



Icebreaker:

Share your favorite joke with the group (the cheesier the better). If you can't recall one, tell about something funny that happened to you this week.

(Watch Session 1 of What Makes You Happy)

1. Of all of the observations Jesus made in the following passage, which surprises you the most? Why?

Matthew 5: True Happiness

3 "Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them! 4 "Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them! 5 "Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised! 6 "Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; God will satisfy them fully! 7 "Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them! 8 "Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God! 9 "Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children! 10 "Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

2. Which part of Dawn's story in the video resonated with you the most?

3. If you are completely honest with yourself, what would you say you look to as your source of happiness? Here are some examples: career, spouse, kids, entertainment, money, food, success, faith...

4. How would you rate your happiness on a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being completely miserable, 10 being inexpressible joy? Why did you choose that rating?

5. What factors in your life tend to affect your happiness, in either a negative or positive way?

6. Describe a choice that you made in the past that has resulted in unhappiness for you today. Describe a different choice you made in the past that has brought you happiness in your current situation.

7. Put a check by the statement about each beatitude that best describes you.

“Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!”

If I were wealthier, I would be a happier person.

I can be happy with a lot or a little because I’ve learned to depend on God for every thing.

“Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!”

I tend to run or hide from pain and sorrow because I want to be happy.

I am able to face grief and loss head on and experience healing because I know that death is not the end.

“Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised!”

I see humility as weakness. If I want to be happy, I have to make my own happiness a priority.

I embrace my weakness because it allows me to be a part of God’s greater plan in this world.

“Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; God will satisfy them fully!”

I’ve allowed my conscience to become calloused because the guilt and regret of my choices would take away my happiness.

I live a life free of guilt and regret because I try to do the right thing even when it’s difficult and make amends for my past mistakes.

“Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them!”

I don’t think I will truly be happy until the person who has hurt me gets what they deserve.

I have found happiness by forgiving those who have wronged me.

“Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God!”

___ Following Jesus would mean giving up fun things that make me happy. I don't want to miss out.

___ Choosing to do things God's way has brought me more happiness than temporary pleasures that have left me empty in the long run.

“Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children!”

___ If I'm not happy, I don't want anyone else to be either.

___ When conflict arises between myself and someone else, I do whatever I can to make peace. This has brought happiness in my relationships.

“Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!”

___ My past and present choices continue to bring unhappiness into my life.

___ I have suffered and been ridiculed for doing the right thing. Despite that, I am happy because my conscience is clear.

8. Choose one of the beatitudes above that you would like to focus on. Write it below.

9. What is one step that you could take this week to better live out that beatitude? If you are comfortable, share this with the group and ask them to hold you accountable to it next week.

Closing Prayer:

“Thank you God for what you have taught us in group today. Help us to follow your prescription for happiness so that we can be more at peace with you, others, and ourselves. Teach us to find our source of happiness in you. Amen.”

** Download The Jar Community Church App and select the “What Makes You Happy Resources” button to access the What Makes You Happy Daily Devotional as well as other resources. This week’s devotionals are Days 1-5.*



Icebreaker:

Share your best story of when the electricity went out and how you passed the time in darkness until it was restored.

(Watch Session 2 of What Makes You Happy)

1. What part of Doug’s story stood out to you the most?

Romans 5:1-2 says

“Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. 2 Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God’s glory.”

2. According to this passage, what is the one thing that is required for us to have peace with God? Is this easy or difficult for you to accept? Why?

3. Do you feel as if you are at peace with God? Why or why not?

1 John 1:6 says, *“So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth.”*

4. What does “spiritual darkness” look like in your opinion?

5. How would you define the term sin?

6. Why do you think a loving God would, at times, allow us to experience the consequences of our sin rather than rescuing us out of it?

7. In the video, in what ways did God allow Doug to face the consequences of his own sin? How did those consequences move him closer to God?

8. Have you ever had to experience the consequences of your sin? Did those consequences bring you closer to God, or cause you to turn away from him?

1 John 4:20 says, *“If someone says, “I love God,” but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don’t love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see?”*

9. Do you think our relationships with others can affect the peace that we have with God? Why or why not? How have you experienced this personally?

10. Is there anything that is standing in the way of your peace with God?

Here are some examples:

Unresolved conflict

An addiction

An unhealthy relationship

A distraction

A poor attitude

Unforgiveness

Apathy

Greed

What is one step you can take toward peace in that area?

If you are comfortable, share that step with the group and ask them to hold you accountable next week.

Closing Prayer:

“Jesus, thank you for giving your life for us so that we have the opportunity to be at peace with you. Reveal to us the things in our lives that are keeping us from living in that peace. Forgive us and give us the power to change.”

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Icebreaker:

Have you ever made an impulse purchase that you instantly regretted?
What tempted you to buy it?

(Watch Session 3 of What Makes You Happy)

1. Was there any part of Sarah's story you could relate to?
2. Do you think it's wrong to have material wealth? Why or why not?
3. What are some signs that someone might be enslaved to money?
4. In what ways does being in debt feel similar to physical slavery?
5. Do you think there is any amount of greed in your life? What does that look like for you?

In the passage below, Paul, a follower of Jesus who wrote nearly two-thirds of the New Testament of the Bible, described contentment this way.

Philippians 4:11 Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. 12 I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. 13 For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.

6. Do Paul's words of contentment ring true for you? Are you able to be content in any circumstance, or is it based on your current financial situation?

7. Would you say that you are experiencing financial freedom? Why or why not?

8. In what area would you like to get better when it comes to money?

Giving

Saving

Living within your means

9. Have you ever set aside time to pray for God's direction in how you use your finances?

If so, what changes did that lead you to make?

If not, would you be willing to do so?

10. How do you think God might be calling you to use your money differently?

11. What is one step you can take this week to follow God's plan for your money? If you are comfortable, share with the group and ask them to hold you accountable.

Closing Prayer:

"Thank you Jesus for providing for every need that we have. Help us to trust you with our finances as we learn to follow your plan for our money. Teach us to put you first not only with our money, but in every area of our lives. Amen."

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(Note to leaders/hosts: You may find it beneficial to split into groups of men and women for the discussion questions during this session.)

Icebreaker:

What dessert or snack do you find impossible to resist?

(Watch Session 4 of What Makes You Happy)

1. What part of Chuck's story stood out to you the most?
2. How can we tell the difference between us choosing a pleasure and a pleasure choosing us?
3. Do you think that earthly pleasures are always sinful? If not, how can you discern when a pleasure becomes a sin?

John 10:10-11 says, *10 The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life. 11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep.*

4. Have you ever been a “thief” of your own happiness? Have you ever pursued a pleasure that stole your potential, killed a relationship, or destroyed your freedom?

5. In this session, Chris asked the question, “What is your go to quick-fix when you want to feel good, relieve pain, or distract yourself?” What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear that question?

6. Do you think you have become a slave to your “quick fix?” Why or why not?

7. Do you find that your quick-fix fulfills you, or leaves you empty and wanting more?

Romans 6:17-18 says, 17 Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you. 18 Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living.

8. What do you think it means to be a “slave” to righteous living?

9. What is one way that you can pursue lasting happiness instead of temporary pleasure? How can this group help you to do that?

Closing Prayer:

“Thank you God for providing a way for us to have lasting happiness that fulfills us. Remind us to seek after you when we are tempted to seek out pleasures that leave us empty. Give us a desire to seek you more and more every day.”

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Icebreaker:

What is the best gift you've ever given to someone?

(Watch Session 5 of What Makes You Happy)

1. Could you relate to Bryce and Whitney's story? If so, how?
2. What are some things that our culture and media promise will bring us happiness?
3. How do people in our society often try to find happiness?
4. What are some ways you have tried to pursue happiness in your life but found that they left you empty?

5. Is there anything that you are pursuing right now in hopes that it will bring you happiness?

Matthew 16:25 says, *25 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.*

6. What do you think Jesus meant in this passage? Have you found this to be true in your own life?

7. In what ways did Jesus give his life away to others?

8. Have you ever experienced the happiness of giving yourself away? Describe your experience.

9. Is there an area of your life in which God might be calling you to “give yourself away?” Explain.

10. What is one practical step you can take to give yourself away this week? Share with the group and ask them to hold you accountable.

Closing Prayer:

“God, thank you for loving us enough to give yourself away for us. Help us to follow your example and give ourselves away so that we can find true happiness. Point out opportunities every day that we can show your love to the people around us.”

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