

LIFE Meeting

Pursuit of Happiness

March 2, 2016

1. Opening Prayer

Jesse

2. Small Group: What is Happiness

3. Large Group: Wrap up small group

4. Large Group: Witness talk

5. Small Group: Domino Effect

6. Large Group: Wrap Up

7. Closing Prayer

Viveca

- **Next Meeting: April 6th (Life and Death)**
- **Sign up if you want to do something at a meeting or mass**
- **Planning Meeting**

Opening Prayer

Long Way Home—Steven Curtis Chapman

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqFlwbnPy_c

Hold hands and interlock fingers so that all the weaknesses in the group are covered by each other's strengths.

I set out on a great adventure

The day my Father started leading me home

He said there's gonna be some mountains to climb

And some valleys we're gonna go through

But I had no way of knowing

Just how hard this journey could be

Cause the valleys are deeper

And the mountains are steeper than I ever would have dreamed

But I know we're gonna make it

And I know we're gonna get there soon

And I know sometimes it feels like we're going the wrong way

But its just the long way home

I got some rocks in my shoes

Fears I wish I could lose

That make the mountains so hard to climb

And my heart gets so heavy with the weight of the world sometimes

There's a bag of regrets,

My should've beens, and not yets

I keep on dragging around

And I can hardly wait for the day I get to lay them all down

I know that day is coming

I know its gonna be here soon

And I won't turn back even if the whole world says I'm going the wrong way

Cause its just the long way home

When we can't take another step

The Father will pick us up and carry us in His arms

And even on the best days, He says to remember we're not home yet

So don't get too comfortable

Cause really all we are is just pilgrims passing through

Well, I know we're gonna make it
And I know we're gonna get there soon
So I keep on singing and believing
What all of my songs say

Cause our God has made a promise
And I know that everything He says is true
And I know wherever we go
He will never leave us
Cause He's gonna lead us home

Every single step of the long way home
(Keep going, we're gonna make it)
(I know, we're gonna make it)
(We're just taking the long way home)
(Keep going, we're gonna make it)
(I know, we're gonna make it)
(We're just taking the long way home)
(Keep going, we're gonna make it)
(I know, we're gonna make it)
(We're just taking the long way home)
(Keep going, we're gonna make it)
(I know, we're gonna make it)
It's just a long way home

When I was asked to do opening prayer, my first thought was "Why me?" Sure, I am a generally happy person. I try my best, but life is a struggle. Like described in the song, we all face mountains and valleys in our lives. I feel like this topic is about more than finding happiness now. In my life, all happiness I have experienced has passed. I have seen many peaks and many valleys. I am still chasing my dreams, pursuing my own happiness. However, I believe that the true happiness is found only in following God. I don't have any idea what God has planned for my life or the lives around me. Knowing isn't important. True happiness will be found by following God, even if you are following blind. In the words of Mr. Chapman, It's a long way home. As we enter tonight's meeting, I challenge everyone to let go and trust in the plan God has for tonight. As your people let us joyfully proclaim, may the Father and the Son and The Holy Spirit be glorified in all place through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

First Small Group

Hold hands and interlock fingers so that all the weaknesses in the group are covered by each other's strengths.

Psalm 37:1-9

1 Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; **2** for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. **3** Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. **4** Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. **5** Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: **6** He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun. **7** Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. **8** Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil. **9** For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.

Reflection

Today's meeting is about happiness, and happiness can be found with God. With God by our sides, we are able to become happy in all that we do. By trusting in the Lord and knowing that He is and always will be there for us, we are able to be happy. It is hard to trust all of the time, and sometimes we have doubts, but we need to be patient and not get mad when others succeed when we don't succeed. Because, at the end of the day we will win eternal salvation with God by never giving up hope with Him. As your people let us joyfully proclaim, may the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places by the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Play Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llWQeMFncm8>

This video is all about happiness. By definition happiness is a mental or emotional state of well-being defined by positive emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. The video speaks of how happiness is one of the most questioned and pursued things in the world, but yet we find ourselves trying to find happiness through material gains although we are found to be less happy with more stuff. Instead of being based on material goods happiness can only be found within our attitude and perspective. We must willingly make a choice to be happy and then follow that choice with thoughts and actions going towards that goal. But for that to be accomplished we must first know what makes us happy. Once we have discovered what truly makes us happy then we can take steps to achieve happiness and contentment in your life. After that you can then spread your feeling of happiness to others through you words and actions, as the video said one person's happiness can inspire up to one thousand others to be happy, and this causes a chain reaction that can change the world.

1. What were your overall thoughts about the video? Did you like it or dislike it? Why or why not? What did you find most interesting about it?
2. Why do you think the country is 18% more depressed than we were during the Great Depression?
 - What factors play a role in being happy/depressed in today's age?
 - In your opinion, what core values are needed/what needs to be most important in your life to be truly happy?
 - How can someone today still be happy with so much negativity around the world? How can you set yourself apart from the crowd?
3. Do you agree that happiness helps with hard work and success? Give examples
4. Do you believe that happiness is based solely in one's mind and then determines how they see the world? Or do you think happiness is an emotion affected by the events of life? Or both? Explain..
5. What makes YOU (personally) happy? (Talk about how knowing yourself can help you to become truly happy)
How does God play a role in your happiness?
6. Do you think that being positive yourself helps other people become positive? Do you find yourself becoming more positive when you are surrounded by positive people? How is positivity infectious??
7. Do you think it is it actually possible to have a domino effect of happiness around the whole world starting with just one person? What can we do to make positivity more infectious? (ex: smiling)
8. What are some things you could do in your daily life to keep a positive outlook on what's going on in your life? Can having prayer/God be a part of your routine help you find happiness?
9. Do you believe Jesus can be an example of true happiness? How can we use His teachings to make ourselves and others happy?

Play Inside Out Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r04NHUOwZkU>

Although it is important to be happy, no one can be happy all of the time. It's important to keep in mind that other emotions can help you too! Like in the clip, being sad helps Riley realize what's really important and she allows herself to become happy again, instead of numb. There is a difference between the "fake it til you make it" philosophy and masking your emotions and bottling up how you truly feel. In order to feel truly happy with yourself and with your life, you need to allow yourself to use all of your emotions, just like in Inside Out.

10. Why is it important to use all of your emotions instead of just being happy all of the time?
11. What is the difference between faking it until you make it and masking your emotions?
12. Do you believe that masking/concealing your true emotions can have a negative effect on your overall happiness and contentment with life? Why or why not?
13. Do you believe it is possible to be truly happy all the time? Why or why not?
14. How can you find a happy medium between being happy, but not forcing yourself to be happy all of the time?

2nd Small Group:

Questions-

1. What did you take away from Mr. & Mrs. Huck's witness talk?
2. What has your family been blessed with?
3. Through tough times how has your helped you?
4. How does faith play a role in your family?
5. What is something that blessed you today?
6. What is something you feel blessed with everyday?
7. Do these blessings bring you joy?
8. How does your relationship with God bring joy to your life?
9. Have you ever experienced a blessing in disguise?
10. Do you believe that happiness can have a domino effect like stated in the first video?

Domino effect:

Now we are going to do an activity reflecting on the Domino effect of happiness. The first domino fell with God when He created Adam and Eve and gave them everything they needed to be happy. Then the effects of that trickled on until God placed the next key domino in the world, Jesus. Jesus showed us how to be happy through a life of kindness, service, and saying yes to God. Jesus' example has been passed down through the ages and it has helped guide many to true happiness. Now we are going to ask you to carry on that domino effect and participate in an activity where you will write down something that brings you joy on a domino and we will put it in our LIFE blessings box.

Ask if they want to share what they are putting in the blessings box.

Challenge:

Challenge them to make a daily happy jar. (Put something in a jar everyday that made you happy that and read it at the end of the year.)

Closing Prayer
I Lived- One Republic
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KINfQbfZwik>

Hope when you take that jump, you
don't fear the fall
Hope when the water rises, you built a
wall
Hope when the crowd screams out,
they're screaming your name
Hope if everybody runs, you choose to
stay

I swear I lived. Ohhh [2x]

Hope that you fall in love, and it hurts so
bad
The only way you can know is give it all
you have
And I hope that you don't suffer but
take the pain
Hope when the moment comes, you'll
say...

I, I did it all
I, I did it all
I owned every second that this world
could give
I saw so many places, the things that I
did
With every broken bone, I swear I lived

Hope that you spend your days, but
they all add up
And when that sun goes down, hope
you raise your cup
Oh, I wish that I could witness all your joy
and all your pain
But until my moment comes, I'll say...

Oh [4x]

With every broken bone, I swear I lived.
With every broken bone, I swear I...

Oh [4x]

Being happy to me involves not regretting anything and living your life to the fullest. To be happy you must appreciate the little things in life. We can find happiness in the little things by looking at how we react to adversity in our lives. As this song says we own each second of our lives, and we get to decide how we want to live them. We can choose to waste them on focusing on the negatives or we can spend our lives doing what we love and being with those we love because when it comes down to it, love is the root of all happiness.

As your people, let us joyfully proclaim, may the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.