

Don't Worry; Be Happy
Big Sandy, Texas
February 7, 2009

Thank you for having Nita and me back with you. We attended 4 days of the Feast here and truly enjoyed the environment and messages. Since then, Dave has spoken with our small group in Fairview, Texas.

For those of you familiar with the Dallas area, Fairview is located just south of McKinney and north of Allen and Plano along Highway 75. The environment for our congregation is quite different. We have 45 people we consider “regulars” even though we only average around 22 due to travel and family plans. We have met in our home now for 13 years and it is quite intimate and comfortable. Our focus is on in-depth Bible Studies, so giving a sermon is rare for me.

As with most congregations, we have a lot of things weighing heavy on our minds these days.

- We have now been officially declared to be in a recession. No one seems to notice that economics is a self-fulfilling prophecy (according to my college professors). Recessions tend to last between 10 and 20 months, so this, too, shall pass.
- We have endured a presidential race that seems to have lasted about 10 years. Approximately 50% of the nation's people are disappointed with the outcome. Some media seem intent on starting right in on the 2012 race.
- All of us have at some time or another studied about the signs of the end times. No matter that it is vital that we know these things. Of its very nature, the topic is not very uplifting.

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These things, and more, have been on my mind a lot since the Feast.

Nita and I spent 2 days in San Antonio during the Feast. One of the sermons was based on a book by Dan Baker. It is titled "What Happy People Know". I have read it and we have copies in our group's library. I highly recommend it. Don't read it for any theological insight, because the writer has some different doctrines that those we believe. But, he has some powerful messages, and some incredible stories, that are well worth reading.

As happens with me frequently, the words of a particular song came back to me and I researched it and its origins. You might remember it. I hope to bring some new meaning to it for you today.

"Don't Worry, Be Happy" is the title and principal lyric of a song by musician Bobby McFerrin. In September of 1988, it became the first a cappella song to reach number one on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. On the UK Singles Chart, the song reached number 2. At the 1989 Grammy Awards, "Don't Worry Be Happy" won the awards for Song of the Year, Record of the Year, and Best Male Pop Vocal Performance. It was performed in a movie named "Cocktails"

I will only read some selected words from the lyrics:

In every life we have some trouble
When you worry you make it double

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Don't worry, be happy.....

I hope you learn it note for note
Like good little children

Don't worry, be happy
Listen to what I say

In your life expect some trouble
But when you worry
You make it double

Don't worry, be happy.....

Don't worry don't do it, be happy
Put a smile on your face
Don't bring everybody down like this
Don't worry, it will soon pass
Whatever it is

Don't worry, be happy

The song's title is taken from a famous quote by Meher Baba. [Meher Baba](#) (1894-1969) was an Indian mystic and spiritual master who turned to the Muslim faith at the age of 19 (1913). He was given his famous name which means "Compassionate Father" and maintained silence from 1925 until his death, communicating with hand gestures and an alphabet board. He often used the expression "Don't worry, be happy". Later, in the 1960s, this well used expression by Baba was printed up on inspiration cards and posters of the era. You may even recognize him if you saw one of his cards ... In an interview by Bruce

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Fessier for *USA Weekend Magazine* in 1988 McFerrin said, "Whenever you see a poster of Meher Baba, it usually says 'Don't worry, be happy,' which is a pretty neat philosophy in four words, I think."

It may come as a surprise to you, that "Don't Worry; Be Happy" is a Biblical principal.

Matthew 6:

- 19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;
- 20 "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.
- 21 "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- 22 "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.
- 23 "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

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- 24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.
- 25 "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?
- 26 "Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?
- 27 "Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?
 - We remember when our son, Brian, was so very much concerned that he would never be tall. He hated being shorter than most boys in his class. Worrying didn't help. And we couldn't help, either.
- 28 "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;
- 29 "and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

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- 30 "Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"
- 31 "Therefore ***do not worry***, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"
- 32 "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things."
- 33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."
- 34 "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

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In his book, *What Happy People Know*, Dan Baker takes on conventional psychiatry in much the way a holistic medical doctor approaches physical health. He is going beyond the traditional approach of trying to uncover a cause for unhappiness. He is trying to determine how to make us happy!

One of his key themes is appreciation, which he calls "the highest, purest form of love"

- a. He calls appreciation "the antidote to fear"

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- b. The brain cannot comprehend fear and appreciation at the same time

“In the struggle for happiness, however, there is only one special quality of love that really matters. That element of love is appreciation.

Appreciation is the highest, purest form of love. It is the type of love that can blossom even when it is not returned. It is the outward-bound, self-renewing form of love that has no dependence upon romantic attachment or family ties. People who truly appreciate feel the same about the object of their appreciation whether it is present or absent. They appreciate it even if it is, by objective standards, not worthy of their appreciation. Appreciation asks for nothing, and gives everything.”

1 John 4:

- 7 ¶ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.
- 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.
- 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

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- 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
- 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
- 12 No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.
-
- 16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.
- 17 ¶ Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.
- 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.
 - Love is the antidote to fear
- 19 We love Him because He first loved us.

Jeremiah 1:

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- 5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

Certainly Jeremiah had not earned that love from God – that he should be appointed a prophet.

2 Timothy 1:

- 6 ¶ Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.
- 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
 - Love is the opposite of fear!
- 8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,
- 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,
- 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

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- 11 to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Dan Baker includes forgiveness as a major component to being happy.

“Forgiveness is the blessing we bestow on not just those who have hurt us, but upon ourselves. Forgiveness knocks down the walls around love that hate can build.

Forgiveness doesn't alter what has happened. The memory remains; the hurt is unchanged. But forgiveness grants us new eyes, through the grace of love, that see the hurt in a different way.

Forgiveness isn't forgetting. It's just leaving behind your own hate and rising to the next level of life. It's not about letting the other guy off the hook – it's about letting yourself off the hook.

...

You don't even need to tell someone you've forgiven her. You can forgive someone who's dead. The important thing is just to get the hate out of your heart.

...

Every day, you go places you fear – in your memories, in your thoughts of the future, and in your real life. Through the grace

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of God, the fears you face are almost always less horrifying than running into a burning building.”

Matthew 14:

- 25 Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.
- 26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.
- 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."
 - Don't Worry; Be Happy!

John 14:

- 1 ¶ "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

Dan Baker adds that we allow our thinking to develop into an endless cycle of negative thoughts with 3 primary errors of perception:

1. Permanence – thinking that a problem will last forever
2. Personalization – thinking that every problem is your fault
3. Pervasiveness – thinking that one problem extends to every other situation

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How can anyone be happy with that type of thinking – which we bring on ourselves?

The Greek dramatist Aeschylus wrote over 2500 years ago:

- “He who learns must suffer,
- Even in our sleep,
- Pain which we cannot forget
- Falls drop by drop upon the heart,
 - Like the Chinese water torture
- Until, in our own despair,
- Against our will,
- Comes wisdom,
- Through the awful grace of God.”

Dan adds “Love most of all. Love is the saving grace”

About Jesus, **Luke** wrote in chapter 2, verse 40 “And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.”

Ephesians 2:

- 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

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2 Corinthians 9:

- 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.
- 9 As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever."
- 10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness,
- 11 while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.
- 12 For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God,
- 13 while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men,
- 14 and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you.
- 15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

Do you thank God when you don't get what you deserve? We don't deserve the gift of eternal life. We can't earn it. It is a free

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gift! We deserve much less, but God's gift is indescribable. Our minds cannot imagine what the Kingdom of God will be like. John tried his best to describe it to us in Revelation, but it will be better than he could describe.

As horrific as the events of Revelation sound, the ending is wonderful.

Phillipians 4:

- 6 Be anxious for **nothing**, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
- 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
- 8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.
- 9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and **the God of peace will be with you.**

Remember – the very word “Gospel” means “Good News”. We should not read the Bible and be sad about the terrible times. The message for Christians really is the Good News that God will protect us and provide for us.

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