



How to Be in a Great Mood!

Matt VanCleave
December 11, 2022

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will practice flexing my smile muscles this Christmas season.
- I will read Luke 1-2 to prepare my heart for Christmas.
- I will use my body, mind, will and emotions to worship God this Christmas.
- I will get on my knees as a reminder to worship God with a humble heart.
- I will put my palms up as a reminder to worship God with a submitted spirit.
- I will stand as a reminder to worship God with eager hope.
- I will read Love Does by Bob Goff for inspiration on loving people.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON RECAP

They sing that it is beginning to look like Christmas, but is it beginning to feel like Christmas? And what exactly are your normal Christmas feelings, your normal Christmas mood?

If we were honest, we would say that our mood changes a lot during Christmas; we are filled with hope and joy but also frustration or annoyance. The beauty of the twinkling Christmas lights and the family fun of dinners bring us warmth and love. But the stresses of the end of the year and the chaos of the season can bring dread and stress, and anxiety. We lament, and we love, we worship, and we worry; all of the moods of Christmas flood our days.

We don't usually talk about your mood around this time of the year, but your mood is actually a really important part of your spiritual life, although we don't often think about them together. We could define mood as a pervasive tendency to feel a certain way, and while we all carry lots of moods, most of us could divide them into good or bad moods.

This week we'll talk about this important but kind of tricky connection with your spiritual life and your mood. And we'll look at four practices that you can engage in between now and Christmas so that your whole person, including your heart, and your mood, can be guided by worship and by God.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Matt starts the sermon by discussing how being in the Christmas season and being in the Christmas spirit isn't the same thing. What do you think he means by this? Do you ever find it difficult to be in the Christmas spirit during the Christmas season?
2. Mood can be defined as the 'pervasive tendency to feel a certain way.' How would you define mood? List the top three moods you would normally find yourself in. Are these good or bad moods? How does your mood shape your day?
3. Matt adds that God cares about your mood, and that ultimately God wants you to be in a good mood. What do you think about that? How does God's care shape the way you view and understand God? How does God's care for your mood shape the way you view your mood?
4. Read out loud Luke 2:13-20. Who is in this story? What moods are they in? Why do you think Luke included their moods in this story? What does your mood look like when you approach God during the Christmas season?
5. Read Luke 2:19. Mary treasured and pondered, shaping her mood. These words reflect the way in which Mary reflected and found held dear the things she experienced. What are you holding as treasure and pondering on this season? What do you hope to treasure and ponder this month?



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

6. The first practice is to set your mood first thing in the morning. How does this practice impact your day to day? How do you think this practice can shape your relationship with God?

7. The second practice is to cultivate gratitude. Why is gratitude at times difficult? How do you think cultivating gratitude will affect your day to day? How can cultivating gratitude impact your walk with God?

8. The third practice is to worship Jesus in your problems. What problem are you facing this week/month that deserves some worship? How can worshipping in the midst of problems change your attitude?

9. The fourth practice is to spread the word. The Magi and the Shepherds spread the word after they encountered Jesus, and the disciples and church community has been spreading the word ever sense. How do you think spreading the word helps your mood? Where or to whom could you spread the word to this week?

10. How will you intertwine the practical steps into your life this week? How can we be formed by engaging with worship and our mood?

