

Stop Chasing Happiness—Start Living with God's Joy and Eternal Hope

In a recent message, Pastor Jack Hibbs delivered a strong biblical reminder that joy and hope are not fleeting feelings tied to circumstances, but enduring gifts from God found only in Jesus Christ.

“Well, how would you like to have a life filled with joy and hope? Who wouldn’t?” Hibbs asked. “That is the pursuit of the world, but without God, without the word of God, without Jesus, those very things will never be yours. But with Him, they are.”

Hibbs drew a clear distinction between happiness and joy, explaining that while happiness can be a good emotion, it is unstable. “Happiness isn’t bad, but it’s fleeting. Joy is God’s consistent ongoing presence,” he said. “You can have joy in the midst of pain.”

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He emphasized that joy is not based on external circumstances or personal roles. “You could be a mom, a mechanic, a student, whatever it is today. And those things will not bring you hope and joy in and of themselves. Only Jesus Christ can do that.”

Drawing from Ezekiel 44, Hibbs illustrated how even Old Testament priests were instructed to avoid serving in a way that caused them to sweat. “Did you know that was in the Bible?” he said. “God says those who represent me are not allowed to sweat. At any moment, according to the scriptures, that when God’s ministers begin to sweat at ministering for God, we’ve gotten into the flesh. We’re doing the wrong

thing.”

This example served to emphasize his message to modern believers: “If we are sweating out our Christianity, we’re doing it wrong. We need to be more dependent upon the Holy Spirit in living out Christianity in our lives.”

Hibbs turned to Romans 12:12, declaring that joy is a biblical mandate. “You and I go through this life right now with joy. It is a commandment,” he said. “Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer.”

Defining “rejoicing,” Hibbs said the word implies being animated and moved by joy. “To be glad. It can be translated to be greeted. To be animated. What about activated by joy? To be moved under the influence of joy.”

He explained that biblical joy is not a denial of suffering, but a supernatural strength in the midst of it. “This world’s going to have hardship, pain, death, and sorrow. In the midst of all of it, the Christian has joy. Even when we’re weeping... it’s because your God is strong.”

Hibbs shared a sobering observation from psychological studies. “The moment somebody loses hope, they die,” he said. “When people lose hope, that’s when they pull the trigger... when they kick the chair out from underneath their feet.”

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He warned against placing hope in other people. “We all get disappointed when we put too much on others to make us happy,”

he said. "Hope is expectancy. Hope is what you have put into a promise."

Hibbs called on believers to hope in God alone. "Hope in God. He can be trusted. When you hope in the Lord and you do not put your hope in people, there's a sense of divine resiliency that you cannot buy, you cannot read in a book, you cannot get anywhere but from Him."

Reflecting on Psalm 43, Hibbs pointed to the psalmist's internal conversation: "Why are you cast down, oh my soul? Why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God."

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Hibbs reminded believers that joy and hope aren't distant ideals—they are daily realities available to anyone who walks with Christ. "Joy, not happiness. Hope—a forever hope. This is the goodness of our God," he said. "It's simple for you and I to have both. In fact, God wants you to have both. He's the inventor of them."

With that assurance, he urged every believer to embrace what God has already promised. "Joy and hope, of course, joy and hope. This is something good and it's from God, and He's waiting for you to ask."

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