

Happiness in Him – Small Group Notes
Tyler Smith – 07/03/2022

We all want to be happy. Whether we admit it or not, it is something that we all end up chasing. From college, to job, to spouse, to house, to kids, to family vacations, to grandkids, to retirement, etc., most of us end up on this merry-go-round where we are pursuing ultimate happiness in things and relationships.

None of these things are evil in and of themselves. They can all be great gifts from the Lord, but they will leave you wanting when it comes to ultimate fulfillment and joy.

With that, as Christians, we have great news... WE HAVE FOUND THE TRUE MEANING TO HAPPINESS.

Lately, Psalms 1:1-3 has been rolling around in my head. Have you ever had a portion of scripture be illuminated to you where you just can't shake it? It's almost like it's the only scripture in the Bible. The Lord has been doing that very thing with me here in Psalms 1:1-3. Let's read it!

(ESV) Psalms 1:1-3

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;
² but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
 and on his law he meditates day and night.
³ 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.

Let's focus on this word "Blessed" in verse 1. This word is used a lot in today's day and age. "I am blessed", "#BLESS", someone sneezes and we say, "God bless you". How about this one, "oh bless your heart". This word has sort of lost its value in our lingo today.

This word "Blessed" is used 26 times in the Psalms alone. The actual meaning of the word "Blessed" in the Hebrew here means to **TO BE HAPPY!** The word "Happy" even is misused today though. There is such a wide range of emotion that is conveyed with this word. On one side of the equation, we can say something like, "I am happy that the Browns won" and on another we

say something as deep as, “I am so happy that the doctors were able to do lifesaving heart surgery on my Grandpa” for example.

To understand the word blessed more fully, we need to look at the usage of the word in other areas of the Word of God. Since the word is used 26 plus times in the Psalms, let’s look at some examples of how the word blessed (happy) is used in this book. Here are some examples:

Psalms 32:1-2 – **Blessed** is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. **Blessed** is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Psalms 34:8 – Oh TASTE and SEE that the lord is good. **BLESSED** is the man who takes refuge in him.

Psalms 65:4 – **Blessed** is the one you chose and bring near, to dwell in your courts! We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple!

We see that BLESSEDNESS/HAPPINESS IS FOUND IN AN UNDERSTANDING AND THANKFULLNESS THAT WE HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, SAVED, AND OFFERED INTIMACY WITH GOD!

POINT 1 – **The pursuit of happiness the world’s way is a progressive path that ends at death.**

Let’s read verse 1 of Psalms 1 again.

(ESV) Psalms 1:1-3

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;

The writer here starts with what NOT to do if you are looking for true happiness. There are three main areas that he calls out. May I submit to you that there seems to be a progression of sin here.

First - **Walking in the counsel of the wicked**

Someone is walking along, and they start surrounding themselves with wicked people or people who are giving them bad counsel. The advice may be something like this:

- “You don’t need to forgive them... they deserve nothing from you. You’ll be happy if you just hold on to this pain.”
- “It’s all about making more money, it’s not that big of a deal if you cut some corners.”
- “Your wife will never know man. You’re on business away from home, who cares”.
- “Date them! It doesn’t matter if they don’t know the Lord. They will come around...”

Second – **Standing in the way of sinners**

Now, someone starts to stop their walking and they stand in sin. At this point, many of us start to dabble in sin. Many times, there is some superficial joy found here. However, you here the Holy Spirit telling you to stop! Giving you warnings and pleading with you to not go down this path. You have headed down the way of sinners.

Third – **Sitting in the seat of the scoffer**

At this point you are sitting at the table of sinners. Sometimes, the worst part of this phase is that we don't feel convicted anymore. In fact, this word scoffer here is referring to someone who boasts about their sin. This is a mocker.

You may find yourself in one of these 3 areas looking for happiness. The Lord wants to remind you what true happiness looks like.

POINT 2 – **DON'T WAR AGAINST SIN WITH JUST "DOING", WAGE WAR AGAINST SIN WITH DELIGHTING**

Look at what the next verse of our main text says.

(ESV) Psalms 1:2 – but his delight is in the law of the Lord and on His law he meditates day and night.

It doesn't say blessed (happy) 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 instead walks in the counsel of righteousness and stands in the way of good works and sits in the seat of grace.*

No, instead, the writer talks about where our delight is.

The writer shifts from activity of the body to activity of the heart! The writer doesn't give us a 10-step action plan to find true happiness. Instead, we are told that happiness is found in our delight in the Word of God.

When Psalms 1:2 says that we are to delight in the **LAW** of the Lord this doesn't just mean rules and regulations. It is referring to the Word of God in its entirety.

It's not just delight in regulations that damn you, it's the joyful news that you are forgiven in Christ!

This delight leads us to a life full of meditation on His word. This word meditate here means to not only dwell on something but to say it out loud. There is so much power found when we say

the Word of God out loud. Sometimes, I find myself just saying these types of things out loud throughout my day (all portions of scripture):

- I will have peace that passes all understanding
- I am fearfully and wonderfully made
- I have been given a sound mind
- Love is patient and kind, it is not self-seeking, it keeps no record of wrongs...
- Etc.

This is where true happiness is found. When you are emersed in the Word of God!

POINT 3 – Happiness found in the Word of God will change every aspect of your life

Let's read verse three of our main text in Psalms 1, "He is like a tree planted by streams of what that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers."

As I was reading this, I got a sense in my spirit that this person, with roots down so deep in the Word of the Lord, trusts the Lord so much. I couldn't shake it and then the Lord revealed this scripture to me, which sounds very familiar to our main text:

Jeremiah 17:7-8

"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD,
whose trust is the LORD.
He is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,
for its leaves remain green,
and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit."

When you find your delight in the word of the Lord. Your trust greatly increases, and your fear disappears. Just look what the Word of God says about trusting Him and saying no to fear and anxiety:

- *"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."* Isaiah 41:10
- *"...For he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?'"* Hebrews 13:5b-6
- *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."* Psalm 23:4

- *“Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.” Deuteronomy 31:6*
- *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” John 14:27*
- *“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Psalm 27:1*
- *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.” Psalm 46:1-3*

Furthermore, your leaf does not wither.

Psalms 1:3, “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.”

Some of us say that we are feeling burnout in our ministry. When you are delighting in the Law of the Lord, your leaves stay green. Many times, we feel tired and worn up from ministry because our delight is selfish and not in Jesus, and in His Word.

It says that whatever we do will prosper. Now, this word prosper certainly gets abused in the church world today. God certainly wants us to prosper in all that we do. And, we will prosper when our delight is in His Word. His Word is full of promises and all of them are yes and amen. At the same time, **our prospering is always in Christ!**

There are people in the world suffering for the sake of the Gospel. They are being tortured as we speak. Are they prospering? We see this type of suffering for the sake of God in Psalms 44:22-24. Let’s read it,

²² Yet for your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.

²³ Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep?
Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever.

²⁴ Why do you hide your face

Are the people in this set of scriptures happy? Are they prospering? Let's also look at a similar verse in Romans where this portion of the Old Testament is quoted.

Romans 8:35-37

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

We see that our conquering, our prospering, is not always in our present circumstance, but in Christ and intimacy with Him. His word, the Gospel, is our delight. It is our ultimate reward.

Is your happiness found in Him? Are you delighting in His Word?