

Happiness in the Psalms

By Mark Mayberry

1/2/2011

Introduction

Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are universal goals. Everybody wants to be happy, but many look for happiness in the wrong places. Neither position nor possessions make one happy or unhappy. Disposition is an oft overlooked key. Heartfelt happiness comes from sharing a meaningful relationship with God, family, brethren, and our fellow man.

It is interesting to study the words “happy” and “blessed” as they are used in the Psalms. Family and children bring us happiness and joy (Psa. 127:3-5). Helping those who are less fortunate also is a source of happiness (Psa. 41:1-2). However, the vast majority of such verses focus on our relationship with God (Psa. 84:4-5; 144:15).

*Psalm 127:3-5 ... 3 Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward. 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. 5 **How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them;** They will not be ashamed When they speak with their enemies in the gate. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 41:1-2 ... 1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. **How blessed is he who considers the helpless;** The Lord will deliver him in a day of trouble. 2 The Lord will protect him and keep him alive, And he shall be called blessed upon the earth; And do not give him over to the desire of his enemies. (NASB95)*

Psalm 84:4-5 ... 4 How blessed are those who dwell in Your house! They are ever praising You. Selah. 5 How blessed is the man whose strength is in You, In whose heart are the highways to Zion! (NASB95)

Psalm 144:15 ... 15 How blessed are the people who are so situated; How blessed are the people whose God is the Lord! (NASB95)

Trusting God

We can be happy trusting God (Psa. 40:4-5; 84:8-12; 146:1-7).

*Psalm 40:4-5 ... 4 **How blessed is the man who has made the Lord his trust,** And has not turned to the proud, nor to those who lapse into falsehood. 5 Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders which You have done, And Your thoughts toward us; There is none to compare with You. If I would declare and speak of them, They would be too numerous to count. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 84:8-12 ... 8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah. 9 Behold our shield, O God, And look upon the face of Your anointed. 10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. 12 **O Lord of hosts, How blessed is the man who trusts in You!** (NASB95)*

*Psalm 146:1-7 ... 1 Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! 2 I will praise the Lord while I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. 3 Do not trust in princes, In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. 4 His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; In that very day his thoughts perish. 5 **How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, Whose hope is in the Lord his God,** 6 Who made heaven and earth, The sea and all that is in them; Who keeps faith forever; 7 Who executes justice for the oppressed; Who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free. (NASB95)*

Reverencing God

We can be happy reverencing God (Psa. 34:8-14; 112:1-3; 128:1-6).

*Psalm 34:8-14 ... 8 **O taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!** 9 O fear the Lord, you His saints; For to those who fear Him there is no want. 10 The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; But they who seek the Lord shall not be in want of any good thing. 11 Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. 12 Who is the man who desires life And loves length of days that he may see good? 13 Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit. 14 Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 112:1-3 ... 1 **Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, Who greatly delights in His commandments.** 2 His descendants will be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright will be blessed. 3 Wealth and riches are in his house, And his righteousness endures forever. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 128:1-6 ... 1 A Song of Ascents. **How blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, Who walks in His ways.** 2 When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, You will be happy and it will be well with you. 3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine Within your house, Your children like olive plants Around your table. 4 Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed Who fears the Lord. 5 The Lord bless you from Zion, And may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. 6 Indeed, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel! (NASB95)*

Obeying God

We can be happy obeying God (Psa. 1:1-6; 106:1-3; 119:1-3).

*Psalm 1:1-6 ... 1 **How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!** 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers. 4 The wicked are not so, But they are like chaff which the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. 6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked will perish. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 106:1-3 ... 1 Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 2 Who can speak of the mighty deeds of the Lord, Or can show forth all His praise? 3 **How blessed are those who keep justice, Who practice righteousness at all times!** (NASB95)*

*Psalm 119:1-3 ... 1 How blessed are those whose way is blameless, Who walk in the law of the Lord. 2 **How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, Who seek Him with all their heart.** 3 They also do no unrighteousness; They walk in His ways. (NASB95)*

Worshipping God

We can be happy worshipping God (Psa. 2:10-12; 65:1-4; 89:11-18).

*Psalm 2:10-12 ... 10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. 11 Worship the Lord with reverence And rejoice with trembling. 12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. **How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!** (NASB95)*

*Psalm 65:1-4 ... 1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. A Song. There will be silence before You, and praise in Zion, O God, And to You the vow will be performed. 2 O You who hear prayer, To You all men come. 3 Iniquities prevail against me; As for our transgressions, You forgive them. 4 **How blessed is the one whom You choose and bring near to You To dwell in Your courts.** We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Your holy temple. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 89:11-18 ... 11 The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours; The world and all it contains, You have founded them. 12 The north and the south, You have created them; Tabor and Hermon shout for joy at Your name. 13 You have a strong arm; Your hand is mighty, Your right hand is exalted. 14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Lovingkindness and truth go before You. 15 **How blessed are the people who know the joyful sound!** O Lord, they walk in the light of Your countenance. 16 In Your name they rejoice all the day, And by Your righteousness they are exalted. 17 For You are the glory of their strength, And by Your favor our horn is exalted. 18 For our shield belongs to the Lord, And our king to the Holy One of Israel. (NASB95)*

Accepting Correction From God

We can be happy receiving correction from God (Psa. 32:1-8; 51:1-15; 94:12-14).

*Psalm 32:1-8 ... 1 A Psalm of David. A Maskil. **How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!** 2 **How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!** 3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer.Selah. 5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin.Selah. 6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. 7 You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance.Selah. 8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you. (NASB95)*

Psalm 51:1-15 ... 1 For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. 4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. 6 Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom. 7 Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. 9 Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You. 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise. (NASB95)

Psalm 94:12-14 ... 12 Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O Lord, And whom You teach out of Your law; 13 That You may grant him relief from the days of adversity, Until a pit is dug for the wicked. 14 For the Lord will not abandon His people, Nor will He forsake His inheritance. (NASB95)

Conclusion

Temporal and eternal happiness depend on our relationship with God. Are you a child of God? Do you share a covenant relationship with him? Have you sought his forgiveness? Have you obeyed the saving gospel of Christ?