

# The Pursuit of Happiness

by Carter Conlon

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*The pursuit of happiness is a fundamental human desire, but true happiness can only be found in a relationship with God and walking in His ways.*

**Duration:** 50:33

**Scripture:** Psalm 128:1, John 8:32, John 13:1

**Topics:** "Happiness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the pursuit of happiness and the disappointment that often comes from worldly pursuits. He emphasizes that true happiness is found in a relationship with Christ and being reconciled to God. The preacher references biblical stories, such as the woman who grabbed the hem of Jesus' garment and the blind men on the side of the road, to illustrate the importance of seeking and holding onto the knowledge of God. He concludes by highlighting the need to align our actions with God's teachings and find happiness in following His ways.

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## Transcript

The pursuit of happiness, and I'm assuming that most everybody here is in that pursuit. Now, Father, I just thank you for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I thank you for quickening my mind and heart, my physical body.

I thank you for enabling me to stand to honor you. Lord, that's the only desire in my heart, that I honor you and finish the work that you've given me to do. And, Father, I ask today that not a single person in this house would end up in hell.

I pray, God, that you break down strongholds of the enemy, arguments of evil, pathways that are leading to destruction, that you expose, break down, tear down, destroy, that you may build that which is good in every heart, every mind, every life. Let there be a revelation of Jesus Christ, the goodness of our God, to every heart. I pray that nobody escape it.

I pray that every defense built against the goodness of God come crumbling down, and God's grace shed the light and love of Christ in every heart. I ask this in Jesus' name. John chapter 13, please, if you'll go there in your New Testament.

We're going to begin at verse 1. I'm going to read a good part of this chapter and talk about the pursuit of happiness. You probably won't understand why I'm using this scripture in this text, but you will eventually. John chapter 13, verse 1. Now, before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him. Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God and went to God, he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

Then cometh he to Simon Peter, and Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. And Peter said to him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus said to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is everywit clean. And you are clean, but not all.

For he knew who should betray him, therefore he said, or said he rather, You are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said to them, Know ye what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and you say, Well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord, and neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If you know these things, happy are ye if you do them.

I'm going to speak on the pursuit of happiness. Now, how many times have you said the words, I just want to be happy? I don't know how many times I've said it throughout my life. I want to be happy.

Why is it so important to be happy? Have you ever wondered that? What is it that is intrinsically woven into our design, put there by the creator himself? You see, our emotions are, scientists are just unlocking the genetic code, and really, it's probably less than Math 101 to rocket science. It's so much deeper than anything we understand. We are created by God with desires, passions, interests.

We are created in the very express image of God, actually, according to the scriptures, which means the internal emotions that we possess are found in God. Although, of course, in fallen man's condition, those emotions are corrupted. But why is it so important to be happy? Why can't we just be miserable and be content? I know some people that try very hard to do that.

But why can't we just be miserable and say, well, I'm just a miserable person, I'm just content to be miserable. Even miserable people want to be happy. They may pursue happiness in a wrong way, but there's a desire in them to be happy, even in their misery.

And what is it about us that we want so desperately to be happy, and we'll go to almost any means to achieve it? We will run in any direction, we will pursue any fad, we will take on any new venture. And really, if you're honest today, at the very bottom of everything we do is, will this make me happy? Will I find fulfillment in this? At the end of my day, will there be peace in my heart and in my life? Will I be happy?

Now, Webster's dictionary defines happiness as a state of being delighted, pleased, joyful, a person who experiences good fortune, who is content, a joyful person. The founding fathers of America entrenched in the constitution of this country, the undeniable right of each person to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Now, some of them, of course, were Christians, at least professed to be. And God himself doesn't have an argument with these things. As long as the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness is in character with the will of God for his creation, these things in themselves are not wrong.

It's when the pursuit of it becomes illegitimate or non-recognized, as it is by God, that we are moving in a direction that we think is going to make us happy, but ultimately doesn't bring us anything but sorrow. In Christ, God said, I'm come that they might have life, that they might have it more abundantly. John chapter 10, verse 10.

Speaking of liberty, Jesus said, you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. John chapter 8 and verse 32. And then in the scripture text we just read, where Jesus took a towel, washed the feet of people, really, who he knew were about to run and misunderstand.

Their motives were still not right. And the things that they were doing, they're still vying for position in some cases. And Peter is still walking in the strength of his flesh.

Christ washes their feet and says, if you do these things, you're happy if you do them. Now, keep your hand in John chapter 13 and go to Psalm 128, please with me. Now, Psalm 128, and actually a lot of the Psalms tell us from an Old Testament perspective about happiness.

What kind of a man is happy? What kind of a man knows this internal joy, this sense of well-being as it is? Now, in Psalm 128, verse 1 says, blessed is everyone that fears the Lord and walks in his ways, has a reverence for God and chooses in his heart, I'm going to walk God's way. Now, of course, in the New Testament, we understand that that walking God's way comes from an indwelling power of God himself through the Holy Spirit. Not only convinces us of where we should go, but enables us to do what God moves in our heart to do.

Verse 2, he says, thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands, and happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house, and thy children like olive plants round about thy table. In other words, there's a presence of God.

There's going to be life in the man's home in this particular scripture who fears God and walks in his ways. His wife will flourish. There will be fruit begin to grow from her life.

And people come to his house, and his wife will not be just some servant in the house. His wife will be a very source. There will be life emanating from her.

The children, there will be an oil in them, which represents there's not only healing, but there's an anointing in his children's lives. And they are vessels through whom God will pour out to subsequent generations. There will be a breaking of the selfishness that comes into the hearts of those who are apart from God.

And this man will be happy. You know, I can honestly say one thing about my home. I'm like David, David the king.

He said, although my house is not yet what everything God has promised it will be, the Lord's blessing is on it. And David talked about the favor. And I can say one thing about my home.

It's a happy place. There's scarcely ever hard words. And I thank God for that.

I thank God for the happiness. Our children like it so much that they even came back to live after going to college. And I'm happy to have them home.

Behold, thus shall the man be blessed that fears the Lord, walks in the ways of God. I know this personally. There's a deep, it doesn't mean that we don't have struggles.

It doesn't mean that there aren't wars to fight and issues of the heart that God has to deal with. It means that there's this inward happiness that only God gives. Because God designed us.

And it's only through Him that we can fully begin to realize what true happiness is all about in our pursuit of it. Let me just read to you a few. Psalm 144, verse 15 says, Happy is that people whose God is the Lord.

I mean, that's where it all begins. If you can say Christ is my Lord, you're on the road to being happy. Psalm 146, verse 5 says, Happy is he that has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.

The person who knows that God is the one who will help him. The person who understands that his hope is not in things of this world. His future is not secured by the things that he possesses.

But his future is in the fact that God possesses him. And the scripture says that man is that woman is happy. Proverbs 3, verses 13 and 18 says, tells us that the man.

Now, when I say man, of course, you understand it's a generic term for men and women. But says happy is the man who finds and retains wisdom. The man or woman who finds the knowledge of God.

As we heard last week preached in this pulpit when Teresa spoke, that the seed does not just fall on unproductive soil or it's not just taken away immediately by the devil. But it finds a heart that says, I want this. This is truth.

I found truth and I'm not letting it go. So I hold to it. Just like the woman grabbed the hem of Jesus' garment and wouldn't let him go.

And the blind man on the side of the road, in spite of what everyone else around him was saying, just simply would not be quiet. And he knew where his help was. And he knew where his hope was.

And he knew that truth was there. And he reached out and he laid hold of this. And he brought it, in effect, to his own heart.

And this is what the scripture is telling us. The man who finds and keeps the knowledge of God. Who says, I used to do it this way, but this is what God says.

This is how God says it's to be done. I used to think this way, but this is how God says I am to think. And he finds it and he retains it.

He doesn't try to act it out in his own strength, because he knows it's impossible. But God comes. And because he has embraced it, God, through the Holy Spirit, makes this truth a living reality within him.

And he begins to change, as the scripture says, from image to image and glory to glory. He's found truth. He's found genuine wisdom.

He has reached out and he has retained it. See, there is a difference between that type of person and Solomon. Solomon had incredible access to wisdom.

Incredible access to truth, but he did not retain it. He did not bring it home. While he's learning these truths that God is speaking to him, he's building other houses.

And he's embracing other loves and other wives and making other alliances. And the end result of his life is tragedy, and not the happiness and blessings. He ends up really a miserable man, because his heart is divided.

Never fully saying, this is right. This is right. And I believe that the core of what has given me the ability to be a Christian, let alone a preacher or anything else that has emanated by God's grace from my life, is the early years I picked this book up and said, this is right.

This is the governing word of my life and mind and heart. This is right. I don't care what I feel.

This is right. It doesn't matter what I think. This is right.

This is what God says, and God, by his grace, has to make it a reality. And the Bible says the end result is that man is happy. Proverbs 1620 says, happy is the man that trusts in the Lord.

Hallelujah. And lastly, Proverbs 1421 says, the man that has mercy on the poor is a happy man. Now, Adam was undoubtedly a happy man.

I'm talking about Adam, the first man created in the Garden of Eden. After all, he lived in the presence of God. It just didn't get any better than what Adam had.

He could call on God. God could call on him. He worked and walked with God.

He had access to a tree of life. He had access to everything he needed for life, just like you and I do in the New Testament. We walk in God's presence.

We can call upon him. He talks to us. We talk to him.

We have the tree of life, of course, who is Jesus Christ. We have the life of Christ flowing through us. We can call on that tree for healing, just as Adam.

There's no evidence he ever needed any healing, but the tree was there. And all the life, everything he would need would be found in that place of living with God. He was a co-laborer in some measure with God in Eden.

Do you remember the story that the Lord brought to him the animals? He would name them. In Genesis 2.15 says, the Lord took him and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And so he was daily just working in the will of God, doing what God said to do.

I don't know the extent of all that, of what that was. But I do know something, that a serpent came. The devil himself came in the form of a serpent.

The Bible says he was more subtle, really just means sneaky, than any beast in the field. And he convinced him that happiness and fulfillment could be achieved to a greater level, outside of the life and the relationship which God had provided for him. And we look at Adam and say, Adam, how could you be so foolish to fall for that lie? You're living in the presence of God.

And it doesn't matter if he's called you to just walk around with a rake and pull out the odd weed. This is the work of God. This is what you were given to do of God.

And fullness, fulfillment and happiness would be found there. Adam, how could you be so foolish to think that happiness is found anywhere apart from this life and relationship which God has provided for you? You know, it's funny. We ask the question of Adam, but it's interesting.

We take that scripture and turn it around and make it a mirror. And we look into it ourselves and say, where are we pursuing happiness? Have we fallen for the lie that outside of the presence of God in Christ and the purposes of God and the work of God and the will of God that happiness is to be found? Has the enemy common in our generation even found a foothold, perhaps even in the church of Jesus Christ, and convinced many that it's not sufficient just to be in the work of God? It's not sufficient just to be an extended hand of God or get up every day and say, God, thank you for saving me and living your life in me and through me. It's not enough just to say, Lord, what would you have me do today? How would you love through me? How would you flow through me? How would you touch through me? How would we walk together? Where are we going? What are we going to do today in your vineyard? Of course, the vineyard now is the world.

And the work of God is the saving of those that are lost and without hope. It's changed in a sense in its physical perspective, but the spiritual perspective has not changed whatsoever. We are grafted back into God through the second Adam, as the scripture says, Jesus Christ, the perfect man who died to reconcile us to God.

We are brought back to the very place that Adam lost through his transgression. Where happiness is found in Christ and it's the work of Christ, it's a relationship with Christ. It's where he becomes all in all and everything to my heart and to my life.

And I'm not looking outside of him and his work to find fulfillment. At the end of Genesis chapter three, we see Adam now and his wife. If I can take you there, if you if you can look upon it almost as a scene and you see them no longer covered with the glory of God.

The scripture says that when Adam and Eve were joined together in union as a husband and wife, they they were naked and didn't even know they were naked. And I've always believed that because there's a kind of glory of God was their clothing. They were covered in the glory.

And when, of course, when they stepped outside of what God had for them and sinned against the Lord, they lost this kind of glory of God. And they knew they were naked. And I see them now not covered with the glory of God, but rather with the things of this world.

I see a church age now that is not covered with the glory of God, but the things of the world covering so many of God's people, just like Adam and Eve. They're covered with this. Now, in this case, it was just something that covered their flesh, but they're covered with something that this world has produced.

And I think about their feet just for a moment, these feet that used to be quick and running to the work of God and these feet that would hear the voice of God. And I'm assuming just hurriedly go into his presence and and longingly want to know what is it that my creator is saying to me today? And what is it that where do you want me to go? What do you want me to do? How how can your desires be fulfilled this day through my life? And I see now the feet of Adam and Eve leaving this garden of God's presence and going on a barren pathway. And this pathway is a pathway of pursuing happiness apart from God.

How foolish we say. But how many have fallen in their footsteps? How many from that that singular, if you can just see it, that singular time when Adam and Eve now covered in animal skins and these feet that once ran to the will of God are now heading out and they're they're now dirty as it is. They're now covered with skins and their feet are covered with the dirt of this world and they're heading down a barren path.

And they're they're they're looking because they're programmed, as it is by God, for lack of a better word, to find and to be happy. And they head out and they they become the first, as it is, or the parents, if I may. So of multiples of millions now who have traveled throughout history and travel in our generation down every dirty thinking path of this world looking for happiness.

I see husbands leaving their wives and their children and walking down the steps of their home or out the elevator and hallway of their apartment saying, I'm leaving. I'm not happy here. Is their feet dirty with the things of this world? The Scripture says the man that has his quiver full of children is a happy man.

But yet not recognizing the blessing of God and then spiritual ignorance heading away from that very thing that God has placed around them and given them charge up because they're not happy. I see myriads of people in this city walking up and down these streets. Sometime look at their feet.

Watch how they shuffle. Look at how the financial people run, thinking that money is going to make them happy. Look at how others walk throughout the city, seeking consolation where they can find it, looking into places of entertainment.

One of the most interesting things you could ever do on a Saturday night is stand and watch the people leave the theater district here in Times Square. They go in. They're all happy or they think they're going to be.

They come out. They're all looking at the sidewalk. One more time, one more.

We laughed a few laughs and we cried perhaps a few tears if it happens to be kind of an emotional production. But we walk out as unfulfilled as we walked in, disappointed one more time in life. I think of those whose feet have led them into pathways of desperation, that happiness lost, willing now to try any quick fix, any instant relationship.

Anybody they can meet any place thinking that's going to one nightstand is going to bring them some sort of happiness. I think of how many have journeyed on this barren pathway to the side of a bridge, the top of a building, the end of a needle, the bottom of a bottle or the end of a gun, when they didn't have to. They didn't have to go there.

And neither do you. Nobody in this house. You don't have to go there.

You see, in John chapter 13, in verse 7, Jesus said, what I do, you don't understand now. He said to Peter, but you will know it hereafter. You don't know what it is that I'm doing.

Peter, you don't have it within you to do it. You don't understand it and neither can you do it. But there will come a day when you will be converted.

You'll be changed and you will understand what this is all about. Verses 9 and 10, he said, Peter said to him, Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and my head. And Jesus said to him, he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean everywhere.

Now, this is an incredible scripture. And I have been baffled by it for years. I didn't understand it.

What does it mean? I don't need to wash your head. I don't need to wash your hands. I just need to wash your feet.

And you'll be completely clean. What was it that Jesus was saying? What was the illustration? You see, you have to go back to Eden. You have to see the dirty feet of Adam and Eve heading out of the garden.

You have to see the millions of their descendants walking down the dirty pathways as they're walking away from God. And they're searching for happiness and fulfillment apart from God. And Jesus was saying this, and this is how I see it personally.

All I have to do is turn your feet around and you'll be completely clean. All I have to do is get your feet cleansed. And the rest of it will be looked after.

All I have to do is convince you you're going in the wrong direction. You're not going to find anything there. He said to Peter, you don't understand this right now, but you will understand it a little later on.

It's been the heart of God that caused him to come in the form of a man and become a servant. Think of it for a moment. God has the right to just swap the whole lot of us and send us to hell.

And he's just. Nobody could accuse him of being wrong. He's just.

Could have done it from the time that Adam sinned. That's it. It's over.

We'll create a new world, more people. We'll try it again. But you see, there's a love in the heart of God that you and I may never fully comprehend until we finally get to heaven.

That's why we will sing like we've never sung before. If we have such a thing as a crown, it will be cast at his feet. We will join the myriads of people from all ages when we finally realize the depth of God's love for his creation.

Cause the God who created the universe to come in the form of a servant, take a towel and stoop down before a frail humanity and say, turn to me. If you will just turn to me, I will cleanse you. If you will just turn to me, I'll make you whole.

If you will just turn to me. You see, I don't have to wash your mind and hands right now. That will happen.

It's really a feat. If you will just stop walking on these paths that you know are not right. If you will stop pursuing these relationships and entertainments and such like.

Things that you now have to have a knowledge don't satisfy. And if you will just turn to me. Just stop.

And you see, that's what repentance is. That's why there's this word that our generation doesn't seem to fully grasp anymore. Called repent.

Repent means basically change your mind. Turn around. Adam was thrust out of the garden of Eden and a flaming sword was placed there to guard the way of the tree of life.

And he didn't have the recourse of turning back. But through Jesus Christ, you and I have the recourse today. We don't have to walk the devil's pathway any longer.

We don't have to be led by human passions and lusts. We don't have to look in this barren world for happiness when it can't be found. We aren't designed to find happiness and fulfillment in the things of this world.

Everything in this world is simply a temporary measure. God says, yes, the way to life was barred. But when Jesus died, when he cried on the cross and said, it is finished.

The veil was torn. The flaming sword, as it is, was put away. And the way to the tree of life was made open again.

And all you have to do is turn around. It's not even complicated. Just stop.

And turn around and start heading to God. You don't have to understand it all. You don't have to know everything.

You may have trouble in your mind. Your hands might be dirty. But Jesus said, I just have to turn your feet around.

You start heading in my direction. And I will meet you. Matter of fact, in the parable of the prodigal son, he gives an illustration of the heart of God.

He says, I'll not just meet you. I'll run to you. I'll embrace you.

I'll start issuing commands to cover you, to cleanse you, to empower you. Put something new on your feet. You'll be my son.

You'll be my daughter. I'll invite you into my house and I'll strike up the band. And there'll be music and dancing.

I'll invite you into the joy of the Lord. And you'll never be more happier in your entire life. And then he says in verse 13, you call me master and Lord and you say, well, for so I am.

If I then your Lord and master have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet. You see, here's how I see this in some measure. I hear Jesus saying, I send you now as a servant to do for others what I've done for you.

I have compassionately turned you to myself. And I send you now to do the same. And.

Ironically, we're talking about going out, not as a lord. Not as not as the highest profile person in the world or the church, but as a servant, a towel. Not high, but low, following in the footsteps of the master, finding people with filthy feet all through this world.

And bending down in the humility of God and convincing with compassion. People who are seeking to find fulfillment in this world, that fulfillment can only be found. In Jesus Christ.

And washing their feet. Doing whatever I have to do. To turn one soul to three, five, ten to God.

And then he goes on, he says. The servant is not greater than his lord and neither that he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If you know these things.

Happy. Are you if you do them. If you know these things, you're happy.

Now, the world doesn't think much of this. The world doesn't like Christ in his work. Everybody who's left Eden, all the descendants of Adam who are still looking for satisfaction apart from God.

They don't think very much of this work. They will mock and rail. On the work of God.

They'll mock your new life in Christ. Make no mistake about it. Your family will misunderstand you.

Your coworkers. Might even become afraid of you. Especially if they're doing corrupt things.

But you will be happy. It's an amazing thing. That's why Peter says.

Always be ready to give an answer to the people who ask you for the joy that is in you. Because your circumstances might not be very good. They may not change.

You might still have to go home to a difficult situation. Your family might be giving you a hard time about your life in Christ. Your boss might be railing and people might be backstabbing you at every level.

But you have this joy that has nothing to do. And you see, people who are looking for happiness outside of Christ are always dependent on their circumstances. I laugh when the clowns laugh.

And I'm sad when the bills come in and I can't pay them. But there is something in the Christian. The genuine Christian is doing the work of God.

There's this inward happiness that has nothing to do with your circumstance. You see, it's because I'm designed for fellowship with God. I'm designed to have the life of God in me.

I'm designed to have God's life in Christ flow through me. And I cannot be happy. I cannot be eternally happy.

I cannot be lastingly happy until this happens. I'm not talking about just walking around with some kind of a silly grin on my face all day. I've known people like that.

It rarely lasts. I'm talking about this inward assurance. This inward contentment.

This inward knowledge. As the Scripture says, the man who knows God, his heart is fixed on God. He's not shaken by evil tidings.

Evil tidings come and they don't shake him. Because he's not looking to anything in this world to satisfy his heart. If it falls, it falls.

I'm standing on the solid rock called Christ Jesus. And if I have bread, fine. If I don't, fine.

God says He will provide for me. He tells me not a hair of my head is going to perish. He tells me when this is all over, He's going to receive me unto Himself in glory.

And I might not have a great house on this side of eternity. But there is a mansion with my name on the door waiting for me on the other side. His heart is fixed.

He has set his motives and heart on things that are eternal, not things that are temporal and are going to pass away. And God says of this man, How beautiful, how beautiful, how beautiful are the mountains on the feet of them that bring good tidings and good news. And say, Oh God reigns.

How beautiful are your feet. They're clean. They're walking in the ways and the will of God.

They're bringing the compassion of God to a fallen generation. Their hearts are not fixed on things of this world. They're not clothed with the things of this world.

The shadow of this world is not upon them. The Shekinah glory of God is in them and flowing through them. There is a light in their eye.

There is hope in their voice. There is compassion in their touch. There is a solid direction in their footsteps.

They are marching to another drum. They are walking into something that is eternal and cannot be taken away by fire, flood or circumstance. They're not necessarily the CEOs of the biggest companies in America.

But they are sons and daughters of a king, a great king. And they walk in a kingdom that is not naked to the visible eye. It's not desirable to the hardened of heart.

But they walk with a towel around their waist. And one by one, they convince men who are walking in the ways of this world that there is another way to happiness. They bend down as a servant and cleanse their feet in the name of Jesus Christ.

And Jesus says they're happy. They're happy. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Happy. Now I can prove this.

I want to close with this scripture. 1 Peter chapter 4. Go ahead in your Bibles if you will. They're happy.

1 Peter chapter 4, verse 14, 3-14. I'll start there. He said, if you suffer for righteousness sake, happy are you.

That's interesting. I remember the first time I read the scripture where Jesus said, I think it's in Matthew, if you're reproached and reviled, rejoice. Well, I tried that.

It was very hard in the beginning. I found it hard to be happy. Because I didn't understand why I should be.

And here in chapter 4, verse 14, the Lord says through Peter, if you are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you. For the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part he's evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

Now, if you're reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you. Now how many can say, you know, I go to work and my boss, you know, tells me you're going to be fired. You're not part of the team anymore.

You don't think like us. You don't act like us. And you look at that scripture and you say, I'm supposed to be happy here.

Now, I read to you Webster's definition. Now, you have to keep in mind Webster's is the definition of the world of happiness. It started with a definition which is not from the scriptures.

And you see, the Webster's definition, I suppose, is the definition of every life apart from Christ. Happiness is a, wow, you're lucky. Good fortune is coming your way.

You've had a nice day. You look very happy. But there's another definition now once you've come to Christ.

And the word happy in the Greek is makarios. And it means, and this is exactly what it means. I wrote it down.

Happy, not because of circumstances, but because you are indwelt by God and fully satisfied. God says, if you are reproached for my name, it is because a world that is walking away from me sees me in you. And that should be a cause to be happy.

That means I'm in you. If they're not affected by you, if they're not offended by you, then you are covered in animal skins as it is. They don't see me.

But because my glory is on you. You're not looking for trouble. I remember when I got saved, I wasn't looking for trouble.

Trouble just came looking for me. I had somebody asked me recently said, how come when I was a torn down, drunken drug addict, alcoholic, everybody was fine with me. And then I got saved and I got problems with my family.

If you are reproached for the name of Christ. Happy. Happy.

God says that means because I am in you and it is me in you dwelling in you. It is shining through you. And I promise you that I will indwell you and you will be fully satisfied.

It goes on. He says. For the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

Now, the spirit of glory in the Greek is dope. So that means the image and character of God bringing himself to a reputation through you. God says, I finally found a vessel that is willing to identify with Christ.

And I am, in effect, making myself known through you. It's not you they're rejecting. It's me they're rejecting.

But even though they are rejecting me, I will still bow down and wash their feet. Remember, he washed Judas's feet at the Last Supper as well. The spirit of glory, the image, the character of God.

The ability to do what nobody in the world can do because only God can do it through his church. On your part, on their part, he says he is evil spoken of. But on your part, he is glorified.

And the word is doxasia, which is a stretch of doxia. It means all of his goodness through you is revealed. Hallelujah.

This is happiness. As Paul says, it's absurd to the world. It makes no sense to those who walk in the flesh and whose pursuits are apart from God.

But it is where happiness is found. And I have to ask you the question today. Honestly, where are you? Firstly, let's say as a person who is not saved here today.

Where are you headed? And I prayed for you today that you don't go to hell. And I prayed somehow that the words that God had given me to speak would wash your feet and cause you to change your mind. And say that the way I'm going is not good.

I need to turn around. And I need to get back to God. I pray in my heart that you felt the tenderness of Christ.

And they must have been awestruck in that room. And this is the Lord of glory who created them. A man who can raise the dead and send the living to an eternal death.

And he bends and he washes their feet. Turn. He knew they were all going to fail.

He knew they were all going to run out of the garden. He knew Peter was going to go off in the flesh. He knew Peter would even bring down oaths and curses upon himself trying to distance himself from Christ.

Yet he washed his feet. Turn. Turn.

You'll find what you're looking for in me. I think of the myriad of Christians in our generation who have no testimony. I think of the multiplicity of churches on every corner who have no glory.

There's no doxa there. There's a program, but there's no doxa. There's no glory.

There's no radiance of Christ. The sinner doesn't walk in and say, surely God is in this place. They go through their daily work schedule traveling to and fro through the community.

Burdened with the cares and concerns of this world. So little fruit brought to perfection. Covered in animal skins.

God says, turn. Even to his church, turn to me. You're not going to find happiness in entertainment.

You're not going to find it in relationships. All of these things that are good byproducts are just byproducts of a relationship that you will have with me. And I will, through you, convince men and women that they need to turn.

And they need to repent and be saved. You'll be persecuted, but you'll be happy. I know that the Holy Spirit has spoken today on a multiplicity of levels.

We have to be an honest people, folks. New Orleans is coming our way one day. Coming to the whole world.

It's just a glimpse of what the Bible says the whole world is going to spin out of control. Where's your happiness? I've hoped that there'd be Christians in the midst of this who are washing feet. They may not have any more water than the next guy, but at least they have an inward living water.

And the radiance, the love of God is being seen through them. There's no other way to happiness. A lot of preachers are promising happiness through money.

It isn't so. That's all going to be gone. Imagine all the people in New Orleans that were sitting in prosperity churches.

Think about it just for a moment. God wants to make you rich. Do you think they might think these are false prophets now? Thank God for the righteous men and women who were perhaps warning of the coming storm.

Telling people where their stability could be found. My heart for you is that I see you in heaven. And on this side of eternity until then that you can be a testimony and I can be a testimony for Christ by making the right choices.

Trusting God to make these choices a reality in us because he has to do it. The Holy Spirit has spoken to your heart today. I'm going to ask you to stand in a moment.

And for those who'd like to receive Christ, I'd like you to make your way to this altar. And for those who are Christians, whether you're walking with God or you're backslidden or whatever the case is. But you say, God, please help me.

I want to be a happy person. And I know that my happiness can only be found in you. And maybe there's a thing or two that need to be put away.

And I think some people need a foot washing this morning. If that's you, I would invite you to come to this altar. And those in the annex, you can make your way, please, and stand between the screens.

And we'll pray for you there as well today, this morning. Let's stand together, please, if you would. You see, coming home means that you're coming back to your creator.

Coming back to the one who created you. Coming back to the place that you were intended to be from the moment that God allowed you to be born. This is a very solemn moment.

One of the most solemn moments you may ever experience in your life. The day that you accept the cleansing of Jesus Christ. The day that you realize that Jesus didn't die to prove a point.

He died because he passionately loves you and wanted you back. He died so that you may trust in his sacrifice that it was sufficient to pay the price for all of your sins. That means the wrong things that you've done against God.

And cleanse you and allow you to come back into God's presence and begin to experience fellowship with God. And come back into the work of God and find true and lasting happiness. Thank God you're here today.

The most momentous decision you'll ever make in your life today is if you're without God to receive Christ as your Lord and Savior. I'm going to ask you if that's in your heart today. You say, Pastor, I've come to the end of my path and I hear everything that God's speaking to my heart.

Today, I'm coming home. I'm giving my life to Jesus Christ. Would you raise your hand all over the sanctuary? You may not be at this altar up in the balcony in the annex.

Just raise it up and keep it up. Just a declaration. I'm coming home.

I'm coming home to God. What a wonderful day this is. What an incredible day it is for you.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Thank you.

Now, let's let's all pray together with those that are going to be praying this prayer. This is a prayer just to help you to understand how you're coming through to God. But if you mean it in your heart, the Bible says if you can believe in your heart, Jesus is the son of God.

If you believe that he died to pay the price for your sins and was raised from the dead as living proof as it is that your trust in him is not in vain. And if you confess him with your mouth, you will be saved. That's what the scripture says very, very clearly.

There's no arguing with that. This is what you're about to do. I'm going to lead you in a prayer, but it has to come from your heart.

Lord Jesus. I am a sinner. I have sinned against you.

Against your love. Against your truth. I have sought fulfillment.

Apart from you. And broken your heart. But I thank you today.

That you love me so much. That you would die. To have me back.

I hear this love. My heart responds to it. I ask you.

To forgive my sin. Cleanse me. From the wrong.

That I have done. I believe. That you are.

The son of God. I believe. That you died.

To pay the price. For my sin. I believe.

That as I pray this very moment. You are receiving me. You are cleansing me.

From all of my sins. You are setting my feet. And my life.

On a new path. Of knowing you. Of loving you.

Of walking with you. And serving you. I receive you.

Into my life. As my savior. And my Lord.

I believe. At this very moment. That you are receiving me.

And that my sins. Are washed away. And I am being received.

As clean. In the sight of God. I believe.

That when I die. You are going to take me home. To live with you.

In heaven. For all of eternity. This is my heart.

This is my life. From this day forward. I am the servant of God.

And I am saved. Thank you Jesus. Now for those Christians who have come to this altar.

Pray with me this simple prayer. Lord Jesus. Set my feet.

On a right path. Cleanse me. Of the filthiness.

Of this world. And the pursuits of this world. And the lies of this world.

My happiness. Is in Jesus Christ. It's in relationship with God.

And it's in the work. That God desires to do. In me.

And through me. Because of this relationship. Thank you God.

Thank you Father. In Jesus mighty name. Hallelujah.

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