

“Re-**JOY**-ce”

A sermon by Dan Harrison (12/17/17)

I. Introduction:

- a. “There’s joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart, down in my heart, down in my heart. And I’m so happy, so very happy to have the love Jesus in my heart (way down in my heart). And if the devil doesn’t like it, he can sit on a tack (owch), sit on a tack (owch), sit on a tack (owch).” -*my favorite Sunday School song growing up*

II. The Scriptural Foundation (a premise for joy):

- a. Hebrew word - שִׂמְחָה (simchah) “Let Israel be glad in his Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!” (Psalm 149:2), “Let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.” (Psalm 14:7), “Rejoice in the Lord.” (Psalm 97:12), “Serve the Lord with gladness.” (Psalm 100:2), “Let the nations be glad and sing for joy.” (Psalm 67:4), “Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice.” (Psalm 96:11).
- b. Greek word – $\chi\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}$ (chara) “Rejoice and be glad...” (Matthew 5:2), “Leap for joy...” (Luke 6:23), “Rejoice with me...” (Luke 15:6,9). “Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4)

III. The Human dilemma: Am I truly happy?

- a. 2017 World Happiness Study looked at:
 - Life evaluation*—a reflective assessment on a person’s life or some specific aspect of it.
 - Affect*—a person’s feelings or emotional states, typically measured with reference to a particular point in time.
 - Eudaimonia*—a sense of meaning and purpose in life, or good psychological functioning.”
 - Result:** US “happiness” has declined by .51 percent since 2015 due to social reasons (not economic)

IV. “Don’t worry, be happy.” (Bobby McFerrin)

- a. *A buddhist recipe for joy with 3 truths:* “Searching all directions with one’s awareness, one finds no one dearer than oneself. In the same way, others are dear to themselves. One should not hurt others if one loves oneself.” – *Udana of the Pali*
 1. Love yourself
 2. Others should love themselves
 3. Unhappiness results when this balance is off (we hurt ourselves & others)
- b. *Centering oneself*
 1. *Self-acceptance & Meditation:* Ed & Deb Shapiro in *7 Ways to Find Inner Happiness*, “Forgive yourself. Love yourself. Treasure yourself. These are big steps, but each one liberates the heart and sets you free. You need to forgive yourself for feeling angry, for getting upset, for all things you think you’ve done wrong. They are in the past and who you are now is not who you were then. You can take any guilt or shame by the hand, invite it in for tea, and open yourself to self-forgiveness... Meditate. There is an overwhelming amount of research showing how meditation changes the circuits in the part of the brain associated with contentment and happiness and stimulates the “feel-good” factor. Meditating on love and kindness makes you much, much happier! And the only way to know this is to try it, so don’t hesitate.”
 2. *Prayer* – “The fact that we experience anxiety and annoyance is the certain sign that, in the unconscious, there is an emotional program for happiness that has just been frustrated.” -Thomas Keating, *The Human Condition: Contemplation and Transformation*