

JESUS 2020

LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF ~~HAPPINESS~~
HOLINESS

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2020

The Declaration of Independence lists the “pursuit of happiness” as one of our “unalienable rights.” Unfortunately, this has been misunderstood by some as a guarantee **of** happiness rather than the right to **pursue** it. Because happiness is a feeling based on circumstances, it can be an elusive and subjective goal. Many people spend their lives pursuing happiness according to the world’s direction only to find themselves frustrated and disappointed. Join us for the final message in **Jesus 2020**, as we learn Jesus’ secret for pursuing and finding true happiness.

Passage: Matthew 5:3-14

Principle: Embrace your _____ and experience God's
_____ (Matthew 5:3-6)

Live _____ for the sake of _____
_____ (Matthew 5:7-12)

Practice: Be an agent for _____ (Matthew 5:13)

Be a source of _____ (Matthew 5:14-16)

Daily Readings:

DAY 1: MATTHEW 5
DAY 2: 1 PETER 2
DAY 3: ROMANS 12
DAY 4: ROMANS 13
DAY 5: LUKE 9
DAY 6: PSALMS 2 AND 46
DAY 7: PHILIPPIANS 2

Suggested Resources:

Books: BEFORE YOU VOTE, BY DAVID PLATT
THE MYTH OF A CHRISTIAN NATION,
BY GREG BOYD

**Other sermons
at ssbc.org:**

LET EARTH RECEIVE HER KING
(2016)
ONE NATION UNDER GOD
(2012)

**Resources on
RightNow Media:**

CULTURE SHOCK, BY CHIP INGRAM
ONE, BY DENNIS ROUSE

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

The purpose of this series was not to try to persuade people to vote for one particular person or political party. Nor was the purpose to be critical of all parties in an attempt to disengage voters. The purpose was to try to get Jesus' followers to place their allegiance to Him and His kingdom above their personal political preference and to live as if His is the only Kingdom that will endure.

HANGOUT [WARMING UP TO THE TOPIC]:

1. Now that the election is over, what do you believe (or hope) will be different in our church, community, nation, and world?
2. What are some practical steps you would like to see our church make to promote healing and unity following this very contentious election?

Today we are considering how Christians should live in relationship to any earthly government regardless of whether or not it reflects our personal political opinions. It is important to remember that Peter (who wrote this passage) did not have the right to vote for the government about which he is writing.

HEAR [LISTENING TO GOD THROUGH SCRIPTURE]:

3. Read 1 Peter 2:1-8.
 - Talk about the list of things Peter says to "put away." How have you seen those things during the course of this election? What are some practical things you can do to put them away?
 - Peter tells Jesus' followers that they must "grow up," and that they are being "built up." What do you think he means?
 - How has this year, including all of its unique challenges, given you opportunities to grow in your faith? How has God used it to build up His church? What risks came with those growth opportunities?
4. Read 1 Peter 2:9-12.
 - What does it mean to live as aliens or exiles in a foreign land?
 - Ambassadors live in a foreign country to serve the interests of their homeland. Do you think most Christians view their role in America this way? Why or why not? What would be different if they did?
 - Why does our behavior among the "gentiles" or unbelievers matter? How do you think your behavior during the campaign affected unbelievers? Were you willing to sacrifice your witness in order to see your preferred candidate win?
5. Read 1 Peter 2:13-17.
 - What is your reaction to Peter's instructions in verses 13-15? What did this look like for Paul living under the Roman Empire? What would it have meant for believers living in Nazi Germany? How does it apply to us today?
 - What responsibilities go along with freedom? How does this relate to the church?
 - What four directives does Paul give in verse 17? Which one is hardest for you and why? What will you do this week to embrace that command?

HUDDLE [MAKING IT PERSONAL AND PRAYING TOGETHER - IN HUDDLES]:

6. What was your reaction to the results from the election? What might those feelings reveal about your faith and commitment to Christ's Kingdom? What would have been different if things had turned out the other way? How will you respond to people who voted differently from you? What will you do to be a peacemaker following this divisive election? Talk about it, invite accountability, and take time to pray.