

UPSIDE DOWN CHRISTMAS

“Happy Holidays?”

⁴³ “You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ **But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!** ⁴⁵ In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. **Matthew 5:43-45a (NLT)**

HAPPINESS IS A TERRIBLE GOAL (because it’s tied to circumstances).

⁹ So I became greater than all who had lived in Jerusalem before me, and my wisdom never failed me. ¹⁰ Anything I wanted, I would take. I denied myself no pleasure. I even found great pleasure in hard work, a reward for all my labors. ¹¹ But as I looked at everything I had worked so hard to accomplish, **it was all so meaningless—like chasing the wind. There was nothing really worthwhile anywhere.** **Ecclesiastes 2:9-11 (NLT)**

TRUE JOY TRANSCENDS (because it’s found in Jesus Christ!).

⁹ “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this **so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.** ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. **John 15:9-13 (NIV)**

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. **For the joy set before him** he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **Hebrews 12:1-2 (NIV)**