

discussion guide for march 5th

“The Pursuit of Happiness – part 4”

Matthew 5:9-10 (p. 1252-DSB*)

GRIND IT
BREW IT
DRINK IT
SAVOR IT



"Yes, I try to find **common ground** with everyone." 1 Corinthians 9:22b NLT

➤ GRIND IT (11:00 am)

We come to the last two keys to happiness. One is something you undertake, the other something you undergo. Both lead to deep contentment, but both involve confrontation.

- How do you feel about confrontation? Do you avoid it? Do you seek it?
- Why is confrontation often unavoidable? Can you give a specific example from your own experience?
- In his 1980 book, *Caring Enough to Confront* (Regal Press), David Augsburger teaches that people will only risk confrontation when the issue or relationship in question is important enough to overcome their hesitancy. Why should Christians be ready to confront the things that divide us, or to bear confrontation for attacks on the things that define us? In other words, why should we care?

*“DSB” - The “Discovery Study Bibles” on common ground tables.

➤ BREW IT (11:10 am)

The word “blessed” means happy, fortunate, or approved by God. The last 2 keys to happiness are something you undertake, and something you undergo.

1. Undertake the Work of Making Peace
 - [Espresso: Jesus, God’s Son was a peacemaker between God and men. As peacemakers, we will be called sons of God.]
 - Read Mt. 5:9 (p. 1252, DSB*). Why is being a peacemaker an active rather than passive word?
 - Is being a peacemaker always a “happy” experience? Why? Why not?
 - Describe things a peacemaker may expect to experience. Did Jesus experience those things?
 - Read John 13:35 (p. 1418, DSB*). What importance does the Bible place on peace in the church? Why?
 - Read Philippians 4:2-3 (p. 1572, DSB*). What two aspects of being a peacemaker are highlighted?
2. Undergo the Abuse of an Unbelieving World
 - [Espresso: When we are persecuted for living godly lives, we are in the best of company. We should feel happy to represent the faithful of the past and look forward to joining the faithful in Heaven in the future.]
 - Read Mt. 5:10-12 (p. 1252, DSB*). What does the Bible teach can happen to those who follow Christ?
 - What is the difference between living godly and living oddly? How do some believers “stir up” persecution and ridicule? Why?
 - How does persecution in our culture compare to that in other cultures? To that in the first century culture?

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➤ DRINK IT (11:40 am)

Pastor Tom said, “in our series, we’ve looked at four signposts on the road to happiness. . .” Jesus is saying:

“When you recognize the brokenness in and around you and grieve over it, that’s a sign you’re on the road to real happiness.” *Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are those who mourn.*

“When you yield yourself to God and yearn for God’s way of living, that’s a sign you’re going the right way to happiness.” *Blessed are the meek; blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.*

“When you deal with others’ failures with mercy and your own failures with a desire for purity, you’re on your way to happiness.” *Blessed are the merciful; blessed are the pure in heart.*

“When you actively mend the hurts of this world and manage the hostility of this world, it is a comforting reminder that you’re headed for happiness.” *Blessed are the peacemakers; blessed are the persecuted.*

Now, are you ready to pursue happiness Jesus’ way?

Prayer Time: (11:45 am)

- Pray for needs of people outside the group.
- Pray for needs of members in the group.
- Pray for absentees by name. Consider giving someone a call this afternoon.

Go Deeper: Use the “*Savor*” section this week in your personal daily devotionals to reinforce the commonground experience.

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➤ SAVOR IT (all week long)

Last Sunday you looked at the Christians responsibility to make peace and our response to persecution. These verses and questions should help deepen your understanding of these truths. You might also want to meditate regularly on all eight of the beatitudes. Stay on the road to real happiness!

Monday, March 5: Read Romans 14:17-19, (p. 1506-DSB*). What three things are key goals for those who are part of the Kingdom of God? Are these three things reflected in your personal actions?

Tuesday, March 6: Read 2 Corinthians 13:11, (p. 1547-DSB*). How do you actively promote unity and peace in the church? (Read James 3:18)

Wednesday, March 7: Read James 4:1-4, (p. 1631-DSB*). What causes fights and quarrels among God’s people? What can you do about it? What will you do about it?

Thursday, March 8: Read 1 Peter 4:1-5, (p. 1667-DSB*). Why are those who choose to live openly as a believer often exposed to ridicule and rejection? Have you experienced this? What can you trust to happen? How does that encourage you?

Friday, March 9: Read 1 Peters 4:12-14, (p. 1667-DSB*). The attitude of a believer toward underserved criticism and persecution is clearly taught in this passage. Does this reflect your attitude when you are experiencing rejection, misrepresentation, or outright persecution.

*“DSB” refers to the “Discovery Study Bibles” available in common ground.