

God Never Said That

“God Wants You to Be Happy”

2 Corinthians 12:2-10 – April 12, 2026

Our Sermon Series

GOD NEVER SAID THAT		
<i>Examining Common Statements That You Will Not Find in the Bible</i>		
Date	Message Title	Bible Text
April 4/5	God Helps Those Who Help Themselves	Ephesians 2:1-9
April 12	God Wants You to Be Happy	2 Corinthians 12:2-10
April 19	God Won't Give You More Than You Can Handle	1 Corinthians 10:13
April 26	Money is The Root of All Evil	1 Timothy 6:6-19
May 3	To Thine Own Self Be True	Luke 9:23-26
May 10	Heaven Needed Another Angel	Romans 12:15
May 17	Forgive and Forget	John 2:23-25
<i>Sermon notes are available in Mandarin and Spanish at the Welcome Desk</i>		

God Never Said That

- **Hosea 4:6** – *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*
- George Barna: “Increasingly, America is biblically illiterate.”
- The purpose of this sermon series is to help train us to be Biblical thinkers.
- **Acts 17:11** (NIV) – *Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*
- Charles Spurgeon: “Discernment is not (just) knowing the difference between right and wrong, it is knowing the difference between right and almost right.”

Americans Are Obsessed with Happiness

- Psychology Today: “Arguably, the primary goal of the majority of Americans is to be happy. When surveyed, the #1 answer of Americans to the question, ‘What do you want most in life’ was happiness.”
- The most popular class offered in Yale University’s history is a class on happiness which has been taken by over 3.3 million people.
- Washington Post: “The U.S. self-help industry is worth over \$11 billion annually largely promising happiness and self-optimization.”
- Despite all of this focus, the United States ranks low in global happiness rankings. Happiness levels in America are declining. Thus, the paradox: A culture that is obsessed with happiness is often not very happy.
- Sheryl Crow: “If it makes you happy, it can’t be that bad. If it makes you happy, then why the heck are you so sad.”
- Pharrel Williams: “Clap along if you feel like a room without a roof. Clap along if you feel like happiness is the truth. Because I’m happy!”

Does God Want You to Be Happy?

- Is happiness God’s goal for you? According to the Bible, is happiness the purpose of your life?
- Rick Warren: “It’s not about you. The purpose of your life is far greater than your own personal fulfillment, your peace of mind, or even your happiness. It’s far greater than your family, your career, or even your wildest dreams and ambitions. If you want to know why you were placed on this planet, you must begin with God. You were born by His purpose and for His purpose.”
- God doesn’t want you to pursue happiness. He wants you to pursue **Him**.
- What was God working in Paul’s life in 2 Corinthians 12? Was God working for Paul’s happiness here on earth?

What God is Working in Paul’s Life and Yours (2 Corinthians 12)

1. God was showing Paul his **true Home (vv.2-6)**

- God allowed Paul to glimpse into heaven and to see his true Home.
- **Philippians 3:20** – *Our citizenship is in heaven.*
- Rick Warren: “In order to keep us from becoming too attached to earth, God allows us to feel a significant amount of discontent and dissatisfaction in life – longings that will never be fulfilled on this side of eternity. We’re not completely happy here because we’re not supposed to be! Earth is not our final home; we were created for something much better. Realizing that life on earth is just a temporary assignment should radically alter your values. Eternal values, not temporal ones, should become the deciding factors for your decisions. In God’s eyes, the greatest heroes of faith are not those who achieve prosperity, success, and power in this life, but those who treat this life as a temporary assignment and serve faithfully, expecting their promised reward in eternity. It takes faith to live on earth as a foreigner. At death you won’t leave home – you’ll go home.”
- One of the Bible’s words for heaven is “glory.” Glory is both a name for heaven AND a summary of our main purpose in life.
- Westminster Confession: “The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”
- **Isaiah 43:7** – *Everyone who is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made.*
- **Romans 11:36** – *For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! Amen.*
- **1 Corinthians 10:31** – *So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*
- **Psalms 115:1** – *Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to Your name be the glory.*
- Conclude The purpose of my life is not to pursue **my happiness** but rather to pursue **God’s glory**.

- Johann Sebastian Bach's practice: Soli Deo Gloria
- Application #1a – The Bible describes 5 ways to glorify God in our everyday lives. Which of these is God's Spirit prompting me to apply this week?
 - Worship Him** (1 Chronicles 16:29; Psalm 86:9)
 - Fellowship with His family** (Ephesians 1:5; 3:21; Hebrews 2:10)
 - Become more and more like Him** (Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 3:20-21)
 - Serve others** (Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; 1 Peter 4:10-11)
 - Share my faith** (Psalm 96:3; Romans 15:8-9)
- C.S. Lewis: "Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."
- John Piper: "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him."
- The Bible says, "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Philippians 4:4). It does not say, "be happy always"; it says, "be joyful always." Happiness is dependent on your happenings. Joy is something that we can choose regardless of our circumstances. The key to this is the phrase "in the Lord" (Philippians 4:4).

HAPPINESS	JOY
A temporary emotion based on circumstances.	An internal state of grace, peace, and thankfulness.
Derived from the same root word as "happening."	Derived from the same root word as grace (<i>charis</i>).
A fruit of circumstances.	A fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22).
In your circumstances.	In the Lord.

- Application #1b – I choose joy. In an attempt to grow in joy, I will use the outline of the Book of Philippians (a book on joy) to increase my joy by...
 - Becoming more and more a person of prayer (1:3-11);
 - Choosing the perspective: to live is Christ & to die is gain (1:12-30);
 - Serving others and put others before myself (2:1-11);
 - Ceasing from complaining and arguing (2:12-18);
 - Valuing people in my life (2:19-30);
 - Making knowing Christ the #1 priority in my life (3:1-4:1);
 - Resolving conflict in my life (4:2-3);
 - Choosing to be joyful (4:4-9);
 - Choosing to be content in Christ (4:10-23).

2. God was inviting Paul to **full dependence** on Him (vv.7-10)

- If God's goal for Paul was happiness in this life, then He would have taken Paul's "thorn" away. But He didn't. God is working a much bigger plan in Paul's life and in mine and yours.
- Rick Warren: "Character building is a slow process. Whenever we try to avoid or escape the difficulties in life, we short-circuit the process, delay our growth, and actually end up with a worse kind of pain – the worthless type that accompanies denial and avoidance. When you grasp the eternal consequences of your character development, you'll pray fewer 'Comfort me' prayers and more 'Conform me' prayers. If you are facing trouble right now, don't ask, 'Why me?' Instead ask, 'What do you want me to learn?' Then trust God and keep on doing what's right."
- **Less:** HOW can I get out of this? **More:** WHAT can I get out of this?
- Question: Am I willing to suffer if it means that I get to showcase God's grace, strength, and glory?
- John Piper: "God does not delight in your pain and suffering. But God regards humility as more important than comfort or freedom from pain. God has different values and priorities than the world."
- Application #2 – Lord, I give You my weaknesses, and I receive Your all-sufficient grace and Your all-sufficient strength. What are You wanting to accomplish in my life through this. I surrender. I want to work with You for Your purposes in my life and through my life for the sake of Jesus Christ and His glory.
- Song by Laura Story: "Blessings"

What if Your blessings come through raindrops? What if Your healing comes through tears? And what if a thousand sleepless nights are what it takes to know You're near? And what if the trials of this life are Your mercies in disguise? What if my greatest disappointments or the aching of this life is the revealing of a greater thirst this world can't satisfy?

3. God was giving Paul a testimony to **share** with others (v.9)

- God was giving Paul a testimony where Paul could boast about what the Lord has done in and through Paul's weaknesses.
- Of the five things that glorify God (worship, fellowship, discipleship, serving, and evangelism), the latter is the only one that you can only do while on earth. The rest we will do for eternity, but sharing our faith with unbelievers can only be done in this lifetime here on earth.
- Application #3 – A person with whom the Lord wants me to share my faith this week is.... The way I will share is....