

2024 SPRING CONNECT GROUPS
'GET REAL' WEEK 3: REAL PEOPLE AREN'T ALWAYS HAPPY
Week of April 21-27th

Introduction: The big idea: "Real people aren't always happy, but they can experience real joy."

Summary: Everyone wants to be happy, but as real people, we're not always happy. The question is: what is happiness? The world's definition of happiness is often times centered around a different idea than God's happiness, thus happiness becomes an elusive pursuit. God wants us to live beyond the world's elusive feeling of temporary happiness and live in His joy. In this message we looked at a few reasons why we aren't 'happy' and how we can experience God's joy.

- 1. We aren't always happy because we don't think our current blessings are 'enough' – But we can be JOYFUL when we count our blessings.**
- 2. We aren't always happy because we're looking for happiness in the wrong places – But we can be JOYFUL when it starts on the inside.**
- 3. We aren't always happy because we are weighed down by stress and the pressures of life – But we can be JOYFUL when we cast our cares on Jesus**

In this message we looked at principles such as:

- As a loving Heavenly Father, God wants us to be happy, but He wants us to find it in Him.
- There are many differences between the world's happiness, and God's joy.
- Discontentment is a thief of happiness and joy.
- The world sends the message that: 'You'll be happy if you just had _____'
- We often pursue happiness in possessions, positions, people, and praise.
- Joy is more than just an emotion or feeling, it's an overall condition of our heart
- Joy isn't found in achieving, but in receiving the Holy Spirit – Joy is a fruit
- When we 'lay down' our root of unhappiness at Jesus' feet, we can pick up His joy in our lives.

Scriptures to Explore:

- 1. Philippians 4:4-7**
- 2. James 1:2-4**
- 3. John 15:9-11**

Discussion Questions:

1. Share a time in your life when you experienced great happiness. (Maybe a gift you received, a trip you went on, a person you met, an event that took place in your life, etc.)
2. Do you think that in our culture we spend more time pursuing happiness, than actually being happy? Why do you think this is?
3. Describe in your own words the difference between the world's happiness and God's joy? Share a time that you felt that you truly experienced God's joy.
4. According to James 1:2-4, how and why can we be joyful even in facing trials of life?
5. Discuss John 15:9-11 and how Jesus' joy in our lives can make our joy 'complete'.

Personal Application: Meditate on Philippians 4:4-7 and Identify some areas of your life (thoughts, habits, expectations, ect.) that may lead to unhappiness, then write down how God wants you to view these, and how you can experience joy (rejoice) in spite of what you may be facing.

Prayer