

Jesus gives us **4 sources of happiness**... money, food, positivity and being liked.

And basically says happy are those who **don't** have them.

We care so much about what everyone thinks about us. We want to be popular and loved.

But Jesus says...

4. Happy are the Hated

²² **"Blessed** are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!

In the Old Testament, the **true prophets** of God were hated. People liked the prophets who told them what they **wanted to hear**. Who scratched their itching ears. Who prophesied **lies** in order to make the people happy.

But the true prophets were fiercely persecuted.

1 Kings 18:17-18 - [Ahab said to Elijah,] "*Is that you, O troubler of Israel?*"

Elijah was proceeded by **Elisha** who was persecuted even by children. They yelled out...

2 Kings 2:23 - **"Get out of here, baldy!"**

Jeremiah the Prophet was

Jeremiah 20:2 **beaten and put in the stocks**

Jeremiah 20:7, Jeremiah said... **I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me.**

In the popularity contest of life, **Jeremiah** came in last place.

He was a hated man, **but** he was loved, treasured and valued by **God**.

Blessed are you when people hate you

People don't want the truth. They want to feel good.

Isaiah 30:10

"Give us no more visions of what is right!

Tell us pleasant things,

We don't want to hear the truth. Tell us nice things.

There is a lot of **pressure** in this life to say thing things that will make everyone happy. To tell people what they want to hear.

Then, they'll like you. Then, they'll say good things about you. **Everyone loves** the positive, funny guy. But Jesus says...

²⁶ **"Woe** to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

William Hendriksen comments on this passage: When all men speak well of you, there must be something wrong with you. You are not taking a stand for the truth. You are not being a blessing. And you are digging your own grave.

Israel loved the false prophets. The false prophets got invited to all the parties.

They **wouldn't speak out against the sin** of the people. Rather, they'd participate in the sin and make the people feel comfortable...feel normal...feel like they were decent people.

The false prophets of **our day**...

- They won't speak out against homosexuality or abortion.
- They won't tell children to obey their parents.
- They won't tell wives to submit to their husbands.
- They won't speak out against the trans-gender movement. --- **Matthew 19:4** – Jesus said, "In the beginning, he made them male and female." --- Jesus made it very clear; there are only 2 genders, male and female.

But... No one wants to hear that. We just want nice stories. We want to **leave church** feeling good about ourselves.

Brad Paisley sings

He yelled out from the back row
"Look here preacher man,
We all know you're new here
but you need to understand..."

So tell us bout them angels and how they fly around and sing
Don't talk about sin and judgment and hell.

Keep it nice and pretty, preacher, and we just might come back next week.

Tell us bout them angels!

But on **judgment day**, I would **NOT** want to be the guy with the biggest church or the most friends.

I wouldn't want to be the guy that everyone likes.

No. I want to be the man is who honored by God. The one who has a place at God's table. That's the party that I want to get invited to.

Jesus said it this way...

22 "Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! **23** Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

So... **Maybe you don't get all the goodies in this life.**

- Maybe you don't have a lot of **money**.
- Maybe you end up **hungry**... or eat terrible food.
- Maybe you're **SAD**... a lot! (like the Prophet Jeremiah)
- Maybe people **don't like** you.

The **Apostle Paul** was hated by so many people. He was beaten and stoned. He was run out of town on many occasions.

But his life was good. Really good!

His life was better than yours.

He was happier than you.

He gave his all for the **kingdom** of God, and it was totally worth it.

Paul said in **Acts 20:24** in his final words to the **elders** of the Ephesian church

I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course...

Paul spent his life for Jesus Christ.

He spent many long, hard years in poverty. Many years with people hating him.

And, at the end of his life, he has no regrets. **He's happy!** It was totally worth it!

He never had a mid-life crisis and bought a Porsche. He gave his all for the kingdom of God. And he looked back on his life, and he described it in 2 words: **WORTH IT!**

Philippians 3:7-9

⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him...

Why would Paul put himself through all this?

For the surpassing worth of knowing Christ!

Poor, persecuted, despised and rejected. Eating terrible food or not eating at all.

And at the end, he was happy with his life!

Jim Elliot said it this way:

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."