Five Lies That Destroy Lives Episode 1

“The Half-Truth of Happiness”

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Jesus said in John 8:32, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

**1.) The LIE: "I must seek and find happiness in life."**

Revelation 4:11 “Thou hast created all things, and for **thy pleasure** they are and were created.”

John 11:35 "Jesus wept."

Isaiah 53:3-4 "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

Hebrews 12:2 "...Fixing our eyes on Jesus...for the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

**A foundational truth of the Gospel is that we are called to live to give,**

**not live to get.**

Luke 3:8 "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance."

Luke 3:10-14 “What should we do then?” the crowd asked. John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.” Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?” “Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them. Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?” He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

**2.) The TRUTH: Happiness does not satisfy**

Ecclesiastes 2:1-3 "I said to myself, 'Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good.' But that also proved to be meaningless. 'Laughter,' I said, 'is madness. And what does pleasure accomplish?' I tried cheering myself with wine, and embracing folly—my mind still guiding me with wisdom. I wanted to see what was good for people to do under the heavens during the few days of their lives."

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 "I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my labor, and this was the reward for all my toil. Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun."

* Happiness is a feeling but JOY is a deep and abiding presence in the life of the Christian.

James 1:2-3 "Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow."

* Happiness is fleeting, but joy is everlasting.
* Happiness is an event but Joy is long-lasting.
* Happiness focuses on the here and now but joy focuses on the eternal.

Hebrews 10:34 "You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail, and when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. You knew there were better things waiting for you that will last forever."

* Happiness is circumstantial but joy is relational.

Acts 2:28 "You will fill me with joy in your presence."

John 15:11 “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”

**3.) The SOLUTION: seek God, not happiness.**

Mathew 6:33 "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

1 Timothy 6:6 "But godliness with contentment is great gain."

Study Questions

* How do you define happiness? How necessary is happiness in life? What does the world say you must have in order to be happy?
* Revelation 4:11 tells us that we were created for God’s pleasure. Do you think most people, even in the church, really believe this? If they reject what God’s Word says, where are people finding their purpose in life from?
* Are we ever justified in choosing to be happy even if what makes us happy violates God's commands?
* Read Hebrews 12:2. What motivated Jesus to endure such pain and shame? Why did He not exercise His power as God and avoid the pain of the cross?
* Identify three main ways that this lie is gaining access to your life and thoughts (television, DVDs, books, etc.) What action can you take this week to shut out the lies and start hearing the truth?
* When we are unhappy, often our first reaction is to try to get out of the situation that is making us unhappy - whether it be a relationship, a job, or a family. Read James 5:7-12 and answer the following questions:
	+ What must we **understand** and grasp about circumstances if we are to endure the "hard times" to later enjoy the "best times"?
	+ What does the **farmer** teach us about the seasons of circumstances?
	+ What do the **prophets** teach us about adversity in circumstances?
	+ What does **Job** teach us about the value of persevering through the hard times?
	+ In what relationship or situation you face today do you most need to develop patience or perseverance?
* Read 1 Timothy 6:6. Why is contentment instead of happiness a gain not a loss? What area in your life do you need to work on gaining contentment? How can you do this?
* What factors are the most influential on people who are making important choices such as career, marital, or financial? What should guide us in these decisions?
* What aspect of this message impacted you the most? Why? What practical application could this truth have in your life right now?