

## BLESSED IS THE MAN—AND WOMAN!

Let's **read together** Psalm 19:11 as found on your outline: "Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward." If I would have been thinking ahead a little better, we could have been doing this each week—and you would probably have had the verse memorized by now!

Psalm 19:11 has served as our over-arching theme because it reminds us **why** we should want to **know** what the Bible says—and **do** what the Bible says!

What is **reason #1?** Because of the **warnings** God gives us! **Why** does God warn us?

The same reason we **warn** our children and grandchildren—we **love** them and want to **protect** them!

What is **reason #2?** Because God promises **great reward** to those that keep His Word!

To sum up the verse, then, there is **protection** in the warnings—and **blessings** in obedience!

Last week, we looked at the blessing of the "peace of God which passeth all understanding" as found in Philippians 4:6-7. We noted that that peace **does not** come automatically. There are things we need **to do** in order for God to **give us** that kind of peace. What do we have **to do**?

First, we need to **put off** worry! We need to recognize that worry **is a sin** because it indicates we have **doubts** about **who** God is—and **what** God says!

Second, we need to **purpose to pray**—with thanksgiving! But how can we pray with thanksgiving—especially in the "anxiety-producing" situations that make us want to worry?

The way to put off worry—and the way to pray with thanksgiving—are **both the same**: we need to **choose to believe** what God says!

--We can **stop worrying**—and pray with thanksgiving—because God **knows what we need** even before we ask (Mt 6:8,32)

--We can **stop worrying**—and pray with thanksgiving—because we know **nothing is too hard for God** (Jer 32:17; Lk 1:37)

-- We can **stop worrying**—and pray with thanksgiving—because we know God "**works all things together for good** to them that love God" (Rom 8:28)

--And we can **stop worrying**—and pray with thanksgiving—because God's way is perfect! Ps 18:30 "As for God, His way is perfect..." That means God **perfectly** answers prayer! God cannot **answer a prayer** wrongly because He cannot **do wrong**! It may not "perfect" according **to us**, but it is **truly perfect** because He alone is the **only One who is perfect**!

And when we **choose to have** faith in what God says, He will give us a peace that **passes all understanding**. What does that mean? It is peace that is beyond our ability **to comprehend—or to explain**. It is a peace that—humanly speaking—**does not "make sense"** to those around us. And it is a peace that will **carry you through storms** and trials that would be impossible for you to go through in your own strength.

This morning, we are going to look at **some more rewards** that comes from keeping—obeying—God's Word. Similar to last week, we will again be looking at a familiar portion of Scripture. Please take your Bibles and turn to Psalm 1; follow along as I read verses 1-6 (read).

First let's consider... **1. The pronouncement of blessing**

Verse 1 "Blessed is the man..."

If I were to ask you, "What does it mean to be blessed," my guess is that some of you would answer: "Having **blessings** from God!" The follow-up question would then naturally be, "What are **blessings** from God?"

We often think of blessings as **good things** that we get from God. Sometimes it's health...or wealth... or a house...or a job...or a promotion. But blessings are not just **possessions**; sometimes they are **people!**

--To have a **spouse** is a blessing!

**Prov 18:22** “Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and **obtaineth favour** of the Lord.”

--**Children** are a blessing!

**Psalms 127:3** “Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is **His reward**.”

--**Friends** are a blessing!

**Prov 27:9** “Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's **friend** by hearty counsel.” **Eccl 4:9-10** “**Two are better than** one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the **one will lift up his fellow**: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.”

But blessings are not confined to just the things we can **see or touch**, are they? To be blessed means to have the **favor of God**—and the favor of God has as much to do with our **inner** man as it does our **outer** man.

It means to have **peace** because we are forgiven...and **contentment** because we belong to God...and **joy** because no matter what happens in this life, **the best is yet to come** if we are a child of God!

Back to our verse. Hebrew scholars tell us that in the original, the word “Blessed” **is plural**, so we could read it like this: “Oh, the blessednesses.” A little clunky, but certainly conveys the idea that God is not talking about being blessed once. It means **a state** of being continually showered with an **abundance of blessings!**

The pronouncement is from God. And God the Supreme “Blesser”—the only One who can **truly** bless—says to us: “Here is the man who is filled with an abundance of blessednesses!”

God doesn't **just** make a pronouncement, though! He goes on to describe what the man **doesn't do**—then what he **does do—then** to what being abundantly blessed **looks like**.

And by describing this man, God gives us... **2. The plan (method) for being blessed**

Notice vs 1 again: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

It should hardly come as a surprise that if we want to be **blessed** by God, we need to ...

#### A. Separate ourselves from sinners

Can't spend a lot of time on this, but I do want to point out what seems to be a downward progression of what happens if we “hang around” sinners too much.

--Our **tolerance of sin** goes up. We go from being around it (walking)...to looking at it (standing)...to participating in it (sitteth)

--Our **taking advice from sinners** goes up. We go from **taking their** counsel...to **adopting their ways**...to **teaching** their way (in the seat)

--Eventually—if we tolerate sin and take the advice of sinners—we will **take on their character**.

--We will go from being **ungodly**—which means leaving God out of our life...

--To being **a sinner**—which means **choosing to do wrong** and **knowing** we are doing wrong...

--To being **a scorner**—meaning one who **mocks** at God and the idea of judgment!

That's the progression, isn't it? We've seen it in people's lives—and maybe have been down that road ourselves! God cannot—and will not—shower us with blessednesses if we refuse to separate from sinners!

**But it is not enough** just to separate ourselves from evil influences, however. We must replace the bad with good. We have before us a pattern that is repeated fairly often in the Bible: **stop** doing the wrong things, **start** doing the right things.

--In Psalm 19:11, we read about the warnings first—then the blessings.

--From Phil 4:6-7, we were instructed to put off worry—then put on prayer.

--In Eph 4:22, we are told to “put off the old man, which is corrupt” and to “put on the new man” (Eph 4:24)

--And here we see that we are to stop mingling with sinners—and start saturating ourselves in the Word!

## B. Saturate ourselves with Scripture

What does it mean to **saturate** ourselves with Scripture? To saturate **means** to soak it in...to absorb it...to fill ourselves with it. God wants us to do that with His Word! How do we know?

Because He tells us in the end of vs 2 “...and in His law doth he **meditate** day and night.”

That’s the idea behind meditate. We are to “chew” on it like a cows **chew on their cud**. We are to roll it over and over again in our minds. **Is it hard** to meditate on God’s Word? Yes—and no!

--On one hand, it is hard to meditate because it **requires thinking**—and thinking can be **hard work!**

--On the other hand, if we **delight** in God’s Word, we won’t feel **forced** to think about it—we will **want to!**

Here’s **an illustration** that some of you have heard me share before. While in Saudi Arabia for Desert Storm, getting letters from my wife was always the highlight of my day!

--It was a **delight** to read those letters! It wasn’t something I **dreaded**...it wasn’t something I looked at as **a demand** placed upon me...and it wasn’t **a duty** I felt I had to do!

--Instead, it was something I **couldn’t wait** to do...it was something **I looked forward to doing**...it was something I **eagerly anticipated and delighted in!**

--I would read her letters **first**—and I would read her letters **last!** The second time, I would read them more slowly and thoughtfully, getting everything I could out of them to make sure I didn’t miss anything.

That’s how God wants us to read His Word, isn’t it? If we **delight in Him**, we will want to **hear** what He says! And if we **love** Him, we will want **to do** what He says! Jesus Himself said that very thing in **John 14:15** “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” What about you?

What’s your attitude towards God’s Word? Do you **delight** in it—or read it only out of **duty**?

Here’s **a question we struggle with sometime**: Is it better to read the Bible **out of duty**—or not read it at all?

The answer should be **obvious**: **It is better** to read the Bible **out of duty** than to not read it at all!

But why? Here’s why! **John 4:19** says, “We love Him, because He first loved us.”

--Pretty straight forward, right? Our **love for God** is a response to **God’s love for us**.

--So... if we want to **love Him more**, we need to **think about His** love for us.

And the best way to do that is to **meditate on what He tells us about His love** for us in His Word!

As we do that, **duty will turn** to delight!

But it **doesn’t work the other way around!** If we decide, ‘I’m not going to meditate upon God’s Word until I delight in it,’ it won’t happen! God **uses His Word** to create a hunger for His Word!

Lastly, let’s consider... **3. The particulars (distinctives) of those who are blessed**

So what are the **particulars**...what are the **characteristics**...what are the **marks** of those who are blessed by God? God doesn’t give us a list, per se. Instead, He gives us a “word picture” —**of a tree!** Please follow along as I read verse 3: “And he shall be **like a tree**, planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” I might be trying to squeeze more out of it than is intended, but I see five blessings here in this verse. On a side note, Jeremiah 17:8 is very similar to Psalm 1:3.

### A. The blessing of being possessed by God

“And he shall be like a tree, planted...” Of this phrase, **Spurgeon writes**: “not a wild tree, but a tree planted, chosen, considered as property...” A “planted” tree is actually a **transplanted** tree, isn’t it? It was a tree that was somewhere else but was chosen by **the planter**—and **moved** to the location that the **planter** wanted it.

Is that not true of us? God’s children **are God’s** children—we **belong to Him!** He **possesses** us—and **plants us** where He wants us. Jesus says as much in the parable of the tares and wheat in Matthew 13. In Jesus’ explanation of the parable, He says this in **Mt 13:37-38** “He [Jesus] answered and said unto them, He that **soweth the good seed** is the Son of man; <sup>38</sup>The field is the world; the **good seed are the children** of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;”

Is that a blessing to you? To think that God **saved** you—and **made you** His—and **planted you** where He wants you should be a blessing to your heart! “Now I belong to Jesus; Jesus belongs to me—not for the years of time alone, But for eternity.” How wonderful it is to be possessed by God!

#### B. The blessing of protection and provision

Vs 3 “And he shall be like a tree planted by the **rivers** of water...” How **many** rivers? Not told—but obviously **more than one!** If one goes dry, there is another one already there to provide what is needed! So the tree is abundantly provided for—and protected from drought.

Is that not true of the person who delights in God’s Word? There is an abundance of promises—Peter calls them “exceeding great and precious”—that will protect us and provide for the needs of our hearts.

**When?** Always! In the darkest of storms...in the fiercest of winds...and in the driest of droughts, the rivers of the promises of God’s Word will provide for you and protect you.

#### C. The blessing of fruit production

Vs 3 “...that bringeth forth his fruit in his season...” A **literal** tree does not bear fruit **immediately**—it must **grow** first. And a **literal** tree does not bear fruit **year-round**—there is a **season** when it produces fruit. So to what degree do we apply this to ourselves?

--Can we say we are **too young** in the faith and need to grow before we produce fruit?

--Can we say, ‘I don’t have to bear fruit right now because it is **not fruit-bearing** season? I’m not 100% sure that either of these convey the intent of the phrase “...that bringeth forth his fruit in his season...”

On one hand, a Christian should **always be bearing** the fruit of the Spirit as found in **Galatians 5:22-23** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, <sup>23</sup> Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

On the other hand, there are “seasons of life”—youth, mature adulthood, and what a friend of mine refers to as “the fourth quarter.” The person who is blessed by God will bring forth the **appropriate fruit** for the **stage of life** they are in.

And yet another way to look at it is like this: There are **seasons of life we go through** that are not necessarily **age**-related. Instead, they are **circumstances** we go through—and God will enable us to produce the **right fruit** at the **right time** for the circumstances we are in. Dr. Keen in a devotional entitled “The True Christian” put it like this: “Liberality when riches increase. Humility when cheered by others. Patience in suffering. Resignation in bereavement. Faith in trial.”

([https://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/keen/the\\_true\\_christian.htm](https://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/keen/the_true_christian.htm))

#### D. The blessing of perseverance

Where do I see that? In the phrase “...his leaf also shall not wither...” Withering leaves are usually a sign that the tree **is dying**; a tree whose leaves are not withering **indicate life**. The person who is blessed by God will **always show signs of life** and will persevere—they will remain true to the end! **Frank Garlock**—hymn writer, musician, and Father-in-law to Patch the Pirate—passed away yesterday. Last Monday, less than a week ago, a friend was visiting with him and Frank Garlock said to him, “I have mixed emotions. I don’t want to leave the family, but I want to go to Jesus.” No anger...no bitterness...no dread—just a calm, peaceful, confidence that all was well with his soul. He remained true to Christ! His leaf did not wither! That is the blessing of God!

#### E. The blessing of prosperity

End of vs 3 “...and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” What does that mean? Does it mean that everything we touch turns to gold—and that we will **not fail** in anything? No; I don’t believe that is what it means.

On one hand, God does allow His people to “prosper”—to be successful—in what they do. Frank Garlock was a very successful hymn writer and musician. A friend of mine is a very successful accountant and business owner. I was successful at a number of things in my military and post-military careers—not because of me, but because I tried to do things God’s way and He “prospered” me.

On the other hand, many of God’s people have had very little in what we would call “outward prosperity.” Jesus didn’t seem to have much in the way of property or possessions; neither did Paul. So what does “whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” mean?

I could be wrong, but I believe it primarily means that whatsoever we do *for the Lord* will prosper. **Mark 9:41** “For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.” **I Cor 3:6** “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” Simply put, what we do for the Lord will be noticed...and rewarded...and prosper.

What are the blessednesses of the man who separates himself from sinners and saturates himself in—and with—God’s Word?

- 1) He has the blessing of being possessed by God
- 2) He has the blessing of being provided for and protected by God
- 3) He has the blessing of producing the right fruit at the right time in any circumstance
- 4) He has the blessing of persevering to the end
- 5) And he has the blessing of prospering in what he does for the Lord

Do you want those things? We can have them if we follow God’s plan. What is God’s plan?  
Separate from sinners—and saturate ourselves in His Word!

So what does God want you to do with what you heard this morning?

1. First, evaluate your relationship with the unsaved. Are they your best friends? Do you hang around them the most? If so, you are not following God’s plan. Your best friends should be God-fearing people—not ungodly ones!
2. Second, evaluate your relationship with the Word of God. Do you delight in it? If not, here’s what I suggest you do.
  - a) Agree with God that your lack of love for Him and His Word is sin and ask Him to forgive you
  - b) Discipline yourself to read your Bible—in other words, make yourself do it even if you don’t “feel” like it. Before you read, though, ask God to calm your mind and open your eyes to see things in His Word. **Ps 119:18** “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”
3. Third, start memorizing Scripture. You can’t roll it over in your mind if it’s not there! How do you do that? Write it down on a 3x5 card—and carry it with you!
4. Lastly—but most importantly—evaluate your relationship to Christ. Separating from sinful people—and reading the Bible—will not get you to heaven! Only Jesus can do that!  
Has there been a point in time when you have transferred your trust from trying to save yourself to trusting only in Him? You won’t get to heaven if you don’t do that!