

THE BLESSED MAN

PSALM 1 • TV112B

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Psalm 1

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

I want you to turn in your Bible to the book of **Psalms** for our message today, **the very first Psalm.**

Do you know how the book of **Psalms** begins? It begins this way in **Psalm 1**: *“Blessed is the man.”* That’s the way that David begins the book of **Psalms**. He begins it with a benediction, even as our Lord began His ministry in the Sermon on the Mount.

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Our Lord began His ministry this way, even as David began the book of **Psalms**. David said, “*Blessed is the man.*” That’s the way he started the book of **Psalms** and he continues that way all the way through.

And when our Lord began His earthly ministry He began with this note; “*Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek; they shall inherit the earth.*”

What does the word “*blessed*” mean? David is saying: “*Blessed is the man.*” Do you know what the word “*blessed*” means here? Well, I will tell you what it means, it means happy, it means happiness or it means fortunate. It means to be well-off.

So David begins the book of **Psalms** with this statement; “*Blessed is the man,*” (happy is the man or you might put it this way, very fortunate is the man or you might put it this way, very well-off is the man) and that’s our subject.

Are you interested in true happiness? Are you interested in being truly well-off? Now, the world in general, even some religious people, have some ideas about what constitutes happiness and they have some ideas about what it means to say that a man is well-off or a man is very fortunate.

What do we mean generally when we say a man is well-off? Well, I know the first thing that comes to your mind when we say that a man is well off, that is he is a prosperous man materially.

Now, that’s what the average person means when they say, “John Smith is well off,” they mean that John Smith has a fine home that is paid for and John Smith has two or three cars, John Smith has a nice bank account, he’s got some savings, maybe some stocks and bonds and John Smith’s well-off. That’s what the average person thinks that well-off means and that’s what constitutes being well-off.

What would you say we mean when we say: “That person is very fortunate?” Well, I’d say that this is the first thing that comes to your mind, that he has good health and all of his children are at home or nearby and they’ve all got pretty good health and all the grandchildren are in pretty good shape.

He’s very fortunate. He’s very fortunate that he has not experienced some great misfortune or some great tragedy or some great sickness or some great accident; he’s a very fortunate man.

And then when we say that someone is very happy, we usually mean that that person is laughing a lot. He’s a person who enjoys comforts, the comforts of life, and freedom from worry. He doesn’t have anything to worry about; he’s always happy, happy-go-lucky. That’s what we think; he’s got fame, friends, fortune, and all of these things.

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But neither our Lord nor David mentions any of these things. When they say, “*Blessed is the man;*” David starts the book of **Psalms** this way: “*Blessed is the man,*” (happy, fortunate, well-off is the man).

And our Lord begins his Sermon on the Mount with these words: “*Blessed is the man*” and neither one of them mention material possession, good health, prosperity in the things in the physical or material world or laughter, glee, fame or a fortune, or any of these things.

Listen to our Lord; or Lord says: “*Blessed, (happy) are the poor in spirit.*” He says: “Happy, blessed are they (not those who are laughing), *but are mourning.*” Then He says: “Happy (not the strong and the able and the self-sufficient), *but the meek.*” And He says, “Happy or fortunate are they (not who are full and well satisfied), but who are *hungering and thirsty.*”

This is strange language isn’t it? And then He goes on and says: “Happy are the merciful and *the pure in heart* and the peacemakers, (not the troublemakers), *but the peace makers.*”

Then David begins this book of **Psalms** with this statement: “Happy, well off, fortunate is the man” and he goes through the whole book of **Psalms** this way. Let me give you just some of them, just lightly touch base throughout the book of **Psalms**:

In **Psalm 2:12**, he says: “*Happy are they who put their trust in the Lord,*” who are not trusting the arm of the flesh or the strength of man but who are trusting in the Lord.

That’s the man that’s happy, not the man that is trusting in his banker and is trusting in his job, and trusting in Social Security and trusting in stocks and bonds, but who’s trusting in the Lord. That’s the man who’s happy.

And in **Psalm 32: 1 and 2**: “*Blessed (happy, fortunate), is he whose transgressions are forgiven. Blessed is the man unto whom God will not charge sin.*” That’s the fortunate man. It’s not the fellow who has no sickness but the man who has no sins because Christ died for him.

“*Blessed (happy) is the man,*” not the man who has no trials but the man who has no transgressions. “*Blessed (happy) is the man,*” not the man who has no ill wind blowing but the man who has no iniquities charged to his account because Christ died for him. That’s the well off, fortunate and happy man.

And then in **Psalm 65**: “*Blessed (Happy, fortunate), is the man whom thou choosest and causeth to approach unto thee.*” It’s not “Happy is the man who has entrance into President Carter’s East Room but happy is the man who has entrance into God’s throne room, into the throne of grace. That’s the happy man.

It’s not the man that calls by their first names some of the notables of the world but the man who can call God, “*our Father.*” That’s the happy man. He may not know anybody on this earth that amounts to a hill of beans but if he knows God through Christ, that’s the happy man!

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Then, **Psalm 84:5**, *“Happy is the man whose strength is in the Lord,”* (not in his influence, in the Lord, not in his bank account, in the Lord, not in his power over other men) *“but happy is the man whose strength is in the Lord.”* You think of that!

And then **Psalm 94:12**: *“Blessed (happy, blessed, well-off) is the man whom the Lord chasteneth.”* Preacher, are you sure you read that right? Yes, I think I did; I have it right here. It says in **Psalm 94:12**: *“Happy is the man whom the Lord chastenest and teachest him out of thy law (His Word).”*

You see my friend, the chastening of the Lord is not to be dreaded, feared, or aborted. God uses trials to strengthen faith, to reveal faith. God uses trials to bring us the fruit of the Spirit, love joy peace, hope, patience, faith and, mercy.

So, a man who feels the hand of God upon him in affliction or in trials or in chastening, ought to be a happy man because God is doing something for him. God is not leaving him alone. Now, God is not leaving him to his will. God’s not leaving him to his own way.

God’s correcting him. He says: *“He correcteth every son whom he loveth.”* If you be without correction, if you be without chastisement, you’re not a son of God. So, that man’s happy who is under the hand of God in afflictions. *“It’s good for me that I’ve been afflicted.”* God teaches me his way.

In **Psalm 112:1**, *“Blessed (happy) is the man that feareth the Lord,”* happy is the man who fears God. Do you fear God? You say, “I don’t fear my god.” I’m not meaning your god, I mean the God of the Bible. Do you fear the God of the Bible?

You know, throughout the Old Testament when it talks about those who knew God and worshipped God, who believed God; do you know how they were described? *“Jacob feared the Lord, Abraham feared the Lord and David feared the Lord.”*

In the book of the New Testament when it talks about the rebels who knew not God; it says: *“There’s no fear of God before their eyes.”* Solomon said, *“The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.”* David said, *“Come and I will teach you how you ought to fear God.”*

I don’t mean a slavish fear, a fear of hell; I mean the fear of son-ship, reverent fear, a fear of awe in the presence of God. Happy is that man who’s learned the fear of the Lord.

Then, in **Psalm 118:26**: *“Blessed (happy) is the man that cometh in the name of the Lord.”* And then, in **Psalm 119:2**: *“Blessed (happy) are they who keep his testimony.”*

You know; we must be completely out of tune with God. This generation and every generation; our definition of happiness is totally opposite of what I have been reading here. The average person’s definition of being fortunate or well-off or happy is directly opposite of everything I’ve read throughout the book of **Psalms**.

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Now isn't that strange? Are we that much out of tune with God? Our Lord Jesus Christ said; He rebuked those of little faith and He said: *"Don't take any anxious thought about what shall I eat, what shall I drink, and what shall I wear? These are the things that the heathen seek after. Your heavenly Father knows you have need of these things, even before you ask him."* Why, He said, *"Look at the sparrow; not a one of them falls to the ground without your Father. Are you not better than sparrows?"*

The Lord said: *"Consider the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was never dressed up like one of those lilies. Are you not better than the grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven?"*

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," (not the kingdoms of this world and what you can gain through the kingdoms of this world and what you can profit by and by, a connection with the kingdoms of this world).

But, you seek God's kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you. Happy is that man who seeks God's kingdom and His righteousness for these other things will be added.

Now, let's go back to **Psalm 1** and let's talk about the blessed man. That's my subject today: **"The Blessed Man."** In **Psalm 1:1** David said: *"blessed (happy) is the man"* and he lists several things and several characteristics of that man.

First of all: **Psalm 1:1**, he says: *"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly"*

Now, my friend; the ungodly have their counsel, their counsel is their wisdom, that's what (c-o-u-n-s-e-l) is, their wisdom, their understanding. *"The wisdom of men is foolishness with God"* and happy is that man who does not walk in the so-called natural wisdom of this flesh but he has found Christ to be his wisdom.

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the understanding of the flesh, but he has found Christ to be his wisdom. *"The wisdom of men is foolishness with God."* The understanding of men is darkness. God says, *"my thoughts are not your thoughts."* *"There's a way that seemeth right unto men but at the end thereof is death (destruction)."*

That man who has turned from his own natural understanding and his own natural wisdom and he's seen it to be utter foolishness in the eyes of God. And he has found Christ to be his wisdom: *"For he of God is made unto us wisdom."* Christ is our wisdom!

And the justice of God and the righteousness of God and the ways of God and the will of God are all understood in their relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our wisdom. He is the truth.

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The Lord said, “*You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.*” Christ said, “*I am the truth.*” No man can know the truth of God or the truth about God except as he knows Christ. Christ is our wisdom and happy is that man who has been able to lay aside his own natural wisdom.

“I thought” or “now this is what I think;” you hear that all the time. Well, what we think is not what God thinks and what we understand to be the way is not God’s way. We’ve got to submit our so-called wisdom to His wisdom and happy is that man who’s been able to do that.

He’s been able to lay aside his natural understanding and his natural wisdom and his natural thoughts and he has found everything God wants him to know, revealed in Christ. The more he knows Christ the more that God reveals to him. As he grows in grace he grows in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly: “*Happy is the man who does not stand in the way of sinners.*”

Sinners not only have their counsel but they have their way. What is their way? Theirs is the way of flesh, it’s the way of materialism, it’s the way of dishonesty, it’s the way of covetousness, and it’s the way of bigotry, malice, hatred, and vengeance. This is the way of the sinner. Happy is that man who walks not in that way and stands not in that way.

Christ said, “*I am the way.*” And when we find that way, Christ to be our way, what do we mean by that? That means that Christ’s character and Christ’s commandments become our will and our desire. We desire to walk in his footsteps.

You see, He said: “*Let the wicked forsake his own way and let him follow the Lord.*” I’ve got to forsake my way. I can’t go my way and God’s way; it’s impossible. And happy is that man who has been willing to turn his back on his way and follow Christ.

Thirdly: “*Blessed (happy) is the man who does not walk in the counsel (or wisdom) of ungodly men,*” but Christ is his wisdom, who does not stand in the way, the way of dishonesty, deceit, covetousness, and craftiness but walks in the way of Christ.

Fourthly: “*Happy is that man who does not sit in the seat of the scornful*”

Now, the scornful has sat down. He’s totally committed to the seat of criticism. He’s totally committed to make a mockery of God and of Christ and of the way of salvation. He’s made up his mind.

He’s sat down; he’s sat down in the seat of the scornful. He’s settled in his opinion. He is not teachable, he is not moveable, he is committed to his prejudice, he’s committed to his opinion, he’s committed to his tradition and he cannot be taught. Blessed is that man who cries, “Lord I’m just a child; teach me. I’m not a smart aleck; I’m not wise or prudent, I’m a child; that’s what I am. I want to be taught.” I realize that we haven’t so much in all the years of our lives touched the hem of his garment, as far as knowing Christ is concerned.

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We've just started. We've just commenced to begin. *"We see through a glass dimly. We know in part, we prophesy in part."* We can't sit down in the seat of the scornful, the skeptic, the agnostic; I won't sit down. Now, I want to walk in the way of the seeker, the learner, the disciple, the follower, happy is that man.

Fifthly: verse 2: *"Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law (Word) of the Lord"*

That's what he is saying here; "He delighteth in the Word or the law of the Lord. Happy is that man, (fortunate, well-off) who loves God's Word."

Now, I don't mean a man who reads it or hears out of a sense of duty or responsibility; I'm talking about that man whose delight is in the Word of God and *"in that Word does he meditate day and night."*

He's like (and somebody gave the illustration) a cow out in the field, and he just keeps eating grass. You see that that cow hardly lifts her head; she just keeps eating grass, and eating grass.

And then she will go off somewhere and stand there and chew and chew the cud, they say. Well, somebody told me that cow filled herself with grass and then she begins to belch it up or something and just stands there and chews it and meditates upon it.

He is saying, blessed is the man who hears God's Word, who studies God's Word and who reads God's Word and goes to hear God's Word preached and then he meditates upon it and he meditates upon it; he studies the Word of God.

Joshua said, listen to Joshua: *"Come hither and hear the word of the Lord your God. Come listen; God's going to speak."* David said; listen to this; *"The Word of God is perfect, it converts the soul, it makes wise the simple. It rejoices the heart, it enlightens the eyes and it's more to be desired than gold. And in keeping the word of God there's great reward."* *"Blessed is that man, (happy is that man), who delights in the Word of God."*

Do you? Well, if you do, you are a happy man. If you found that Book to be precious promises, I don't mean a scrapbook in which to keep the clippings and somebody's hair from the first haircut and a clipping about somebody's death, and your discharge papers from WW1 and pictures of the grandbabies.

Anybody that desecrates the Word of God using it for a Scrapbook ought to be ashamed of themselves. I'm talking about a man who delights in the Word of God who treasures it, loves it, delights in it, and meditates upon it.

Our Lord said: *"Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it."* Paul said: *"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God."* Peter said: *"As newborn babies desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby."*

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Blessed and happy is the man who has found this blessed treasure to be the most valuable of all gifts. Wouldn't you hate to be without God's Word? Some of you wouldn't miss it would you? It's been so long since you've read it.

One great old preacher said that in the average home you can write with your finger in the dust on the Bible the word damnation. And that's right, Christ said: *"My word will judge you."*

And we know so little about the Book. It's because men have no love for it. You have no love for God's Word. If you loved it you would read it. If preachers loved it they would preach it. If people loved it they would go to hear it, the Word of God. Happy is the man who loves the Word of God.

Sixthly: And then, look at **verse 3:** *"Happy is the man who is like a tree planted by the rivers of water."* I see so much here, I could take a whole program on it. But, let me ask two, three, or four questions:

First of all: How did that tree get there by the rivers of living water?

It was planted: *"He shall be like a tree planted,"* it was planted. It didn't grow accidentally, it didn't plant itself, it was planted by the Lord.

Our Lord said in **Matthew 15:13:** *"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."* And this tree, this blessed tree, God planted it. Well, where did he plant it? Well, he planted it by the rivers of water.

He didn't plant it out in a desert and He didn't plant it out in a wasteland. He didn't plant it out in a wilderness where it would die from lack of nourishment and lack of strength and lack of sap; He planted it by the river. That's where the trees are green.

I was out in Texas one time in a meeting and they had had a draught there for about 7 or 8 months and it hadn't rained. And there was a river and down by the river the trees were just as green and everywhere else they were about dead.

Who is this river, this water, the rivers of water? It's Christ and He's called the *"rivers"* because it is a plentiful source; it never runs dry. He's the river of living water. He's the everlasting stream that gives life and nourishment to His people and they are planted in Christ.

They get all their nourishment from Him, all their grace from Him, all their righteousness from Him, all their wisdom from Him, and all their life from Him.

Secondly: All right; notice this: What are its fruits?

It says: *"He shall be like a tree, (this happy man) planted by the rivers of water that brings forth his fruit in his season."* Whose fruit? The Lord's fruits, the one who that planted it, the owner,

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and the husbandman's. They are His fruits; He's the owner and it brings forth fruit in His season but also the tree's fruit.

Each of God's people has their special gifts: *"He gives to everyone several as he will."* And they'll bring forth fruit, every one of them. There are no fruitless believers.

Our Lord came to the tree on which there was nothing but leaves and He cursed it. There's fruit; every Christian has fruit, his fruit in his season, in God's own time, in God's due time, in the time for that fruit, for that tree to bear that fruit. It will bear it when God pleases, in due time, or it may go sometime without evidence of a strong fruit but it will have fruit.

You know, *"the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, kindness and faith."* And you who are without fruit, you'd better do some examination, because God has planted this happy man in Christ and he is going to bring forth His fruit in His season.

Thirdly: Notice this, what's the trees future? *"It shall not wither."* All of God's trees are evergreen, they never wither. No cold wind of trials shall ever destroy them. No hot, dry, famine shall ever kill them. He said: *"My sheep hear my voice, I know them, I give them eternal life and they shall never perish, never."*

So, this tree planted by the rivers, the abundant stream, the everlasting stream, the plentiful source of life, Christ Jesus will bring forth His fruit in His season and his leaf shall not wither. Whatsoever He doeth and everything He doeth He doeth for the glory of God; at least that's His motive, that's His objective to do what He does for the glory of God and it shall not fail. *"His leaf shall not wither; whatsoever he doeth it will prosper."*

Isaiah said this about our Master, he said: *"The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."* I'm not saying that everything I do out of selfish purposes is going to prosper, it's not. And everything I do to accomplish my own will and way is not going to prosper necessarily, but the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in this tree. What God wills to be done by this believer, it will prosper, whatever that is.

Seventh: verse 4; *"The ungodly are not so,"* that is they can never be happy.

They can never be happy because and this is why; *"They are like the chaff which the wind driveth away."* Now, the chaff may spend some time with the wheat, but there is coming a day of separation.

There's coming a day when it will be sifted and the wheat will be preserved and put in the storehouse and the chaff will be borne by the wind out into the wasteland out into the wilderness. They can't be happy, *"they are like chaff which the wind driveth away."*

Eight: verse 5; *"The ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgment."*

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The unrighteous shall not be able to stand, they are going to fall. We are going to stand by God's grace; by Christ's intercession we stand in Him and we are seated in Him. But, the ungodly shall not be able to stand before the force of God's judgment and wrath and condemnation because the Lord knows the way of the righteous.

What is the way of the righteous? It is Christ, but the way of the ungodly, that's his own way: "I'm going to have my way. That's alright preacher." Yes, it is alright my friend, it'll all be alright.

But you are not going to have your way. "*The way of the ungodly shall perish.*" God is going to have His way. He knows the way of the righteous, that's Christ. Your way, it will come to an end. For a while you'll have it but it will come to a close!