

Are you *happy*? Right now, in your life, job, marriage, church, lifestyle, inner life, are you happy? If yes, why? If no, why? And is happiness possible? **Some** would say, its not. The world is too dark, too fallen, too corrupt. Even **Mick Jagger** said, “You can’t *always* get what you want.”

Others say you can, but have to **bust** it. You have to get our there and earn it, work for it, claw and scratch and build your happiness. Or **increase your faith**. Claim God’s promises, trust God more. Flex your faith muscles. Then you’ll be happy.

But Psalm 1 says you can be happy. **Verse 1 *Blessed is the man.*** . . . But its more **art**, than **science**. There is no equation or formula. Its more fluid and organic, more give and take, than you think.

But know this: **God wants you happy.** He really does. He made you, to be happy. You exist for that reason. What does that mean? How do you do that?

### **One, you delight in God’s Word.**

Look at verse **2 *but his delight is in the law of the LORD.*** . . .The word law there is **torah** in Hebrew. The torah is God’s law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, is the law of God. But the word can also mean ***instruction, word.*** The point is, whatever God says or commands or prescribes, this man, or woman, delights in it! It is his delight and treasure and joy and feast and pleasure.

Now Notice the word ***but*** in **verse 2**. It is hard change from verse 1. Its like a Kellogg U Turns. You exit and there is a whole lane for a U-turn. It fooled me, twice! Thats the idea here.

Look at **verse 1**

***Blessed is the man***  
***who walks not in the counsel*** (advice, wisdom) ***of the wicked,***  
***nor stands in the way of sinners,***  
***nor sits in the seat*** (assembly) ***of scoffers; BUT***

See that? But, his delight, is the law of the LORD. The **reason** he avoids the wicked and sinner’s and scoffer’s way, is ***because*** He delights in God’s law. He so **prefers** God and His ways, that **their** way, (sinners and scoffers and wicked), doesn’t appeal to him.

And, God's law keeps him from their way. This book, the Bible, will keep you from sin. When these words are *coursing through* your spiritual veins and filling your mind and shaping your worldview, it keeps you from sin.

**Jeremiah 15:16**

*Your words were found, and I ate them,  
and your words became to me a joy  
and the delight of my heart,  
for I am called by your name,  
O LORD, God of hosts.*

See, you don't just **read** the Bible, you **eat** the Bible. You feast on it. You eat the book. You come to it as a feast. He delights in it, like warm bread or like sizzling bacon (for us, not him). Its a feast for his soul.

Now when **verse 1** mentions the *counsel* of the wicked, *way* of sinner, and *seat* of scoffers, I don't think he means: avoid those people. Avoid the sinner and scoffer and wicked, lest you **catch** it. What he means is, **don't embrace their worldview**. How they think and feel and reason about money and possessions and power and marriage and sexuality is opposed to God's ways. What **God says** about life: parenting, singleness, money, leadership, work, sexuality, friendship, leisure, is not how the world thinks. They align sometimes, but mostly, they clash.

The world says take, God says give.  
The world says rule, God says serve.  
The world says live, God says die to yourself.

Those are polar opposite views of life.

I read a short column in the *Wall Street Journal*, on basic money principles. The gist was, what to spend where. So spend this percent for mortgage, rent, this much for utilities, save this much, invest this much, use this much for leisure (eating out, Star Trek). Which was good, but never mentioned giving. Not for charity, for the poor, for church or synagogue. Nothing on giving.

But read Proverbs, Exodus, the Psalms, the Gospels, Paul's writings, giving, is central. It is money 101, not some **tack on** to get **blessed**. It is the core of money. You give first, then pay mortgage and bills and Chilis. Its the first-fruits of income. But the *Wall Street Journal*, at least there, never touches it. Those are worldview issues. The Bible, God's word, should inform and shape and motivate all we do.

*So can I ask you, is your life being shaped by Scripture?* Is your marriage rhythm, friendship, work ethic, parenting principles, money management, leisure, web browsing, spending, TV watching, shaped by God's Word? Or, are you outsmarting God? (trying to) See, harboring bitterness feels right. Hoarding money, seems smart.

**There is no book like this.** I've read other religion's books. Not for critique or error searching, for class for really. They don't compare to this book. No book is like this. I've spent 13 yrs reading this, teaching this, digging into this, wrestling with this, hoping in this, and it amazes me. Does it amaze you?

Now if you're new in church or not a Christian or not sure, our belief is: **The Bible is God's Word written.** It is our only *perfect* authority. It contains no errors, no falsehood. It is truth. It is divinely inspired and nothing is above it. It **has been, is** being, and **will** always be attacked, undermined, denied, tampered with, tweaked.

**We aren't surprised by that.** But we think this is God's Word. And you may ask *How do you know?* How do you know its true and right and without error? Well, it says it is. The Bible says, the Bible is true. To which many say, "*That's circular.*" Yeah, but so is everyone. We all begin somewhere. **Where do you begin?** Reason? Opinion? Why is that true?

But that aside, read this book, pray these prayers, obey the commands. Talk to Christians about it. Read Mark's Gospel. And ask yourself: **Are there good reasons to reject Jesus?**

So this is true happiness. Delighting in God's Word, feasting on it, produces life and joy and hope in us. **Psalm 19:7** says "*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.*" This book will revive you and lift your spirit and affirm God's love for you and change your thinking and acting and feeling. So we have to get in the Book.

Look at **verse 2** again, *but his delight is in the law of the Lord, on his law he meditates day and night.* The word meditate is used in **Isaiah 31:4** which says *As a lion or a young lion growls (meditates) over his prey.*"

Picture that. A lion protecting and guarding and growling over his zebra. I took **Cross and Rhyse to the zoo**, yesterday. By the way, you moms are awesome. How do you that all the time? Anyway, we heard the lion growling yesterday. It was so awesome. His growl says, "*I could kill you.*" You don't mess with that. That is meditating. You are that focused and serious and intent on something. Day and night he is thinking on and going over the Word.

Do this.

Get the Word in your life. And get your life *from* the Word. Let me give you some thoughts on that.

**One:** *get a Bible.* That's obvious. We have free copies back there. I recommend ESV, NIV, NKJV, NASB, HCSB. If you can, get a study Bible. ESV, MacArthur, Reformation.

**Second:** *find a reading plan.* I encourage that. Our site has some, there are apps, some Bibles have plans. It is hard to wing it. Those give you a diet of Psalms, Gospels, Law.

**Third:** read anytime, but set a time. Block out time in the morning or evening or noon, to read.

**Four:** prepare for war. Things will come-up. Snooze buttons, phone calls, meetings, emails to deal with. Good things, not just bad things.

**Five:** Read in community. Discuss with others. Grapple these truths with others. Get in small groups together, Sunday school classes, meet together and discuss this.

**Six:** Humble your life before this book. You hear it. you repent. you submit to it. Don't think, "My *husband* needs this."

**Seven:** Read with the cross in mind. Keep the Gospel and Christ's perfect, atoning work in mind. He is the Living Word. You can't live this without Him. You weren't meant to!

## **Second, fruitfully endure all the seasons of life.**

Look at **verse 3**

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

So because he delights in God's law, the result is, he's always fruitful. *Whatever* comes his way, whatever the season, pain, suffering, prosperity, abundance, drought, wind, cold, snow, sleet, he fruitfully endures. Now this **verse is not commanding** anything of us, nor is the whole Psalm. He is not saying be the tree or yield fruit in season. **Verse 3** is a result verse.

**Gods word is the stream.** The law is always giving life and power and hope and courage to Him. But the **point** is to allure us and call us into this kind of life. He wants us delighting in God's word and always bearing fruit.

The happy life is the fruitful life.

The happy life looks up, not out. Your world can shake and tremble and collapse, but you don't. *Psalm 112:7 "He (the righteous) is not afraid of bad news, his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord."*

Notice the **end of 3 in all that he does, he prospers**. But what is prospering? Him or what he does? Perhaps what he does, his work or endeavors.

But look at 4 *The wicked are not so, but are like chaff (dead, dry, wheat) that the wind drives away*. This is suffering language. This is drought, wind, heat language. The wicked are swept away. The righteous are firm and planted. **He** keeps bearing fruit and prospering.

If you **know this God and delight in His word**, you can survive anything. Any suffering, any season, any pain, any betrayal, you can prosper. You can still love and serve and care and be controlled, in all kinds of seasons.

And, **you can survive blessings**. Yes, you heard right. You can survive blessings. Blessings are dangerous. They can wreck your faith. See **cancer** can threaten your faith. But so can **cake**.

You with me?

A promotion might kill you. Your heart might grab those things and trust those things and hope in those things and stiff arm God or just use God. Think of what Paul said. In **Philippians 4** he said *I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all these things through Christ who strengthens me*.

We don't think that way do we? No one gets a raise and quotes that. *"I can do all things through Christ."* We lose our job and quote that.

But true happiness, fruitfully endures all things. They hurt and suffer and go through agony OR prosper and flourish physically, but their heart keeps pounding for God, trusting Him, **singing** to Him, hoping in Him in all things. **But...** the wicked are not so. They are weightless and fruitless. They are tossed back and forth. The seasons define their joy.

So which are you? Are you enduring pain or prosperity fruitfully? Are you caving in?

### **Third, joyfully rest in God's care.**

Verse 6 *for the Lord knows the way of the righteous*, The words is not mere knowledge. It is care, protection. NIV says **The Lord watches over the way of the righteous**. He guards and preserves our way. So rest in it. You aren't in control. You don't need to be. Being happy means *releasing* control. You just give in to God. You let Him reign and rule and run your life. He knows your way.

Now we **need to clarify something**. In verse **1, 4, 5, 6** all mention the wicked in contrast to the righteous. So *why are some wicked and some righteous?*

Well, in one sense, all are wicked. No one is born righteous. No one is born good. God made all things good and rhythmic and beautiful. But Adam sinned. He fell. The Curse entered the world. **Romans 5** says, his guilt and death, spread to everyone. Even David, Israel's King, says "*Behold I was brought forth in iniquity*" (Ps. 51:5).

And I know it's Mother's Day. My wife loves our boys. She will turn green and grow muscles, if you harm is near them. But she knows her Bible. They are sinners with rebellious and hard hearts. All of us are. And you know this.

**Romans 1** says we exchange the truth about God, for a lie. We know what's right and we don't do it. **Who can look back** over their life, with no moral regrets? No one? We've all had conversations, transactions, thoughts, words, deeds, choices, that we regret.

**Romans 3** says *None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.*"

Those are Psalm quotations by Paul in **Romans 3**. They knew this then. This is a sobering truth for us. We sing here *All I Have Is Christ*. There is line that goes "*As I ran my hell-bound race, indifferent to the cost...*" I ran that race. I was on a path that would have destroyed me, though it **was clean and moral**. There were no drugs or alcohol, no immorality. But I was on a self-focused, me exalting path, God-belittling path. All *have sinned*. We deserve God's just and fitting and appropriate wrath.

Look at *verse 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand* (survive) *in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*. This is last day language.

So why is this guy, or anyone, righteous and blessed?

**He was rescued.** His ancestors were in Egypt, in slavery, suffering in bondage. And God brought them out and called them His own. We call that **grace**: one sided love! This man knows that grace and trusts in that grace and walks with this God. That is why He is righteous.

That is why we, as Christians are righteous. God rescued. Christ died in our place and took the wrath we deserved. He was the truly **Blessed Man**. He was righteous in all things. He had no sin, knew no sin. But he was made to be sin, to make us righteous. **God treated Jesus as a sinner.** God's Beloved Son, became God's enemy, to make us His enemies into His Son's and daughters. And **none of us deserved it.** God owed us nothing! Grace And so we boast in Him and Him alone. We rest in His care and knowledge of us.

**Psalm 31:15** *“My times are in your hand.”*

**Psalm 139:1-3**

*O LORD, you have searched me and known me!  
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from afar.  
You search out my path and my lying down  
and are acquainted with all my ways.*

Two weeks ago, Heather ordered our boys some clothes. We live at 331, but the package went to 301, just down from us, the mailman said. So I walked down **7 different times**, with no luck. The longer it went, the worse we thought. *“What jerks. Got our son's clothes!”* On trip 8 I prayed. It was quick, half convicted, but I prayed. I walked up, knocked, no answer. Knocked again, no answer. I turned to walk away, and the door opened. She apologized over and over, gave me the package, and I walked away thinking “How good is our God?! He is that close to us, that acquainted, that concerned with us.” I think.

He watches our ways. He never takes his **eye, hands, love** off you.

***But the way of the wicked will perish.*** . . . So if you're not a Christian, we are grateful you are here. Please come any time. But know, you will not survive God's judgment. You will perish. You need rescuing. You were **meant** to know and love God this God. But you've turned from Him. You need redemption and salvation. The happy life is in Him. Go to him. Call out to him.

So are you happy?

Will you delight in gods word? Seek to bear fruit in all times? Rest in Gods care for you?

Pray