

Series: Psalms

Title: Happy is Every One

Text: Ps 128: 1-6

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Our Psalm begins with a fact.

**Psalm 128: 1: «A Song of degrees.» Blessed [happy] *is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.***

Then he gives three pictures that we associate with happiness and blessedness. One is from one's occupation.

**Psalm 128: 2: For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy *shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.***

Two, the picture of a fruitful wife bearing many children and all the children being about your table.

**Psalm 128: 3: Thy wife *shall be* as a fruitful vine by the sides of [within] thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.**

Three the picture of one's nation and city being blessed so that one sees his great, grandchildren and peace upon the nation.

**Psalm 128: 4: Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. 5: The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. 6 Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, *and peace upon Israel.***

**Proposition:** True happiness is to fear the Lord and walk in his ways and the blessings of God are spiritual.

## THE FACT

**Psalm 128: 1: «A Song of degrees.» Blessed *is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.***

Every one, each and every one, that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways, no exceptions, is blessed. They are happy. The converse is true. No one is happy, with true spiritual, inward blessedness, who does not fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

The fear of the Lord is of God. No sinner fears God by our first birth.

Romans 3: 18: There is no fear of God before their eyes.

No sinner can give another sinner a fear of the Lord. Only the Lord creates a fear and reverence in the heart in the new birth. God promised concerning his elect,

Jeremiah 32: 37: I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger...and cause them to dwell safely. 38: And they shall be my people and I will be their God. 39: I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them. 40: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

Note that when God gives one heart, God also gives one way. That way is Christ. God creates a new heart and gives fear of the Lord by making Christ the one Way of salvation unto his elect. Christ is the one Way that God accepts his elect because Christ is the one faithful servant who feared God and walked in his ways in perfection. Concerning the Lord Jesus as the Representative Head of his people, scripture says,

Isaiah 11: 2: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; 3 And shall make

him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

We will look at Psalm 111 to see how God puts his fear and reverence in the heart of his elect by making us behold his holy name in Christ crucified.

Psalm 111: 9: He sent redemption unto his people

In regeneration, of God is Christ made unto us Redemption (1 Cor 1: 30). God is holy. Therefore, God our Father sent Christ unto his people who redeemed us.

Psalm 111: 9:...He hath commanded his covenant forever

God commanded his everlasting covenant of grace forever but he commanded it be in righteousness. So Christ came not to destroy the law given at Sinai but to fulfil. He alone did! All God's elect sinned. We had to die and be made perfectly righteous before God's holy law. Christ fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law on behalf of his people. God commanded his covenant forever so Christ fulfilled his covenant, his law, and honored it forever that God might be merciful and make his covenant of grace with his people.

Psalm 111: 9: Holy and reverend is his name.

In the new birth, the Spirit purged our conscience making us behold God's holy and reverend name in Christ crucified! God is so holy. Therefore, God our Father sent his Son who took the place of his people under the curse. Christ redeemed us from the curse of that old covenant by being made a curse for us. In Christ crucified we see God's name is holy and reverend.

Psalm 111:10: The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom:

Through the gospel, the Spirit of God put the fear of the Lord in our new heart when of God Christ was made Wisdom unto us (1 Cor 1: 30). The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. Children are not full grown at birth. They are born at separate times and grow at different rates. So it is with God's children. The fear of the LORD is the *beginning* of wisdom. He creates a change in us right away giving faith and repentance to believe on Christ and obey him. But he grows us in the fear of the Lord by his grace over time.

Psalm 111: 10...a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*:

Christ gives us *a good understanding* of the everlasting covenant of grace. He gives us a good understanding that Christ is the Righteousness and Holiness of his people. Christ gives us two commandments. One, he commands us to believe on him and walk by faith, not by sight. Two, he commands us to love one another as Christ loved us and gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savor. By his grace, we do his commandments.

Psalm 111: 10...his praise endureth for ever.

By giving us fear and reverence of the Lord, we give him all the praise and glory for this work of salvation. Thus, we are happy, "*Blessed [happy] is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.*"

The fear of the Lord makes us depart from evil.

Proverbs 16: 6: By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil...

We hate evil: the evil of will-worship, the evil of self-righteousness, and most of all, the evil we still see in our own sinful flesh--in our own thoughts and deeds

Proverbs 8: 13: The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

Those things steal our happiness in Christ. David hated his own vain thoughts. Paul hated his own sins. "What I would, that do I not, but what I hate, that do I" (Rom 7:15). But there is no discipline like the discipline of forgiveness. While beholding the sins of our flesh always before us, the Spirit of God makes us behold God's unchangeable mercy in his forgiveness for Christ's sake alone. Thus God grows us in reverence in our heart and obedience to Christ.

Psalm 130: 3: If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4: But *there is* forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. 5: I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. 6: My soul *waiteth* for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: *I say, more than* they that watch for the morning. 7: Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is* plenteous redemption

He grows us to behold his name is holy and reverend by continuing to forgive our sins for Christ's sake. God remembers the sins of Christs redeemed no more because Christ put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself. Therefore, God justly keeps mercy for thousands who Christ redeemed with his precious blood. His mercy in Christ grows us in fear and reverence of the Lord.

It is not fear of hell. The love of God casts out that fear. This is a godly fear. It is a child reverencing our father by the spirit of adoption.

Romans 8: 15: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The fear of God humbles us to trust the Lord--"be not high minded, but fear" (Rom 11: 20). We ask God to keep us-to be a sanctuary for us. We seek to obey him. But our confidence is that only in Christ does God beholds us perfectly faithful and righteous.

## THE PICTURES

These are temporal pictures that we associate with happiness. But they picture the spiritual happiness God gives us. Our blessedness is Christ himself.

The first blessing that makes us happy is that God promises we shall eat the labor of our hands.

**Psalm 128: 2: For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.**

The Lord provides us with a job. By his grace we eat the labor of our hands. We give God the glory because he gave it!

Ecclesiastes 5: 18: Behold *that* which I have seen: *it is* good and comely *for one* to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it *is* his portion.

But what if God's saint fears the Lord, walks in his ways, works a job but they are not rich in temporal things. Well, God provides our temporal need and we are happy. But the true blessing, the true happiness, is spiritual. What was the labor of our Lord Jesus Christ? He said,

Luke 2: 49: I must be about my Father's business.

John 19: 30...it is finished!

God's blessings are spiritual. They are due to the labor of Christ's hands and the true blessing is Christ himself! God our Father blessed us with all *spiritual blessings* in heavenly places according as he chose us in him. By God's grace working in our new heart and giving us fear of him to walk in his ways, we labor in prayer and God blesses us in the heart with Christ. We assemble and labor for the meat that endures to everlasting life. God blesses our labor by giving us Christ! We labor to enter into his rest. God makes us happy to rest in Christ! The happiness Christ gives us is himself: the Bread from heaven, the Water of Life,

the unsearchable riches of Christ, the Joy of his salvation! Even our temporal job is to further the gospel of Christ and minister to needy brethren. In all of our labor, God blesses us spiritually, inwardly with Christ.

Hebrews 6: 10: For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister....14...Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

Secondly, the picture of happiness is a fruitful wife bearing many children and all the children being about our table.

**Psalm 128: 3: Thy wife *shall be* as a fruitful vine [in] the [inner compartment] of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.**

God does give a spouse and children and we thank God and are happy. But Christ is the Preeminent Husband, *we* are the bride; Christ is the Everlasting Father, *we* are the children. It is Christ who makes his bride, his church, fruitful. He produces his children by the Holy Spirit through the gospel. Each elect child Christ redeemed are the travail of his soul!

Galatians 4:28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

Our Savior keeps his children full of the oil of the Spirit like olive plants about his table in his house. David said, "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever." (Ps 52: 8). Even the children Christ produces through the gospel are our spiritual children! John and Paul called them "my little children" (Gal 4: 19; 1 Jn 2: 1; 3: 18). Indeed, God blesses his saints with faithful husbands and wives and physical children. But our true happiness is spiritual and therefore lasting. Things that are seen are temporal but things not seen are eternal.

We can preach in way that not only discourages God' saints but also promotes self-righteousness. What about those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways but do not have these things? Or have them taken away? If you fear God and walk in his ways and prosper in your labor and you have a family then be thankful, God gave all! But know it is a blessing of God's grace not merit. So do not think less of brethren who do not have it! There are plenty who are rich, who have good wives and many children, who have no fear of God, who live wicked lives.

Job 21: 7: Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? 8: Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes....10: Their bull gendereth, and faileth not...14: Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. 15: What *is* the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

And sometimes God removes his temporal gifts, even from those who fear God and walk in his ways. What about Job?

Job 1: 8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

Job feared God and eschewed evil. What a commendation from God! Yet, the LORD permitted the devil to take his children, all the labor of his hands, his servants in one day then his health! The only one the devil left was Job's wife. The reason may be that she did not believe the gospel. She told Job to *curse God and die*. She is not mentioned as the one who bore Job children in the end. But Job's blessedness was not temporal. His happiness was the Lord himself! So Job knew it was the Lord who removed his children, riches, and health.

Job 2:10 But [Job] said unto [his wife], Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips

But if Christ is our happiness then when God takes away temporal gifts, we still have inner joy though we suffer outwardly. While suffering, Job's happiness was Christ.

Job 19: 25: For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: 26: And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.

David feared the Lord and walked in his ways. God called David "a man after mine own heart" (Acts 13: 22). God used him to write the Psalms. Yet David's sons were not olive trees, but thorns, they sought to kill him. What was David's happiness?

2 Samuel 23:5: Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire, although he make *it* not to grow.

Hear a few of our Lord's beatitudes and know that the happiness of God's child is spiritual.

Matthew 5: 3: Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4: Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. 5: Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth....10: Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

This last picture is of a prosperous nation where one will live to see his great grandchildren. But some of God's saints live in a poverty-stricken nation. Still they have this spiritual blessing. It is obvious these blessings are spiritual from this last picture.

**Psalm 128: 4: Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. 5: The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.**

The Lord is not blessing us out of earthly Zion but heavenly Zion and that with spiritual blessings in the new heart. We do not see the good of earthly Jerusalem but we see the good of heavenly Jerusalem, the church. We are happy Christ has made us his holy nation. "For our [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Php 3: 20). Like Abraham, we look for a city whose builder and maker is God (Heb 11: 10).

**Psalm 128: 6: Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, *and* peace upon Israel.**

Christ prayed not only for those he had called but for those who would believe through their word. He continues to intercede for us with the same petition. Therefore, in glory, we shall behold *our children's children* in those Christ called through our gospel and those he called through their word. And because Christ is our Peace, we shall see peace upon his spiritual Israel no matter what happens!

So what have we seen in this Psalm? Fear God and walk in his ways; that is true happiness. Be thankful with temporal gifts that God gives but do not let the temporal be your happiness; God is and shall take them all away, until at last God takes our life. The blessings that truly make God's saints happy are spiritual: Christ himself!

Psalm 73: 25: Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee.

**Amen!**