

God's Perfect Word

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[0 : 00] Let me just pray for us before we begin. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you that your word is alive and is true today. Please bless us with your word, we pray. In Christ's name, amen.

So I wonder what comes to mind when you think of a blessed person. Well, I decided to do some research to find out what people thought. So I went to the most reliable and honest source I could find.

I went to Twitter and searched hashtag blessed. So this is some of the things I found. It will be up on the screen. A young lad named Scott tweeted, Honestly, I couldn't ask for a better group of friends and family.

I love my squad, if you know what that means. Hashtag blessed. So for this young man, being blessed was about his family and friends. Another tweeted, What a crazy day. Can't wait to start a new life in this new home with the woman I love.

Hashtag blessed, hashtag mortgage. Another posted this photo and said, This is life, chilling and fishing. Hashtag blessed. Another girl tweeted, So happy to be able to do what I love every day.

[1 : 08] Hashtag blessed. Dream, location, filming, actress, work, star. There's a lot there. For this girl, being blessed is doing what she loves. And one more, one fine individual tweeted, Hashtag blessed because cheesy potatoes.

And as great as family possession and cheesy potatoes are, Is that true blessing? Can these things really bring us joy and satisfaction?

Can it make us happy? I asked some of you here what a blessed person is. And some of you said, Well, it's to be well off, Maybe like have some money in the bank.

Success came up a bit. A good reputation. Others said, It's about living in peace away from war. And being able to enjoy life. You know, poolside, Sipping drinks of your choice.

And ultimately, The two traits that kept coming back up, Was prosperity, In wealth, health and status. Or, It was a sense of freedom.

[2 : 07] Doing what you love. Being carefree. Experiencing the world. But is this truly a blessed person? Is this what the Bible considers blessed?

In our passage today in Psalm 1, Is going to tell us what it means to be blessed. So let's jump into it. Psalm 1, verse 1. If you've got your Bibles, Read with me. And we're on point 1 in your handout, If you've got those.

So the way of the blessed. In verse 1 it says, Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked, Or stand in the way the sinners take, Or sit in the company of mockers, But whose delight is in the law of the Lord, And who meditates on his law day and night.

The psalm starts by telling us what the blessed person is not. The blessed person does not walk, stand or sit, With the wicked, sinners and mockers.

By the way, this idea of walking in step with, It's a little bit tricky, But I think a better translation would be, Those who do not follow the advice of. That's the idea there. So it's someone who takes the advice of the wicked, On how they live their lives, How they pursue blessedness.

[3 : 17] Now this isn't three separate examples, Of how you walk in wickedness, But one progressive example, That you can find yourself on. Notice how it starts off by walking, You're walking, And then you're standing, And then they're sitting.

Let me show you how I picture it. So let's say I'm someone, Who's pursuing blessedness. I'm on this road to blessing, I'm living the Christian life, And I'm going and going, And then I notice someone's walking besides me now.

And I go, Oh, hello. And they start talking to me, We start conversing, And they start telling me, Hey man, Maybe this isn't the way to go. And you start considering, Maybe it isn't.

So then as you're talking to them, You start to slow down, And then you start walking in step with them, And before you know it, You start facing the opposite direction. And then that's what the second part of verse 1 says, Now you're standing in the way the sinners take.

And after a while you start talking, You're saying, Yeah, maybe that's not the way, Maybe true blessedness is out in the world, This is the way to go. And then eventually you find yourself, Not even standing with them, But now you're sitting down.

[4 : 25] You're sitting down with them. And the language is interesting, Because it says, Now you're sitting with the mockers. And what they mean by that is, That now you're starting to ridicule, What you used to follow.

You're starting to mock the things, That once you're walking on. And the psalm tells us, This is not the way the blessed walks. His delight isn't in the company of the wicked, But instead, Verse 2, His delight is in the law of the Lord.

Now just simply, The law of the Lord here, Is a reference to God's word. So the blessed delights in God's word. Not only that, But they meditate on it, Day and night. They keep God's law close to heart, And it influences how they live.

I think the common thing that comes to mind, When you hear meditation, Is probably this. Yep, not that. Is this, right?

Lotus position, Out in the wilderness, It's always sunset. And this isn't what the psalm is saying. To delight and meditate on God's law, It doesn't mean you have to be like that.

[5 : 31] But what the psalm is simply referring to, Is what you keep in your hearts. What you keep in your minds. And ultimately, What we meditate on, Will be what we pursue. So for example, If your mind is constantly on money, That's what you'll pursue, In everything you do, Every decision you make, Will be for money.

A psalm tells us, Blessed is he who meditates on God's word, Day and night. Because their thoughts and decisions, Will be in line with God's word. And you start living in, Light of God's truth, By rejecting things like greed, Things like dishonest gain.

And you start to treasure the things in heaven, That is eternal, Rather than the things on earth. And the psalm paints us, This beautiful picture of those, Who delight in God's word.

Look at verse 3. That person is like a tree, Planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in season, And whose leaf does not wither.

Whatever they do, Prospers. Now once again, I wonder what you're thinking, When you hear that. Most of us will go here, You know, Beautiful, Green, I copied that off Google, There's little bits there, But like you think of a forest, You think of, You know, A lot of vegetation, Like there's life everywhere, In that picture, Right?

[6 : 47] But I think a more accurate picture, Would be something like this, Okay, It's not there, Sorry, That collapsed, I didn't know why that's not there, Well the picture there was, It's a stream, Imagine a stream in a desert, Stream in a desert, And it's surrounded by sand, And surrounded by waste, But the only signs of life, The only signs of vegetation, Is actually along that stream, Because geographically, Israel, Isn't surrounded by forests, It's mostly desert, And a hundred percent of the time, If you plant a tree, Anywhere outside, Of the area, Of the streams of water, It will wither away, So it's not, So it's not surprising, Is it, That the blessed person, Is a tree, That's next to the streams of water, The one, Who once again meditates, And delights in God's word, Is like the tree, That feeds off the water, The more you drink,

The psalm says, You will not wither away, You will be strong, You will prosper, And you will yield, Your fruit in season, The idea of prospering, And yielding fruit, Isn't referring to, What we talked about earlier, You know, Health, Money, And success, But I think this is what it's saying, You'll start saying, Know the things, That you thought, You'd never say no to, You'll start to value things, That God values, And actually live by them, You'll already be, Rooted in God's word, So that whatever season, In life you're in, You'll be able to withstand them, And stand strong, So if you're entering, Into a season of work, For example, You'll start making career choices, Not based on, How much you get paid, Or the prestige of a company, But instead, You'll start prioritizing, Your relationship with God, To love him, To serve him, And to walk in his ways, And believe it or not, This is the blessed person,

The psalm talks about, Which is a strong comparison, To the wicked, So we're on point two, On your handout, If you're following, The path of the wicked, Verse four, And the psalm says, Not so the wicked, They're like chaff, That the wind blows away, If the blessed are like the tree, The

wicked, The sinners, And mockers, Someone says, They're like chaff, Who here knows what chaff is?

What is chaff? Some of you might know, But I didn't, So I did some investigating, And chaff apparently, Is a dry protective shell, Around seeds of grain, So if you go to a farm, You'll see it all the time, And, So when people harvest rice, Wheat, Or whatever grain you like, It leaves this dry, Flaky stuff behind, Because once you pick it, It will just wither away like that, And commonly, It would be left on the ground, After they harvest, Because it was considered rubbish, It was considered trash, And eventually, When the wind blew, It just blew it away, And it would be gone, And the psalmist says, This is what the wicked are like, As they live their lives, They think, This will make me happy, This is the way, To live life to the fullest, This will sustain me, And they say all this, Without the word of God, And the psalm just said, That's chaff, That's like trash, That's like a plastic bag, In the street, That just has no resistance, At all to the wind, Compared to the tree, The chaff's got no chance, To flourish, Does it? It's got no foundation, It's got no stability, And here's what it comes down to, If you're wondering, How do I know if I'm chaff, Or if I'm the tree, If you're not rooted, In God's word, Then you are chaff, Chaff?

[10:35] Me? No, No, You don't understand, I got great stability, I got a great job, It's secure, I already have two properties, I'm investing in the third, This weekend, The psalm says you're chaff, I finished top of my class, I'm highly respected, People look up to me, Because I'm a good person, I have good morals, I'm a nice dude, Chaff, Well, I've been going to church, All my life, I went every Sunday, I do some good in the community, I donate to World Vision, 45 months strong, Yeah, Chaff, But I'm popular, I'm smart, I'm successful, I'm rich, Psalm 1 says that's chaff, Without the word of God, You are chaff, And here's why I'm pressing so hard on this, Because there's a warning for you in verse 5, If you're chaff, It says, Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous,

You hear that? They will not stand in the judgment, Meaning by the end of it all, When God judges everyone, The chaff will have nothing to hold on to, They'll have nothing to stand on, They'll be excluded from the assembly of the righteous in heaven, Now when the Psalms say sinners here, It's not talking about anyone who sins, Right?

Just generally, But it's in the context along with the wicked and mockers, It's talking about those who sin against God, And actually deny Him, It's not those who struggle to deal with their sins, But it's those who continue to sin, Willingly and proudly, Being a mocker here, Isn't just more than a heckler in a comedy club, If you've ever been, A mocker not only disagrees with God, But actively opposes Him, That's what a mocker is in the Bible, In Psalm 14 verse 1, It says, These people, It says in their hearts, There is no God, This could be your co-workers, This could be family members, Friends, It could be anyone, It's just anyone who denies God with their lives, This could be even those, Who come to church on Sundays, And for the rest of the week, Live as if God doesn't exist, And the surprising thing is, They actually don't care, That's who they're talking about, These are the wicked,

These are the sinners, These are the mockers, And this is the path they walk, And verse 5 tells us once again, They will not stand in the judgment, They think they will, But they won't, For only God has the authority, To decide who stands before Him, And who's in the assembly of the righteous, At the start of my sermon, I ask the question, What does the Bible say about being blessed?

And I think we find our answer here, True blessing, Is able to stand in the judgment, True blessing, True blessing is to be able to join, In the assembly in heaven, True blessing is to be considered, Righteous before God, This is what it means to be blessed, And this is what we learn, When we meditate on God's word, Because righteousness isn't something, We earn, Is it?

[13:51] It's not because I'm such a good person, Or by my works, But solely on the grace and mercy, Given to us in Christ, And that's what our New Testament, Passage was all about, That in Christ, We are truly blessed, I mean, This is better than anything, You could receive, Just think of what's the best thing, What's the greatest thing you could get, Right?

This is what I thought, It's better than, Traveling the world for free, For the rest of your life, It's better than that, Right? And it's crazy, What God gives to us in Christ, You don't need to turn there, In Ephesians 1, It will be up on the slide, Hopefully, But notice how we're blessed, And this is what Ephesians 1 says, Verse 3, Praise be to God, The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us in the heavenly realms, With every spiritual blessings in Christ, For he chose us in him, Before the creation of the world, To be holy and blameless in his sight, In love he predestined us,

For adoption to sonship, Through Jesus Christ, In accordance to his pleasure and will, Verse 7, In him we have redemption through his blood, The forgiveness of sins, In accordance to the riches of God's grace, That he lavished on us, In verse 11 it says, In him we are also chosen, To be for the praise of his glory, In verse 13 it says, In him we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, Guaranteeing our inheritance in heaven,

Isn't this a bit crazy? In Christ we have everything we need, Not only to be right with God, But to also be considered family, Not only to receive forgiveness of sins, But also to be a recipient of his love, Not only to be reconciled to him, From enemy to friend, But we also are able to praise and glorify him, This is what it means to be blessed, This is how we stand in the judgment, This is how we are accepted as righteous, And in the book of Psalm, This isn't a new thing, For even by the end of Psalm 2, It says, Blessed are those who take refuge in him, Him being Christ, All we do is take refuge, And God handles the rest, In Psalm 1, Back in our Psalm, Verse 6 it says, The Lord watches over the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked leads to destruction, While God is active on the path of the righteous,

Showering us with blessings after blessings, The wicked are left on their own, They're left to their own demise, And it leads to destruction, So these are the two ways to live, The way of the righteous, And the way of the wicked, My question is, Which path are you on today?

Are you the tree, Or are you the chaff? And my challenge is, Don't assume which path you're on, But look at your life, Because no one thinks they're chaff, Right? No one goes, I'm chaff guys, Maybe one guy, But no one assumes that, Everyone assumes they're the tree, They assume they're flourishing, So then noon, How do I tell?

[16:51] Well a good question to ask is, Do I delight, And meditate on God's word? Have you ever delighted in God's word? Has it ever brought you hope?

Does it give you peace? Does it give you strength, When life's a bit rough? King David in Psalm 19, The latest Psalm says, God's law is reviving to my soul, He says, It's more precious than gold and silver, He's saying, That to know God's word, Brings life to his soul, It's refreshing, It's replenishing to him, Says it's better than gold, It's better than a million dollars, In Psalm 119, It says, How sweet are your words, Sweeter than honey to my mouth, Now there's someone, Who's delighting in God's word, Isn't it?

Last week, If you were here, Andrew spoke, On the resurrection of Christ, One of the greatest news, You'll ever hear as a Christian, I wonder how many of us, Went away first delighting, In the fact that, Christ has defeated sin, That we are no longer chained, To death, But now we are alive in Christ, I wonder how many of us, Thought about that this week, Have you ever delighted, And meditated on God's word, And let's be honest here, God's word is a delight, For those who have delighted in it, But sometimes it's hard to get there, I can be honest, I'm the first one to say, It's pretty hard sometimes, But here's where meditation comes in, When I first became a Christian, To be honest, It was hard, It was pretty hard work, To understand the Bible on my own, But there was a great delight, When I asked someone, When I heard a sermon, Or I read an article, Where it just explained it to me, And suddenly things started to click, And to be honest, Even today, Sometimes I read scripture, And I go, What was that? Right? So then I asked my friends, I asked the famous, Renowned Bible scholar, Adam Chung, And I asked, I asked, What's this mean, Adam?

And he'll say, I don't know, Go read this. So even he, Sometimes needs to do some work. But over the years, I realized, That there's a lot I've come to know, There's a lot I've come to understand, And this wouldn't have happened, If I didn't spend time, Meditating on God's word.

[19:15] It's tough, It's sluggish. So can I encourage you, If you're a new Christian, If you're a young little sapling, That's struggling to get water, Don't give up.

If there's things you don't understand, Ask. Seek answers. Come talk to me. Go ask Mark. Probably ask Mark first. Go ask Mark, right?

But here's some of my suggestions, And ways we can pursue this, Right? Wednesday night Bible studies, Great way to dig into the word. And there's other groups as well, It doesn't have to be Wednesday night.

There's heaps of, Bible reading plans out there, Available on the internet. There's apps on your phones now, That reminds you, Sends you passages to read. Read with some friends.

Read with your family. These are great ways. Meet up with, This is one of the best ways for me, Personally. Meet up with an older, Mature Christian, And read the Bible together with them.

[20 : 14] Let them walk besides you. Let them recommend articles and sermons, And let them pray for you. And for you more mature Christians out there, Who's delighted, Who's tasted, I encourage you to help those that struggle with this.

Maybe you've got the way that works for them, Because everyone meditates differently, Don't we? Some listen to songs, Some love to read books, Others just need to have a robust conversation about stuff, Filled with grace and mercy and peace.

And maybe you do that well, Maybe you're good with that. But it's hard work. But the delight you experience in knowing God, Is incomparable to anything the world can offer.

Believe me. So let's be proactive about this. I mean, We spend hours and hours on everything else, Don't we? In other aspects of life. With our careers, Health, Gym culture is heavy now.

Our relationships, For the younger guys, Video games, Maybe for the older guys too. Sports, Celebrities, Food, Rock climbing, Whatever, right?

[21 : 22] Whatever you do. And I'm not trying to guilt trip you here, That's not the point about this. It's not about bitter submission, right? But, I'm so convinced, That when you dig in, And you actually taste, The word of God, I believe it will bring you joy.

I believe it will satisfy your soul. And I believe it will bring in you, A delight that the world can't offer. Which will make you want to walk, In accordance with God's word.

Not out of bitterness, But you actually want to. So be encouraged friends, For those who soak themselves in God's word, Will flourish in due time. Continue to walk in God's word, Knowing that in the end, We will stand before God, For giving in Christ.

And in the meantime, Be encouraged, While we're here on earth, God is, And will watch over us, Until we're united with him. So let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, We thank you that, True blessing is available, And it's available to all, In Christ.

Thank you that, There is a delight, That satisfies our soul. Thank you that there is a delight, In knowing who you are, And what you've done for us. I pray Lord, That you shape us, And convict us by the power of your spirit, To walk in righteousness, And not in the path of the wicked.

[22 : 44] In the name of Christ. Amen. You know,