

1. Get Acquainted: Icebreaker

What are 3 things you delighted in this week?

Or

What was someone or something you hoped would make you happy but it did not satisfy?

Or

What of all God's gifts have you loved but ignored Him?

2. Worship: The God of Pleasure, The God of Splendor

Psalm 29:1-11 (ESV)

¹ Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

² Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.

³ The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over many waters.

⁴ The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

⁵ The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

⁶ He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.

⁷ The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

⁸ The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

⁹ The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth and strips the forests bare, and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

¹⁰ The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.

¹¹ May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!

3. Kingdom Centered Prayer:

Pray with Us – Brown Peterson

1. Worship and adore the Lord as the giver of all pleasure and joy. Thank him for his creation that brings true pleasure and joy to us and that it should cause us to be thankful to Him.

2. Confess the many ways that you took a created pleasure in this world and treated it as God. You tried to suck out lasting satisfaction from a fine creation. Repent of idolizing the creation rather than the creator.

3. Give thanks to Jesus for the way you enjoyed God's world and people in the proper way. That he displayed how to have a pleasure filled life that always led back to his Father. Be in awe of Jesus that he went through the agony of pain and death so that he could secure an eternal pleasure for his brothers and sisters he would atone for.

4. Ask the Holy Spirit for help to enjoy pleasure better. The gifts in this world are meant to cause us to reflect on the kindness of God and build thankfulness in our heart.

5. Pray for those in your life who are on the endless hunt of trying to find lasting joy apart from knowing the Lord. Pray that they would continue to be let down from the world and that they would turn to having faith in the Lord who gives us life, and life abundantly.

4. Sermon Reflection:

Proclamation of God's Word

Text: Ecclesiastes 2:1-11, 5:18-6:6 (ESV)

Title: Wisdom of Ecclesiastes: The Vanity of Pleasure **Teacher:** Brown Peterson

2:1 I said in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself.” But behold, this also was vanity. 2 I said of laughter, “It is mad,” and of pleasure, “What use is it?” 3 I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine—my heart still guiding me with wisdom—and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life. 4 I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. 5 I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. 6 I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. 7 I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. 8 I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the sons of man. 9 So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. 10 And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. 11 Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun. ... 5:18 Behold, what I have seen to be good and filling is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. 19 Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. 20 For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart. ... 6:1 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy on mankind: 2 a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so that he lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God does not give him power to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity; it is a grievous evil. 3 If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with life's good things, and he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he. 4 For it comes in vanity and goes in darkness, and in darkness its name is covered. 5 Moreover, it has not seen the sun or known anything, yet it finds rest rather than he. 6 Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good—do not all go to the one place?

The Gift of Pleasure:

Pleasure – personal delight in God through his creation and governance resulting in thanksgiving, praise and wonder

What someone does, invents, creates, stories, builds, their hobbies and interests tell us something about who they are. Look around the room and ask someone to tell a story about what they know about someone by:

- Where they live
- The clothes they wear
- What they do for a living
- Their sense of humor
- Beverages they drink
- The art they own
- Music they enjoy

What does it tell us about God that He created or invented pleasure?

- What brings God pleasure?
- What is it that we do that brings God pleasure?
- What of God's creation brings you the greatest pleasure?

The Poison of Pleasure

God gives good gifts and we mess them up by trying to enjoy them w/o Him

2 ways to sin in pleasure – Sins to Confess

- Hedonism –
 - Pleasure as God
 - Pleasure as Demand
- Stoicism –
 - Pleasure to be avoided
 - A fear of Pleasure
- Confess your sins of both. Give Examples.

Pleasure offers a Christ of solutions but never delivers.

- What is the difference between the offer of Jesus of pleasure and the flesh's offer of pleasure?
- Why are we so afraid of pleasure? What does that tell us about our view of Holy Spirit?

The Restoration of True Pleasure – Jesus trains us in pleasure!

- Seek first King Jesus and all the pleasures of the Kingdom will be added to you.
 - Thankfulness – personal gratitude to God for his goodness is the antidote to the poison of pleasure.
 - All is from God.
 - All Pleasure is from God.
 - Any experience of pleasure is from God.
 - So as your pleasure increases your love for and in God increases.
 - God gets the credit in your worship and wonder in Him
- Dissatisfaction – the work of Holy Spirit to bring us to repentance of “wrong pleasuring”
- God has limited what Satan can offer to only be those things that will never satisfy.

5. Mission: Quotes to renew your soul on your mission

Happiness in God is the heartbeat of the mission and missionary! Read the following quotes reflecting on God's goodness and your dependence on Him to supply the happiness you need to do His will.

The life of godliness is our living unto God as God, as being absolutely addicted to Him. – Richard Baxter

A life of Faith is a living upon the unseen, everlasting happiness purchased for us by Christ, and all the necessities thereunto, freely given us by God. – Richard Baxter

George Mueller of Bristol

I saw more clearly than ever, that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not, how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man may be nourished..... I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God and to meditation on it.

Jack Miller - But I think that a great hindrance in discovering and following God's will is our difficulty in believing that His will is good-and good for me. We need to learn to love God's will if we are to be mature believers, but we can hardly love His will if inside ourselves we have not been persuaded that His will is for our good and is itself a good will.

- Which quote encouraged your heart the most? Why?
- Which quote energized you for your mission this week? Why?
- What part of your mission is joyless for you? Ask God to revive your soul with His steadfast love.