

# The Blessed Life

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[ 0 : 00 ] Now we're going to read our Bible passage, which is Psalm 1, which is on page 448. This is a passage that Terry will be preaching about in a few moments.

Psalm 1 on page 448. Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

The wicked are not so, but are like the chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. This is the word of the Lord. May he bless it to our hearts and to our minds.

[ 1 : 16 ] Well, if you would turn in your Bibles to Psalm 1. Let's have a moment of prayer. Amen. Make the book live to me, O Lord.

Show me thyself within thy word. Show me myself, and show me my Saviour. And make the book live to me, for Christ's sake.

Amen. I turned on my television on Tuesday night, and there was a program just starting that was called, Make Me Happier.

It's a series that's set in Scotland, and different people write in. They have a host of different problems. Maybe dealing with grief, dealing with depression, living with anger, dealing with anxiety in their lives.

And they're writing in to the show, to ask the show, would you help me deal with these issues, and make me happier. And happiness is something that we all desire, isn't it?

[ 2 : 19 ] Something that we all pursue. There are many thoughts as to what happiness is, and how we can attain it. I was sitting in a friend's kitchen one afternoon, and there was a wee poster on his wall that said, Happiness is being a grandparent.

Now, I'm sure it was absolutely true in their case, but in many cases, it isn't. Or many people say to have success, or money, or fame, or all three, is to have happiness.

But in many cases, the rich, successful, and famous are among the most unhappiest, lonely, and depressed people in the world. In bookstores, you'll find many, many books on the subject, with titles like, Seven Steps to Instant Happiness.

But the truth is this, the only instant thing is you departing with your hard-earned cash. Happiness is a big subject for every human being.

And if it were to be found in being a grandparent, or being rich, famous, and successful, then it would be unattainable for most of us, as we don't fall into these categories. So I thank God that he hasn't remained silent in this issue.

[ 3 : 30 ] And as he cares for every human being, he has made known in his word the way to true happiness. And here, the first word in the whole book of Psalms is this word, blessed, or blessed, which most of the commentators translate as happy, or happiness of.

And speaking to Bob Fyre and David Robury this week, they both tell me that this word in the Hebrew is actually plural. So it should actually be translated as blessednesses, or happinesses. A multiplicity of blessedness, or happiness. But the word doesn't just speak of being happy in the superficial way in which we often use it.

It means to be supremely happy. To be supremely fulfilled. And the word doesn't just refer to a feeling, or an emotion.

But to a state. A position. A position of privilege. A privilege of being under God's favour. So regardless of circumstances, or events in life, the blessed are blessed, because God looks down upon them, and God is pleased.

[ 4 : 45 ] They are blessed to live under the favourable gaze or smile of God. As we sang in our opening hymn, and your smile is resting on your church again. That's what it is to be blessed.

To be supremely happy. To be under God's grace, with His smile resting upon us. Maybe like those that have written into that TV show.

You've turned up this morning, wanting to be made happier. Well, I've got good news for you. The blessed life is what God desires for us all. So let's look at the psalm together under three headings. In verse 1 and 2, the source of the blessed life. The source of the blessed life. Verse 3 and 4, the success of the blessed life.

The success of the blessed life. And thirdly, verse 5 and 6, the security of the blessed life. Well, firstly then, verses 1 and 2, the source of the blessed life.

[ 5 : 46 ] The psalm opens up here in verse 1 by telling us what the blessed man or woman doesn't do. The psalm begins in a negative way. Maybe not the best way to open the psalm, you might think, by being negative.

Last weekend, the youth team were away with 29 of the kids away to Lendrick Muir. And I was responsible for telling the kids what time the meetings were at, what time the dinners would be at, what rooms they were staying in, and so on and so forth.

And also when I arrived, I was also responsible for telling the kids what we expected of them during the weekend. And Agnes Brough, as most of you will know, whose overall responsibility for all the young people's work in the church, said to me, Terry, don't be too negative.

You know, right at the start of the weekend, don't be too negative. We want the kids to enjoy themselves, so don't be too negative. And I knew exactly what she meant. But, you see, in order for us all to enjoy the weekend, when I was given instructions, there had to be necessary negatives. Don't speak when I'm speaking. Don't turn up late for meetings. Don't be running a booklet, mad people after lights out.

[ 7 : 05 ] So you see, right at the start of the weekend, in order that we would all enjoy the weekend, there had to be necessary negatives. And needless to say, the kids were all great.

It was some of the leaders that we had trouble with. So in much the same way, just as our weekend began with necessary negatives, so too does our psalm.

It begins with necessary negatives to show what the source of the blessed life is not. Look at verse 1. It's a way of life that begins by being careless and ends in outright ungodliness.

Verse 1. The blessed man does not walk in the counsel of the wicked. This word walk, it refers to a tenor of life, standards or values that you hold.

If you want to be blessed, you don't take your values from the agony ants of the day. You don't follow the wisdom or the way of the world. The blessed man also does not stand in the way of sinners.

[ 8 : 08 ] This word stand gives a picture of commitment, of being committed to. You know, when you say to somebody, I'll stand by you. I'll stand with you. You're committed. First you listen to the wisdom of the world.

Then you accept it for your own. And nor does the blessed man sit in the seat of scoffers. This word sit gives a picture of teaching, a place of authority.

Remember in the psalmist day in culture, the teacher would sit down to teach. You remember Jesus in Luke chapter 4? He read the scroll of Isaiah. And when he had finished reading, he sat down.

He sat down to teach. Sitting is the place of teaching. So you see, what starts as casually listening to the wisdom of the world, then becomes your own. And then you teach others.

And this teaching isn't just done by words. But by the life that you live. By your example. And I wonder if you noticed the progression in the verse.

[ 9 : 09 ] First the thinking is affected. Then the behaviour. And then there is a belonging. And I'm sure you've all heard Bob say, we don't go to bed one night following the Lord and wake up the next day following Baal.

There's a progression. It's not something that just happens overnight. It's something that happens over time. There's a progression. Our thinking is affected.

Then a behaviour. And then before you know it, you belong to a totally different camp. We might be sitting here this morning thinking, this can't happen to me. But I'm sure we all know people this has happened to.

It's even happened to high profile people. People who were great promoters of the gospel who are now today opponents of the gospel. And you see what it's saying? We need to guard our minds.

The source of the blessed life is not living by the wisdom of the world, but, verse 2, by the wisdom of the word. But his delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night.

[10:17] The law of the Lord is not just the Ten Commandments. It's not just the do's and don'ts of scripture, but it's the whole scriptures. And there is two things that the blessed man or woman does with the law of the Lord.

First, they delight in the law of the Lord. They delight in the law of the Lord as it is a means to God himself. Their delight is in the law of the Lord and the word of the Lord because their delight is in the Lord.

They know that when they study the word they encounter God and that's why it is their delight. They don't read like academics who just read and study just for the sake of it. No. They come to the word and they delight in it.

They have a passion for it because they have a delight and a passion for the Lord himself. That's not what the wicked are like. The wicked love the wisdom of this world.

They find no delight in the word of the Lord. They have no interest in it and they see no relevance in it for their lives. But the righteous those who are under the favour of God the blessed they recognise that in the word they meet God himself.

[11:28] Just think for a moment going back to a time before you were saved if you can do that.

You would never imagine yourself coming to church twice on a Sunday to listen to two sermons especially if one of the sermons was given by me.

Or I bet you could never imagine yourself attending house groups to study the Bible. You wouldn't believe that you would read the Bible daily. And if anyone suggested that you would one day do those things you would think they were off their heads.

But then something happened to you. The truth of the Lord Jesus Christ took hold of you and took hold of your life and you were saved. You began to have a hunger and a thirst for the word of God. You began to delight in the word of God because you now had a delight in the Lord himself. The light in the Lord the law of the Lord is an evidence and a proof that I love him.

The source of the blessed life is the light in the law of the Lord but not just delighting in the law of the Lord but also meditating upon it day and night. The blessed man or woman doesn't just read the word shut their Bible and then forget about it.

[12:39] They meditate on it day and night. So what does it mean to meditate? Well, it doesn't mean to empty our minds as some of the eastern religions have us to believe.

To think of nothing. How do you do that? I don't know how you do that. You've got to think of something, haven't you? To think of nothing. The word here for meditate means to fill. To fill our minds.

It's actually a word that's used to describe a cow chewing the cud. And apparently I'm told that cows only spend a very short time biting the grass and they spend the rest of the day chewing over it. Ruminating on it and taking all the goodness from it. So you see here the picture's obvious. The blessed bite the word of God and they spend the rest of the day chewing it over using the wisdom of its counsel and asking how does God's word apply in this area of my life and how can I bring God's word to bear in this situation?

So friends when you do your reading in the morning take a thought or a verse and ask God to continually bring it back to your mind throughout the course of the day so that it gets into your system.

[13:55] Delighting and meditating in the law of the Lord are the source of the blessed life. And secondly the success of the blessed life verses 3 and 4 I'm sure false teachers have had a right field day with verse 3 and on first reading and on the surface it may appear that this verse lends real weight to the false prosperity gospel that the Christian will have constant wealth, health and prosperity.

Well if that's the case what about the life of Job who was a righteous man who lost everything all his wealth lost his family lost his health and was left scratching sores on his body with a clay pot.

And if that's what it means also then why do our friends in Pakistan that we've heard about in recent weeks why do they have their villages attacked and their homes destroyed and burnt down because of their love and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ?

No, the prosperity of this verse is not material or financial but spiritual. It's about spiritual fruit bearing. It's about becoming Christ-like. What God's Word is promising here is that if we are rooted in God's Word and rooted in God's love through Jesus Christ living in obedience and walking with Him we will be fruit bearing disciples.

We will display the evidences and graces in our lives that mark us out as God's own children and that is the most prosperous the most successful thing that you could ever be.

[ 15 : 34 ] It makes Bill Gates and Warren Buffett's of this world look like paupers. Prosperity is measured in spiritual terms but look at verse 3 look at the picture it gives.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in season and its leaf does not wither. The name Glasgow means dear green place and Glasgow has more parks than any other European city.

You wouldn't have to go far to find a tree in Glasgow but the psalmist didn't live in Glasgow. The psalmist lived in Israel where the land was hilly dry rocky and very warm and you see what the picture is saying.

If we are walking with the Lord we can be in the most hostile of circumstances the most hostile of environments and we can still flourish. But our source depends not on where the leaves are but where the roots are.

The tree is successful because it is rooted by streams of water and you see the illustration it's given. The blessed man or woman is successful is prosperous because they are rooted in the word of God.

[ 16 : 49 ] There is no shortcut to this. The source and the success of the blessed life go together. But the wicked are not so but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

I'm sure we all look to the wicked and we think like the writer of Psalm 73 that they are successful that they are prosperous and in vain we have kept our hearts clean and washed our hands in innocence.

But Psalm 1 is just as clear as Psalm 73. The wicked are not so. They are not successful. They are not rooted in God's word. They are rooted in the wisdom of the world and they are like chaff dust that the wind blows away.

The source of the blessed life the success of the blessed life and finally the security of the blessed life. Verse 5 and 6 It's been very clear that all throughout this psalm we have had two ways to live compared and contrasted and as we come to verse 5 and 6 it is also clear that these two ways to live will come to two final destinations that will be very different.

Verse 5 speaks of the great separation that will take place in the day of judgment. When the wicked will not stand when sinners will be kept apart from the congregation of the righteous and the wicked will perish.

[ 18 : 24 ] These are very sobering words aren't they? And words of great importance to every human being as we will fall into one or the other category. So it gives us a question who then are the wicked and who are the righteous?

righteous. Well I suppose as a world we would say that maybe paedophiles, murderers and dictators like maybe Robert Mugabe were wicked. And maybe people like Mother Teresa and sweet old ladies were the righteous.

But this psalm is clear isn't it? That those who reject God's word are the wicked. Those that declare they have no interest and no use of God's word.

And the psalm is also very clear that those that live like verse 1 rejecting the wisdom of God's word for the wisdom of the world will, verse 6, perish.

And this will have eternal significance lost forever in unceasing torment under God's judgment.

[ 19 : 35 ] judgment. And in contrast, the righteous. The righteous are those that have heard God's word and believed it and received his word.

Those that have trusted and loved the Lord Jesus Christ. You might be sitting thinking, hey Terry, where did you pull Jesus from there? One minute you were talking about God's word and then you've just welded Jesus on.

I haven't welded anything on. God's word is the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember what John wrote in the first 14 verses of his gospel? John begins, In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of man.

Then verse 14, The word became flesh, and dwelt among us. You see, God's word is God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 20 : 44 ] The Lord Jesus Christ said so himself in John chapter 5 verses 39 and 40, while addressing the religious teachers. And this is the charge he brought to them.

You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life. life, and it is they that bear witness to me, yet you refuse to come to me, that you may have life.

You see, the scriptures, the Lord Jesus Christ is the central character, and the Lord Jesus Christ's works are the central theme, his works of creation, his works of redemption, of salvation, and his works of coming judgment.

judgment. So you see, to delight and meditate on the law of the Lord is to delight and meditate on his Son. Now friends, you might be sitting here this morning not feeling very righteous, but the fact is this, if you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, then you are.

You may be sitting here this morning not feeling very secure. You may be feeling like the chaff that just at any minute the wind will blow away. But friend, you can't be separated.

[ 22 : 02 ] No power of hell, no scheme of man can ever pluck you from his hand. And look at verse 6, for the Lord knows, or the Lord watches over the way of the righteous.

The Lord protects us, the Lord guards us on either side. We will make it, for the Lord is protecting us. He is involved, so we are secure. Well, in closing, the Lord desires the blessed life for us all. It's not a life of wealth, health and prosperity. It's not a life of protection from hurts or pain, or a life of ease and comfort. But it is a life of his presence, his grace, his favour with us every step of the way. and he promises that beyond this life is an eternity of bliss, an eternity of joy. Friends, the psalmist has set before us this morning, life and death.

Which way will you choose? A closing hymn this morning speaks of what it is to be blessed.

[ 23 : 21 ] It was written by a man called Horatius G. Spafford. Horatius had lost his son and his wife had took a journey to England with their four remaining daughters.

And on that journey to England, the ship was wrecked and went down. And Horatius received a telegram from his wife, saved alone.

His four daughters had perished. So he had to make the journey to England to get his wife and his daughters and bring them home. And when he was on the boat and he was round about the spot where the ship had went down, his four daughters had died, he penned the song that we're going to sing.

Number 804, When peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll, whatever my path you have taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul.

Friends, that's what it is to be blessed. Is it well with your soul this morning? The Lord Jesus Christ wants to make it well. Number 804.

[ 24 : 40 ] Weihn■■ part 2.

At least my Where sorrows and sinens flow.

For heaven I come, You have brought me to stay. It is well, it is well, It is my soul.

It is well, it is well, It is my soul. It is my soul.

It is well, it is well, It is my soul. For heaven I come, For heaven I come, It is my soul.

[ 26 : 16 ] It is my soul. And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come,

And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, And I come, In His hand, in His hand, with my soul.

For He is His right, in His right now to live.

For He is His right, in His right now to live. For He is His right, in His right now to live.

For He is His right, in His right now to live. For He is His right, in His right now to live.

[ 28 : 58 ] For He is His right, in His right now to live. For He is His right, in His right now to live.

For He is His right, in His right now to live. For He is His right, in His right now to live.  
For He is His right, in His right now to live. And the Lord shall be there. Bless the Lord, bless the  
Lord, Lord and Lord.

He is His right, in His right now to live.

He is His right, in His right now to live.

[ 30 : 24 ] Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the  
fellowship of the Holy Spirit the Comforter, rest in us all, and those whom we love, now and  
forevermore.

Amen.