

***"Tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"-1King 22:16***

## Blessed is the Man



In one sense, "blessed" means *to make happy*. This is a universal desire of every man, woman, and child. Who doesn't want to be happy?

### Who is Happy?

God, through King David, communicates the state of a man who is happy. "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its seasons, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper" (Ps. 1:1-3).

David expresses happiness first in the negative and then in the positive. Happiness is:

- not walking in the counsel of the ungodly.
- not standing in the path of sinners.
- not sitting in the seat of the scornful.
- delighting in the law of the Lord.
- meditating on God's law day and night.

### Happiness: Not Walking in the Counsel of the Ungodly

All men are born into this world, innocent and without sin. But through the weakness of our flesh, we all sin (Rom. 3:23). When we sin, we heed the counsel of the ungodly, whether it's the counsel of false religious teachers or worldly lusts.

### Happiness: Not Standing in the Path of Sinners

When we heed ungodly counsel, we sin. Unless we quickly repent, we adopt an ungodly lifestyle that becomes our walk of life, rather than walking in the Light.

### Happiness: Not Sitting in the Seat of the Scornful

If we walk in the path of sinners, we eventually sit in the seat of the scornful. Darkness hates the light; therefore, it is scornful toward people walking in the light. People who harden their hearts against God are scornful of the righteous, God's children.

### Happiness: Delighting in the Law of the Lord

Notice that happiness is a state of mind, not a state of affairs nor a station in life.

We are happy because we delight in the law of the Lord --- we do not delight in sin. We have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; we abhor evil and cling to good; we abstain from every form of evil; we avoid evil companions.

Because we delight in the law of the Lord, we don't participate in sin. We don't even entertain evil thoughts.

### Happiness: Meditating on God's Law Day and Night

Since we delight in the law of the Lord, we meditate upon His law day and night. We think about the things revealed in God's word, and live the way He commands.

Paul expresses these thoughts like this, "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you" (Phil. 4:8-9).

### Result of Godly Happiness

Because we delight in the law of the Lord and mediate in it day and night, we are **like a planted tree**, not a wild tree. We

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are chosen of the Lord, a special tree that He cares for, cultivates, fertilizes, prunes, and loves.

Jesus describes this relationship as a vine and branch. "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. . . . Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing" (**Jn. 15:1, 4-5**).

As God's tree, we are **planted by the rivers of water**. There is an overabundance from which to drink from the Lord. Therefore, we grow in the Lord, standing strong in this present age against sin, and in the age to come, obtaining eternal life.

Because we are God's tree, planted by the rivers of water and strengthened by Him, we are **fruitful**. We are filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, walking in a manner worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him in all respects, and bearing fruit in every good work (**Col. 1:9-10**).

Therefore, we **prosper in everything we do**. Godly men, doing godly things, always prosper, judging success based on the spiritual rather than the fleshly.

We are like Paul, who says, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me" (**Gal. 2:20**).

## Prescription for Happiness

To be happy:

- Don't walk in the counsel of the ungodly.
- Don't stand in the path of sinners.
- Don't sit in the seat of the scornful.
- Delight in the law of the Lord.
- Meditate on God's law day and night. -Allan McNabb

## Bible Works

Ephesians 2:8-10 reads as follows, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His

workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

This passage is often used as a proof text for faith only doctrine, but a careful reading of the passage will not allow such teaching. The reason why so many misunderstand this passage is because they fail to distinguish between the different types of works mentioned in the Bible.

Let's take a look at some of the different types of works that are revealed in scriptures:

### Works of the Law

Paul spoke of such works when he said, "**knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified**" (**Galatians 2:16**). From this passage we learn that in order to be justified by God, a sinner must place his faith in Christ, and not in the Law of Moses. The word "justified" means "counted righteous" or "declared righteous" by God. Paul taught that keeping the Laws of Moses will not save a man; however, he did not teach, that a man is justified by faith alone.

### Good Works

Ephesians 2:10 states, "**For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**" Every individual Christian is responsible to do good works.

### Works of Faith

In John chapter six we read about the feeding of the five thousand, who were fed with five loaves and two fish. Following this miraculous event, the multitude went looking for Jesus. When they found Him, Jesus knowing their hearts said, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father**

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has set His seal on Him” (John 6:26-27). Upon hearing the words of Jesus the crowd asked, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Jesus replied, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.” (John 6:29-30). Jesus taught that faith is a work!

### Works of Man's Righteousness

Paul declares, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5).

### Works by Which Man may Boast

The Ephesians were informed, “Not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:9).

As you can see there are various types of works mentioned in the scriptures. A student of the scriptures must be careful when reading a passage that mentions works. When reading such passages, we must read the text in its entirety and draw the proper conclusion regarding what sort of works are under consideration.

Consider the following passages below and answer the questions.

“Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it” (Jonah 3:10). Does this passage teach that God sees our good works, and that those good works influence His decisions about us?

“For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God” (John 3:20-21). Does this passage teach that “our deeds” must be clearly seen, “that they have been done in God”?

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we

might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified” (Galatians 2:16). According to Galatians 2:16 are we saved “by works?”

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10). Does this passage teach that there are works that God requires us to walk in, i.e. do?

“But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:4-5). According to Titus 3:4-5 are we saved “by works of righteousness which we have done?”

“You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only” (James 2:24).

Does James teach, that a man is “justified by works, and not by faith only?”

Based on the above passages of scripture it is apparent that the Bible teaches that there are works that do not save us, yet it also teaches that there are works that do save us, which shows that there are different kinds of works. We must make a distinction as to what kind of work is being considered in a given passage.

There is one type of work that saves, and that is the “works of God,” works of righteousness which He has commanded us to do. Peter said, “Whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him” (Acts 10:25-44). What about you, have you submitted and done the works of God that you might be found accepted by him?

—Fred Singleton

*“Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You. Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. With my lips I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth” (Psalm 119:11-13).*