

Small Group Questions

January 13, 2019

Series: Be Happy

Message: "The Challenges of Happiness"

This series kicks off 2019 with a look at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5. Each week we will examine two of the eight beatitudes, as they are often called. Beatitude means a "declaration of blessing." What Jesus shares with us are pursuits we can live out over the course of our lives, day by day. This is not an eight step quick fix to feeling happy but, rather, living in ways that produce a deeper, lasting sense of joy, even when the circumstances of our lives are not what we would ask for. They sound so counter-intuitive but in a world where happiness is a rare commodity, they offer us a new way to accomplish the pursuit of happiness.

The hope of this series is for us to become more of what Jesus describes in these verses. It's easy to become familiar with the words found here but it's much more challenging to live what Jesus shares. Our focus will be on living these truths out in real life. There will not be a check list because these pursuits are limited or one-time actions but more of a lifestyle for the long haul. Any steps taken in the directions Jesus gives us can be cause for celebration in our groups.

As always, thank you for your ongoing commitment to shepherd precious lives for Jesus' sake!

(Questions to get everyone to participate)

1. For what would walk 100 miles? Why?
2. When and where were you the hungriest you've ever been in your entire life?

(Questions based on the primary texts)

Read Matthew 5:5-6 and Matthew 15:21-28.

3. What is the common perception in our culture about being "meek" or "humble?"
4. Is "hunger" and "thirst" for God and the things of God something we can produce or is that a work of God, or something else altogether?
5. Tyre and Sidon is a region with long-standing enemies of Israel. What do you make of Jesus going to a place like that and others that contained people normally written off? What implications does that have for us individually and corporately?
6. How would Jesus' adversaries view Him going to a region like Tyre and Sidon?
7. What do you make of the word play between Jesus and the woman? What do you make of the disciples words in this story?
8. What is a greater need in your life right now: 1) to get more onto God's agenda when it comes people around me; or, 2) to persist in my pursuit of God when it seems He's indifferent or not listening?

