

Review:

There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.

Proverbs 14:12 (NIV)

The modern relational vision:

My _____ is most _____.

- The _____ of relationships is _____ happiness.
- When I get _____, then I'll be happy.
(fill in)
- "Do what _____ you happy."
- If I'm _____, something must be _____.

The problem of “happily ever after”:

“It is the very pursuit of happiness that thwarts happiness.”

- Dr. Viktor Frankl

1. It tells us _____ is bad.
2. It leaves us _____ relationally.

“The empty self is filled up with consumer goods, calories, experiences, politicians, romantic partners, and empathetic therapists... [The empty self] experiences a significant absence of community, tradition, and shared meaning... a lack of personal conviction and worth, and it embodies the absences as a chronic, undifferentiated, emotional hunger.”

- Philip Cushman

3. It creates a _____.

“If happiness is having an internal feeling of fun or pleasurable satisfaction, and if it is our main goal, where will we place our focus all day long? The focus will be on us, and the result will be a culture of self-absorbed individuals who can’t live for something larger than we are. As parents, we will then view our children as a means to our own happiness. Marriage, work, and even God Himself will exist as a means to making us happy. The entire universe will revolve around our internal pleasure—me!”

- JP Moreland; Klaus Issler [Lost Virtue of Happiness]

The law of happiness:

¹ Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, ² but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on His law, day and night. ³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.

Psalm 1:1-3 (NIV)

Relational intelligence:

Happiness is a _____ of a well lived life not a _____ in life.

“You can’t get a second thing by putting them first; you can get a second thing only by putting first things first.”
- C.S. Lewis

But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

Application:

- Choose to be a _____ not just a _____.

¹ Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, ² make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. ³ Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Philippians 2:1-4 (NIV)

- Choose _____ instead of _____.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. ⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7 (NIV)

- Choose _____ over _____.

¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

Philippians 4:11-12 (NIV)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why should your happiness not be the main focus? What is the outcome of this misdirected focus?
2. Have you ever felt like God was holding out on you? Explain. How does viewing God as your loving Father change your perspective on His law?
3. In light of Psalm 1:1-3, what is the outcome of delighting in God's law? What steps can you take to delight in God's law daily?
4. Of the three application points, which do you need God to help you with the most? Spend some time today in prayer asking God to help you with this.