

“The God Fearing Man”
Psalm 112
(Preached at Trinity, August 12, 2012)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As I pointed out last week, Psalms 111, 112, and 113 each begin with הַלְלֵהוּ – Hallelujah. And then after skipping Psalm 114, Psalms 115, 116, & 117 each end with hallelujah.
 2. Psalms 111 & 112 serve as companions.
 - A. They are same length with matching stanzas and both are acrostic psalms with each line beginning with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.
 - B. Psalm 111 displays God’s goodness in His mighty works. Psalm 112 speaks of the man who follows this God.
The first is about God. The second is about the man of God.
 3. The theme of **Psalm 112** follows the conclusion of **Psalm 111**:
"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*"
 - A. To know God and walk with Him and properly reverence Him is first above all things.
 - B. The Godly man who walks in the ways of God is wiser than all of the wisdom this world has to offer.
Psalm 119:99-100 KJV - "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation. ¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts."
 - C. Following this statement **Psalm 112** begins with a beatitude:
"Blessed is the man *that* feareth the LORD, *that* delighteth greatly in his commandments."
 4. **Psalm 112** describes the blessings of the person who fears the LORD and obeys His commandments. He is most blessed. Our lives have consequences.
I’ll expound the psalm under three heads:
 - I. The Description of the Blessed Man – **Verse 1**
 - II. The Declaration of the Blessed Man – **Verses 2-9**
 - III. The Despair of the Wicked Man – **Verse 10**
- I. The Description of the Blessed Man – **Verse 1**
 - A. He is above all a man of praise
 1. **Psalm 112** begins with Hallelujah – “Praise Jehovah”
 2. We saw back in **Psalm 108** that the Godly man praises God at all times, even in the midst of affliction.
Psalm 108:1 KJV - "O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory."
 3. **Psalm 111** describes praise as being whole-hearted
Psalm 111:1 KJV - "Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with *my* whole heart"

- B. He is a God fearing man
1. On one hand this speaks of holy reverence. He bows before God in awe and adoration. He recognizes God's splendor and majesty
 2. On the other hand there is a holy fear – the majesty and splendor of God is terrifying.
 - a. It is a terrible thing to have an unholy familiarity with God. It is a terrible thing to fail to fully apprehend the weightiness of God.
 - b. The Bible is filled with those who lost the sense of awe
 - a. King Uzziah took it upon himself to enter the temple of God to offer incense, something only priests were permitted to do. When the priests complained Uzziah became angry and God smote him with leprosy.
 - b. Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, offered up incense of their own making which the Bible refers to as "strange fire." God killed them in a fearful display of His wrath.
Leviticus 10:2 - And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD."
 - c. Eli's sons, Hophni & Phinehas were killed because of their lack of reverence for the priestly office
 - d. Uzza was killed for daring to put his hand to the Ark of God.
 - c. These examples serve to as a great warning to us
Hebrews 10:31 KJV - "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"
 3. I'm not talking about an unholy fear
 - a. An unholy fear is a fear void of repentance and yet filled with the terrors of hell. He is filled with guilt without sorrow
 - b. An unholy fear is filled with a mistrust of God such as the servant in the Parable of the Talents who hid his master's goods because he saw his master as hard and unmerciful.
 - c. An unholy fear is filled with terror in the face of God's Providence, always mistrusting what God will bring upon his life
 4. A holy fear, on the other hand, flows forth from a right understanding of the infinite holiness of God. It protects us from unholy familiarity and carelessness.
- C. He delights in the commandments of God
1. A holy fear results in a holy disposition – a delight in holiness.
 2. There is a difference in obeying God and delighting in obedience
 3. God has written his Law upon the heart of His people.
Jeremiah 31:33 KJV - "But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts"
 4. John describes it:
1 John 5:3 KJV - "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
NAS - "His commandments are not burdensome."

II. The Declaration of the Blessed Man – Verses 2-9

A declaration of God's blessings upon the man who fears Him and delights in His Law
It is a wonderful mixture of temporal and spiritual blessings

A. Generational blessings – Verse 2

1. His offspring will experience the blessings of God – they will be mighty
גִּבּוֹר – strong, valiant
 - a. The righteous seek to lead their families in righteousness.
The wicked focus mainly on this world – this includes the worldly religious.
God wondrously blesses the faithfulness of His people
 - b. The focus of the strength and might here is not so much physical might as spiritual vitality. Those who live upright before God will see this character passed onto their children. They too will be upright
2. This is not a universal axiom but a consistent principle
Sometimes the children of the righteous become rebellious, but this is the exception. The faithfulness of the parents is most often reflected in their children.
3. This is testified in the qualifications of church leaders
1 Timothy 3:4-5 NAU - "*He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity* ⁵ (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?),"

B. Temporal blessings – Verse 3

"Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house"

1. This too is not an absolute axiom – there are many righteous people numbered among the poor. Jesus spoke a parable about a righteous poor man named Lazarus. It surely doesn't support a prosperity Gospel.
2. But the Bible often speaks of material blessings upon the righteous who have found true wisdom in the fear of the Lord.
Proverbs 3:13-16 KJV - "Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding. ¹⁴ For the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. ¹⁵ She *is* more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. ¹⁶ Length of days *is* in her right hand; *and* in her left hand riches and honour."
Proverbs 22:4 KJV - "By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *are* riches, and honour, and life."
3. There are consistent principles that follow the righteous.
They are hard working – the Christian work ethic. Hard work most often results in fruitfulness.
They are frugal and thrifty – Thrift usually results in greater resources
4. Notice the second line of **Verse 3 in Psalm 112** is the same as **Psalm 111**
The former is speaking of the righteousness of God, the latter the God fearing man. The righteous reflect the holy character of God.
He repeats it again in **Verse 9**
 - a. The psalmist is saying that if we fear God and delight in His commands we will grow in righteousness

- b. And this affects every aspect of our life. We will be honest, just, hard working, diligent – this will usually be reflected in our resources.
- C. Spiritual blessings – He is abundant in good works – **Verses 4-5**
1. He shines forth in brightness.
 - a. He receives light from God. Surely, in the context this would include spiritual illumination—true wisdom. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.
 - b. But it also included light that can be reflected in moral purity and uprightness. This is the light we shine before all.
Matthew 5:14-16 NAU - "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."
 2. He is gracious and compassionate. Notice **Verse 4** is also paralleled in both psalms. God is gracious and compassionate and so are those who follow Him.
 3. He is rich in generosity and abundant in wisdom – **Verse 5**
Again, notice the parallels between **Verse 5** of these two psalms
- D. He is mighty in strength and courage – **Verses 6-8**
1. He is steadfast, immovable. It calls to mind **Psalms 57 & 108**
Psalms 108:1 KJV - "O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory."
Verse 7 - "his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD."
Verse 8 - "His heart *is* established, he shall not be afraid"
 2. He trusts God at all times. This confidence comes to the man who fears God and delights in His Law.
 3. By contrast, the Godless man is filled with fear.
- E. Finally, **Verse 9** summarizes the previous verses – the God fearing man is filled with compassion and honor
Psalms 112:9 NAU - "He has given freely to the poor"
Paul quotes this verse as he encourages generosity among the Corinthian Christians
2 Corinthians 9:7-9 KJV - "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work: ⁹ (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever."

III. The Despair of the Wicked Man – Verse 10

- A. After declaring the blessings of the God-fearing man the Psalmist contrasts the wicked man
 - 1. He is grieved at the blessedness of the righteous man
 - 2. He tries to deny the blessings and is filled with hatred towards the righteous.
Psalm 112:10 KJV - "The wicked shall see *it*, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth"
 - 3. This *is* a consistent axiom. The wicked have always despised and envied the righteous. The first murder bears testimony to this reality.
 - 4. Instead of fullness we find the opposite – “melting” The word describes being dissolved, vanishing
- B. The full reality of this verse is reserved for eternity
 - 1. Every idol will vanish out of their grip
 - 2. Every desire will go unfilled
 - 3. Hell is described as a place of “weeping and gnashing of teeth”

Conclusion:

- 1. What blessedness follows the righteous man. He has discovered true wisdom and the source of true blessedness. He has found his hearts contentment.
- 2. The wicked man will discover that all of his life has been a testimony to foolishness.
Close with **Psalm 1**