

Are You Blessed?

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[0 : 00] If you would turn with me to Psalm 128. And Psalm 128 is a happy psalm. We have been studying through a portion of the book of Psalms that is called the Pilgrim Songs, the Songs of Ascent.

We're about halfway through, a little over halfway through. In Psalm 128, we come to a psalm that is all about blessing. Now, to preface this message, I want to point out the fact that words really matter.

Now, what I'm saying is not so much that what we say matters. That's obviously very important. The Scripture has a lot to say about that. But specifically, the words we use when we talk about spiritual things really matter.

And we also need to make sure that we understand the words that we're using so that we don't misuse them. I think if God looks down from heaven and hears us use the word blessing sometimes, I think he often is just shaking his head like, Man, I'm not sure if you understand what blessing really is.

I mean, at times, have you seen somebody post something on Facebook? Or maybe, for being honest, we've posted something on Facebook. And we got some new thing, some item in our lives.

[1 : 12] And we're like, I got this new thing. Hashtag blessed. Is that really what it means to be blessed? Surely, there are things that God provides for us that really are gifts from God.

They're good and perfect gifts that we can enjoy. However, what does it truly mean to be blessed? I think, for me, the word blessing or blessedness or, you know, uses a lot of different forms kind of falls in the same category as a word like glory.

Like, if someone was to ask you, how would you define glory? That's one for me that's like, let me go to the dictionary for a second and let me read a definition for you.

Because that's one that's a little bit tough to wrap your mind around, I believe. Or to articulate, I should say. Blessing is sort of like that. And so, Psalm 128, God is going to say, Here is the one who's blessed.

And here's how they are blessed. And here's what it looks like for somebody to be blessed. And so, that's the topic tonight, is blessing. It is a psalm of triumph. We've come through this.

[2 : 17] It's like there's this process in the Pilgrim Songs where they go from trouble to trust to triumph. We were in a really bad place. We turned to God and then God blessed.

And that's where we're at in Psalm 128. So, let's read Psalm 128. We'll pray and then we'll jump into this message tonight. Scripture says this, Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, that walketh in His ways.

For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands. Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house. Thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion. And thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children. And peace upon Israel. Would you pray with me? Father, we come to you tonight. And as we open your word, Lord, we ask that you would teach us, instruct us from your truth.

[3 : 21] That we would understand truly what it means to be blessed. What that blessing looks like. Lord, help us to get a hold of this. And God, I'm asking that you would encourage your people tonight. That you would strengthen them with your joy.

With your blessing. With your goodness. Because truly, that is who you are. Lord, you are good. You are joyful. You are loving. And you desire to bless your children.

You desire to encourage your children. To strengthen your children. And Lord, I pray that tonight you would do that. God, I pray if there's someone here that has never believed in Jesus, that you would help them to see that you are love.

You are good. And that they would turn to you. Because you are the only one that can satisfy the needs of our hearts and life.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. So the first thing to take note of as we're talking about this question of, are you blessed? What does it mean to be blessed? The first thing I'd like to ask you to take note of is this.

[4 : 24] And this is, now, I want to warn you. Please don't, I'm glad we don't have hymn books. So that you can't throw one at me. Because this point might sound a little bit strange. Fearing and following God will make you happy.

We've got a grunt here like, hold on a second. Fearing and following God will make you happy. Is that a true statement? I believe from, okay, well, hey men, we're all on the same page. We can move right along. I believe that this psalm highlights this fact.

And I would challenge you to consider, do you truly believe that fearing and following God will make you happy? Let's read verse number one once again. Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord that walketh in his ways.

It's describing this person who has decided that I am going to fear God and I'm going to follow God. I am going to reverence and honor God.

I'm going to respect God for who he is and I am going to follow him. I'm going to walk in his ways. There's a definition I read about fear.

[5 : 30] What this idea of fear is. Again, right, because this is not the idea that we're over here kind of cowering like, oh God, don't squish me. I'm afraid of you. I'm afraid of getting run over by the God truck.

That's not the idea of what's going on here. Fear is reverence. It is awe. It is devotion, worship, love, honor. All of those things are kind of squished into that word fear.

And here's the definition that I read this week. The term indicates both an attraction to and a shrinking back from the object of fear. The attraction to the Lord is adoration for the majesty, power, and glory of God.

The shrinking back is the acknowledgement that he is the sovereign judge of all the earth and must be obeyed. It's a right understanding of God because he is to be loved.

And just understanding who he is like draws our hearts to him. It's like there's one who made me, loves me, and gave himself for me. That draws me to him, right?

[6 : 34] But then I also have to understand there's like that shrinking back of like, oh my goodness, he is also the judge of all the earth. He is almighty God. He is holy and perfect and powerful.

And all of that is fear. That is fear, the fear of God. And it says, and to walk in his ways, to follow him. So it says, those that fear, everyone, anyone who fears and follows is blessed.

So the real question is, what is that state of blessing? What does it mean to be blessed here? Here's some statements about this. It is the state of experiencing God's favor. That God's face would be turned upon this one who fears and follows God.

It is the joy and bliss from knowing that one is right with God. It is joy and bliss from knowing God's favor is upon your life. Now here's the really interesting thing as I was studying this.

The Hebrew word that is translated into blessed in verse number one is translated happy in verse number two. Would you read verse number two with me? Because this is where I kind of want to press into this idea that this is what we might even think of as happiness.

[7 : 47] Verse number two says, For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands, happy or blessed shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Exact same Hebrew word.

In fact, as you study that and use your dictionaries, you find that 27 times that word is translated blessed and 23 times it's translated happy.

It's almost like they're right there so closely associated. To be blessed is to be happy in Jesus, to be happy in the Lord. Now, you might be thinking like, okay, this is maybe a little bit different.

This is a little bit weird. It feels weird. Let me give you one more statement that might even feel a little bit stranger. Are you happy in your relationship with God? Are you happy in your relationship with God?

Does knowing God, being in a right relationship with God make you happy? And that might even be like, hold a second. Are you really supposed to say it that way? Are we really supposed to ask if our relationship with God makes us happy?

[8 : 50] That sounds more like something if you're sitting at Starbucks and you got your laptop out. At least this is how Starbucks is for me. Sit there and you're working on your laptop and you overhear conversations. Anyone else do the Starbucks eavesdropping thing?

A few of you are starting to chuckle a little bit. And you hear two ladies and they're over there like, you know, so how's it going with your new boyfriend? Does he make you happy? Right? That's almost how that question sort of feels.

Does your relationship with God make you happy? And it's almost like, that kind of feels weird to say. Like, is that how I should think about this relationship with God? Well, think about this for a second.

The Old Testament portrays the believer, those who relate rightly to God, as happy in many places. Let me give you three.

Deuteronomy 33.29. We'll have it up on the screen. Deuteronomy 33.29 speaks about Israel. It says, Can you read that?

[9 : 59] Those first like three words with me? Ready? One, two, three. Happy art thou. Israel, you're happy. You have something that nobody else has.

You have something that's wonderful. You have been saved by the Lord. He's your shield. He's your sword. He's your God. You have something that should make you incredibly happy.

The second one is the one we just read in verse number two. For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands. Happy shalt thou be. The one that relates rightly to God?

Happy. Here, let me give you one more. Psalms 144.15. Here's another one that's just very directly. It says, Happy is that people that is in such a case.

Yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord. Isn't that something? Happy are the people whose God is the Lord. And if you're here tonight and you profess Christ as your Savior, are you not someone whose God is the Lord?

[10 : 59] Yeah, we are, right? So there should be a happiness in our lives. Happiness. Now, why do we revolt from that or kind of recoil to that?

Or maybe we don't even think about our relationship to God in those terms. Here's a couple reasons why I think we might kind of struggle with this. And we might not even experience the joy, the happiness, the blessedness of knowing God like He would intend for us to.

Right? Because God literally says, You fear God. If you follow God, you'll be blessed. And that is also happy. So why don't we? Well, I think one of the things is we have maybe a different view of happiness, of what happiness means.

Right? We think of happiness as things that are easy and feel good. Right? Like if I go and I get a cookie out of the pantry and I eat the cookie, it's easy and it feels good to put it in my mouth and chew it up and eat it.

And so I'm happy. Cookies make me happy. Well, it's a little bit different. Okay. I knew that was coming. It's a little bit different than that. But it's really shouldn't be, can I say it shouldn't be too much different to that?

[12 : 11] Because the scripture does say, taste and see that the Lord is good. Like experience it. Know it. Like get a hold of that. That the Lord is good. Let me give you another one.

We're taught, we've been taught that happy is bad. We've even said that like happiness and holiness are opposites. You ever heard something like this? God doesn't want you to be happy.

He wants you to be holy. You ever heard that statement said? Think about it for a second. I think there's an idea behind that that makes sense, right? Because there's a prevailing belief in the world that you just need to do what makes you happy.

And what the mean is, do whatever is easy and makes you feel good, right? And so we're saying being holy is not easy and it doesn't always make you necessarily feel good because it requires denying yourself.

But that does not mean that holiness is anything less than happiness because you can be holy and happy. Amen. You can be holy and happy.

[13 : 15] Maybe we've been taught something that's not quite right. We might not believe that God actually commands us to be happy. Let's think about a verse here. I read where someone was saying, God repeatedly calls upon us to rejoice, delight, and to be glad in Him.

One you might know of Philippians 4.4. What does he say? Rejoice in the Lord always. And again, I say rejoice. Now you might be thinking, well, okay, rejoice, happiness. I'm not sure those are the same things.

Well, here was what Charles Spurgeon said about this verse. It is intended that we should be happy. That is the meaning, that we should be cheerful. Rejoice. Dictionary definition.

To enjoy a state of happiness and well-being. To be glad. Is it true that God literally through His Word tells you and me to be glad?

To be happy? To be joyful? To be just like overflowing with awe and wonder and enjoyment of who He is and how He's working in our lives?

[14 : 17] I think He does. I think He does. But I'm not sure that we always believe that. Where it's like, man, I'll rejoice. But I don't really want to. And I don't really like it. We've made it out to be more like when Mom says, eat your vegetables.

It's like something we've got to do but we can't really enjoy. Right? But that's not what's going on here. And other reasons we might make distinctions that aren't really there. You might be saying, well, but listen, joy and happiness aren't the same thing.

Well, I think if they're not the same thing, they're at least brother and sister. Like they're very closely related. And so you can't say, man, I'm full of joy. But I just walk around with a frown.

And my spirit is sour. And I'm joyful for Jesus. But I just hate living life. Like I'm not sure if those two go together. I'm not sure if that's how that works.

And you might be saying, well, but, well, actually, before we get to this, this is where I believe it gets really deep. We might not, we might reject the thought that God calls us to be happy because we might not believe that God is a happy God.

[15 : 25] Think about that for a second. We might reject the thought that being blessed means being happy, being full of joy, because we're not sure that God is a happy God.

You see, the call to rejoice only really makes sense if the God we love is happy, if the gospel message we embrace and proclaim is happy, and if heaven is a happy place.

And so this really gets down to kind of the core of our beliefs about God. What do we believe about the character of God? Would we describe God as someone who is full of joy, who is happy?

That's a good question. It's one that you might need to grapple with, right? Because there's a lot of things that we can say about God, and we might not believe that he is that.

But I think there's indications in the scripture that he is. I mean, it says he is love, and he loves us.

[16 : 31] And even Jesus on the cross, what does it say? For the joy that was set before him endured the cross. Why did Jesus go to the cross? Because he had joy to do so.

That's wild to think about. He looked at the cross and was like, my words are going to fail. I don't know what was going through Jesus' mind and heart. But he looked at the cross, and there was somehow, some way, there was joy in that.

And so he endured the cross for the joy that was set before him. I don't know, that blows my mind. That's wild. Is God happy? That's a question you might need to look at and study and answer.

You might also be saying, but what about denying yourself and taking up the cross? Aren't there things in the Christian life that are hard and that are difficult, that would maybe be opposed to happiness? Well, yes, I think they are opposed to happiness if you define happiness as things that are easy and things that feel good, right?

Because denying yourself, anyone say, man, I just love it when I wake up in the morning and I have to deny myself. I just love it. It's so good. It makes me feel warm and fuzzy inside. No, I don't know about you, but for me, it's like, man, it's like, God, by faith, I'm going to deny myself and I'm going to trust that this is what you say is right.

[17 : 49] And I think what happens is as we embark on this journey and as we walk on this journey of following Jesus, there are things we encounter that aren't exactly what we call fun. And they're definitely not easy.

And they definitely don't always make you feel good. They're oftentimes quite uncomfortable. But the thing is, we are playing the long game. We are playing the long game.

The process of following Jesus is a process of forming our lives in such a way that we will be blessed and happy people. It's kind of like this.

It's kind of like with fitness, right? With fitness. You're not going to get strong physically if you do what is easy and feels good, right?

Because what's easy and feels good? Sit on the couch, pick up the remote and turn the TV on and just veg out for the rest of the evening. That's easy and feels good. But is it going to get you any stronger? No.

[18 : 44] Okay, you can talk. It's all right. No, it's not. Are we in agreement? I mean, unless there's some new magic couch that came out that makes you stronger while you sit on it. If so, please tell me because I want one of those because I'd rather not go to the gym.

But what do we know about fitness, about life? You choose to do what is difficult and doesn't feel good so that 10, 15, 30 years down the road, you don't look back with regret and say, Oh, I wish I would have taken care of my body better.

Oh, I wish I would have. You get what's going on here. You end up happy, glad that you went through the pain and the discomfort to achieve an outcome, right?

Or you look back with regret and be like, man, why did I just choose the things that were easy all the time? I think it's kind of like that with the Christian life.

If we choose what is easy and what feels good, it might be nice in the moment, but it won't make you happy. It won't fill you with joy. It's not going to be good in the end.

[19 : 55] But if we choose the path of following Jesus, which does include things that are hard and are uncomfortable and often don't feel good, we will look back and say, it was worth it and I'm happy that I walked with Jesus.

Because I don't know if there's anybody that walks with Jesus and ends up regretting living for Christ. Living for Jesus is something we won't regret.

But we remain unhappy in our Christian lives when we, first of all, reject the belief that happiness can be found in relationship to God or when we avoid the process that God wants to use to transform our lives.

Let me give you one more illustration. And we might have to turn this into two parts. We're 10 minutes till we close. One more illustration. It's kind of like, you know, kids when they are at the pool and it's time to swim.

And what do they do? They go up to the edge of the water and they maybe, you know, feel the water or dip their foot in. It's like, oh, that's really cold. And they kind of shrink back. It's like, you get goosebumps all over. And it's like, I don't want to get in that.

[21 : 00] That's not going to be fun. But what do you know about the pool? If you're going to have fun at the pool, you go to the pool, you jump in, you freeze and you shiver for about 75 seconds.

And then after that, it's great and it's fun and you have a splash and you play and it's just a good old time. And I think what has happened is oftentimes Christians, we dip our toe in the pool of faith.

And we're like, oh, that's scary. I'm not sure if I want to jump into that. But what if, what if you just went head first? Lauren told me I shouldn't say head first because, yeah, you shouldn't dive head first into the shallow end.

You're going to break your neck. But you know, you get what I'm saying. You dive into the pool called faith and you find out this is pretty amazing. And I think if you look around and you probably even have these stories yourself.

There's been times when you've been like at the edge. Like, do I want to go into the pool of faith or do I want to stay out on doubt and disobedience to God? Because that's really what it is, right?

[22 : 05] It's disobedience to God. But when you dive in, it's like, it's exhilarating. It's amazing. It's amazing what God does. Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord that walketh in his ways.

So can you be happy in your relationship with Jesus? I think you can. And I think that's what God intends for you to do. So that's a lot on that. And we just covered one verse.

Let's go to verse number two and we'll continue on through this. Second thing is this. Learn to enjoy the good gifts of God. Learn to enjoy the good gifts of God. So look at what he says.

He says, For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands, happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house. Thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. Basically he says, listen, those that fear and follow the Lord, this is the blessing that God is going to give to them. And what does that consist of?

[23 : 02] It's two things. Did you notice the first one? The first one is that he says, you will be able to eat the fruit of your labor. Right? You see that? You're going to eat the fruit of your labor.

You'll eat the labor of thine hands. Now what does that mean? It means that you're going to be able to go out into your field that you've worked so hard for, pluck some corn, get some tomatoes, make some salsa, and enjoy it.

That's the first part. The second part is he says, your family will be blessed and will flourish. And it's kind of amazing. He says, your wife's going to be like a vine. Your children are going to be like olive plants. That's kind of an amazing image, right?

Imagine sitting at the table and there's like these olive plants all around the table. The idea was, if you're an ancient Israelite, to have growing olive trees is a really good thing.

Because you're going to get olives and olive oil. And that was just a very important commodity in their times. Now, the remarkable thing to me about this list is that it's really quite unremarkable. Right?

[24 : 02] Again, remember, this is the triumph portion of the Psalms. We go from trouble to trust to triumph. Now, how triumphant does that sound to you?

That you can go out into your garden, pick some food and eat it, and that you can sit down with your family and have a meal, and things are going to be well in your household. How remarkable is that? We kind of take that for granted, don't we?

Right? That I'm going to be able to go to work, earn some money, go to the grocery store, buy some food, go home, have dinner, put a steak on the grill, and enjoy my labor. That's pretty unremarkable.

But I think what this does is it's pointing us to what... God's not telling you He's going to give you a bajillion dollars. He's going to give you a private jet. He's going to do all those things. We understand that, right?

That's prosperity gospel. You turn in your seed faith offering. God's going to multiply it a thousand times. That's not going on here. He's saying, listen, you know what? You know where God's blessing is found?

[24 : 59] You being able to go home, sit down with your family, and enjoy a good meal together. That is a blessed life. Now, in our day, I think the biggest attack on what the scripture is saying here is the religion of more.

The religion of more. That's like the religion of our day. More. More, more, more. It's kind of like the Apple events. Anyone watch WWDC that happened this week? Oh, wow. Nobody?

Did you see about the... What's it called? The Vision Pro thing? The goggles? You saw that? Okay. Apple is famous for, in their events, doing this. They say, one more thing.

And then they bring out whatever is the latest and greatest and newest invention. That was their one more thing. Although it's kind of funny because their one more thing was basically like half the event. And so it was really an event about that.

Anyway, I'd go nerdy on that. But that is the religion of our day. More, more, better, faster, more fancy, more this, more that, all of these things.

[26 : 01] More. And the core doctrine is this. The core teaching of the religion of more is this. You will be satisfied when you have a little bit more. Now, you're smart enough to know that that is not true.

However, the problem is that is just like that's the air that we breathe. Have more, you'll be satisfied. But the problem is once you get more, you've got to have more. And it just goes on and on and on and on.

And we don't realize that that teaching, that thought process, that belief is destroying our spiritual life because we keep on believing that once I get a little bit more, I will be satisfied.

We know somebody in the Bible that didn't just get more. He got the whole thing. And who is that? Solomon, right? Ecclesiastes is that book where he's saying, I made it to the top.

Whatever measure you want to put on it, whether it's wealth or fame or accomplishments, success, achievements, awards, accolades, whatever you want to, whatever, I don't care how you want to measure it, Solomon got to the top.

[27 : 08] And what did he say at the top? Vanity. It was empty. More, more, more doesn't lead to satisfaction. It leads to emptiness. And so what does God say about the blessed man?

Listen, you should look at your life and say, God has given me so much. If I can go home, if I can eat what I've worked to earn, if I can sit down with a loved one or with a friend and I can enjoy a meal, I have been blessed by God.

And we should turn away from the religion of more. I didn't want to confess this, but we got four minutes and a little confession time.

Along these same lines, chasing more, it just doesn't make you happy. And from the time that I started my camera hobby, I counted up today and I was like, you know, how many different camera models have I owned?

I've owned 26 different camera models. I don't know if you call that a hobby or an addiction. I'm trying to figure that out. Now, don't freak out on me. I do not own all of those at this time.

[28 : 20] That's like, okay, buy and sell. I'm trying to justify it. Man, this is going really bad. I told you it was confession time. But you know what's so funny about all those cameras? They all take pictures. And they're all within like 5% to 10% in quality.

Like they all take good photos. But the lie is, if you just get this one, it'll be better. If you just get that one, it'll be better. And we live our lives going from one thing to the next thing to the next thing to the next thing.

And where does it get us? It doesn't get us anywhere. Where is it in your life that you might be believing the religion of more, the doctrine that if you just have a little bit more, you would be satisfied?

Be careful, because that is a subtle one. It's pervasive. It's everywhere. It's all around us. And finally, in verse 5 and 6, he says, look forward to God's future blessing. Basically, in verse 1, he says, if you fear God and if you follow God, you are blessed.

And then he also points forward and says, listen, you're going to see God's goodness on Zion. You're going to see the blessing out of Zion. You're going to see good in Jerusalem.

[29 : 29] You're going to see your grandchildren. You're going to see all of these things. You're going to see God's goodness in the future. And the idea here is that you are experiencing God's blessing now, and you will in the future.

And what's the idea here? God's goodness, it doesn't fail. It doesn't run out. It doesn't stop. He blesses, and he works, and he continues on into the future. And ultimately, it's the blessing of seeing God fulfill his word.

Now, you notice how much of this centers around, like, family, right? You got the family around the table. You got your family as in Israel. You got your grandchildren, all of these things.

That was literally the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, that he would have a great name, a great nation, a great people. And so he says, listen, the blessing is seeing God fulfill his word.

Now, in the last few moments, I do want to give you one last thing, because there's a part of this that it almost, it's like, okay, all that we've studied so far, it's like it's too good to be true.

[30 : 32] Because what about the instances when things don't work out like this? What about when someone loves God but dies early? What about when we're single and we just, all we want is just to be married?

What about when we don't have children but we dream and pray to have them? What about when we suffer? What about when we struggle in life? What about all the things that come up in life that's like, wait a minute, I thought if I feared God and followed God, then everything would be perfect.

Well, here's a couple things to consider as we close this out. Could it be that we are expecting more than God promised?

Let me give you a couple things to think about here. God didn't say that we would be free from suffering. We'd be free from struggle. Well, we live in a sin-cursed world and that's just, that's the reality that we live in.

This is not Eden and it's not heaven. It's a sin-cursed world. There is suffering. There is struggling. God didn't say it was easy. In Acts 14.22, Paul even taught young Christians that they were to expect tribulation.

[31 : 45] He didn't say that we wouldn't face death. Hebrews says it's appointed unto man once to die. Remember what the New Testament view is on what it takes to be satisfied.

He said having food and raiment, food and clothes, let us be content. Let us be satisfied. We might be looking and saying, God didn't live up to my expectations. Well, it could be that we have wrong expectations.

We're missing out on what God has already provided. And the other thing about this is that we might be discounting eternity. Now, did you notice that last part we looked at where he says, the Lord shall bless thee out of Zion.

Thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. This is very forward looking, right? It's forward looking. And this is ultimately fulfilled. When Jesus comes back, he establishes his throne.

It's ultimately fulfilled in eternity. And see, Hebrews 11, that's what we call the hall of faith. It goes from Abel to Moses and Abraham.

[32 : 48] Yeah, Moses, Abraham. All these people that lived by faith. And there was a category of people in that chapter that lived by faith but did not receive the promise.

And we might look at that and say, well, man, God shortchanged them. But I want to read a few verses to you and then we'll be done. I promise. Hebrews 11, 13 through 16. This is the mindset that these people had.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them. Notice this wording here. And embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

What were they doing? They saw the promises. They believed them. They embraced them. And they said, this is not where I live. This is not where I belong. I'm traveling through this earth.

Can you go to the next verse? For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. Let's keep going. Keep going here. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity returned.

[33 : 53] Verse number 16. But now they desire a better country. That is a heavenly, and heavenly. Wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city.

And they were looking and expecting that the ultimate bliss, joy, happiness, peace was going to be experienced in that city.

Not right here. Not right now. But that city. That place that is perfect. That will meet every... Well, let me say this. It will meet, and it will go far beyond any expectation of what the blessedness is that God has for us.

Because here's the thing, friends. We will always be disappointed when we expect this life to provide what only heaven can give. You'll always be disappointed.

So, we need to wrap this up. The first thing I think that we've got to say is, do I fear God? Do I follow God? It says, those that fear, those that walk in His ways.

[35 : 00] And that's very simple, practical. How's your view of God tonight? How's your obedience to God tonight? Are there things that you know to do, but you're not?

You're resisting. Stop resisting. Trust Him. It might be hard. It might be difficult. But it is the best way. God's way is the best way. Stop resisting. Do you believe that God can meet every single one of your needs?

He can give you exactly what you need. He can. Would you trust Him? Would you live the life of faith, looking forward to eternity, looking forward to God's promise being fulfilled, and in us experiencing the joy of salvation?

Father, we come to You this evening, and Lord, we confess that we are strangers and pilgrims. We are people who don't belong here because we have believed in You. We have trusted in You that You are the Savior that came into the world to die, to save us from our sins.

And Lord, we thank You for giving Your Son for us. Truly, that is the greatest gift that we could ever receive. Lord, I pray that we as believers would never discount the joy, the happiness, the wonder of having Jesus as our Savior, as our friend, having God as our Father.

[36 : 21] Lord, I pray tonight if there's someone here that's never believed in Jesus, that they would call upon You. They would call out to You, believing who You are, that You are who You said You are, and that You did what You said You would do, that You gave Your Son to die in their place, and that if they would call upon You, that You would make them Your child, You would forgive them of their sins, and make them new.

Pray right now that they would call out in their hearts, and that they would believe in Jesus. Father, we love You. We thank You for how Your Word works in our lives.

God, I pray as we meditate on these things, that any beliefs about You, about life, that they would be revealed as wrong if they are untruth, and that we would believe Your Word, we would dive into the life of faith, and experience the joy and the happiness that You have for us.

Praise things in Jesus' name. Amen.