make the Lord, rather than circumstances, his 'inheritance'. List the ways in which David puts the Lord first in his heart. How might you emulate David in one or two ways?
- 5) Read Revelation 21:8 and reflect on the following: "These are hard words, but they make sense. We cannot have it both ways: We cannot have the end of tears without also having an end to the evil that makes us weep. If God is going to wipe tears from the face of the earth, then he is going to have to wipe sin from the face of the earth. We cannot have God comprehensively "with us" while also nursing cowardice and lying."
- 6) Psalm 16 does not perfectly describe David. But it does perfectly describe David's 'Son' Jesus. Read the Psalm as the words of Jesus. What does it show you about the quality of the life that Jesus brought to God on your behalf when he offered himself at the cross? What does it show you about how painful it was for Jesus to be forsaken by his Father when he died in our place?
- 7) Jesus promises in Revelation 21:6 to give to the thirsty, "from the spring of the water of life without payment" (that is, 'without the thirsty having to pay anything'). Why is the 'without payment' so important to you? How does it help you to deal with the fearful warning in Rev. 21:8? Thank the Messiah for what he has done to secure your everlasting happiness.