

C.S. Lewis said it best:

“Hunger would be absurd if there was no such thing as food. Thirst would be absurd if there was no such thing as water. Loneliness would be absurd if there was no possibility of satisfying that yearning in relationship with another human being. The desire to find God would be absurd if He did not exist.”

Add to this that after finding God, life would be absurd if there was no such thing as newness... blessing in Him.

**Psalm 1:1a: Blessed is the man....”**

- **Grammatical Usage:** “**Blessed**” or in Hebrew, “’aš·rê-” meaning, “to go straight, to advance; to be happy”; “**man**” or “hā·’îš,” meaning, “man; person; individual.”
- **Literal Interpretation:** Living righteously, advancing in life, satisfied is the person....
- **Contextual/Comparison:** God keeps His Word: God continually uses His Word. God wants us to be blessed and in this psalm He gives us a picture of the blessed man and then tells us why he is blessed:

**1. GOD’S PICTURE OF THE BLESSED MAN**

If we ask, ‘What is the blessed, or happy, man like?’ **v. 3** tells us. “**He is like...**” and then follows a seven-fold description of the godly man, the believer, the Christian. We introduce these characteristics with seven key words:

1. Vitality: “**a tree...**” This denotes life, and the blessed man, the true Christian, has received a new life (**John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:1**), a divine life (**2 Peter 1:4**)
2. Security: “**a tree planted...**” This suggests a carefully chosen tree, cared for and cultivated. The life of the blessed man is secure in Christ (**Colossians 3:3; John 10:28**)
3. Capacity: “**planted by streams of water...**” What does a tree need most? Moisture. Is this sufficient? Yes! In Christ the **blessed** man has all that he needs for time and eternity (**Romans 8:16-17; Ephesians 1:3; Philippians 4:19; Colossians 2:9-10**).
4. Fertility: “**which yields its fruit...**” The blessed man is fruitful – he has and exhibits the fruit of the Spirit (**Galatians 5:22-23; John 15:16**)
5. Propriety: “**fruit in season...**” How wonderful this is! This man brings forth the right fruit at the right time; that is, patience in suffering, faith in trial, joy in prosperity, etc.

6. Perpetuity: “**whose leaf does not wither...**” The new life received by the righteous man is everlasting life (**John 3:15**), and his fruit abides (**John 15:16; 2 Corinthians 5:1; 1 John 2:17**)

7. Prosperity: “**all he does prospers.**” This is the sum of all the previous six. Compare **Genesis 24:1; Romans 8:28**.

## 2. THE WAY OF THE MAN’S BLESSING

Is there a way to be blessed? Yes! It is clearly stated, first negatively and then positively, in **vv. 1-2**. It is a four-fold process:

A. Repentance. This is implied in **v. 1** by the three words “not”, “nor”, “nor”. All have sinned (**Romans 3:23**), but the blessed man has repented of his sin. Repentance is “a change of mind that leads to a change of action” (**Isaiah 55:7**).

So it must be complete – a turning from the counsel of the wicked, from the way of sinners and from sitting with the mockers. (Notice, three names for the unblessed man; also, the subtle progression of sin walking...standing...sitting.”)

B. Faith. This is indicated in **v. 2**. This man is now **blessed** because he has turned from **v. 1** to **v. 2**; from sin to God, to Christ; to the will, the word and the way of the Lord. He is now a person of faith. But he is also a man of:

C. Obedience. “**His delight is in the law of the Lord**”; therefore he is a man of obedience, and faith plus obedience brings true blessing:

Trust and obey, For there’s no other way

To be happy in Jesus, But to trust and obey.

D. Communion. **V. 2** tells us that this man is made and kept blessed because he meditates day and night in the Word of God. This speaks of true fellowship with God – which is the fourth and final ingredient of true happiness.

Jesus addressed the very same in **Matthew 5:1-6**:

### 1. Spend Time With Jesus

Before Jesus shared The Beatitudes, He climbed a hillside, and His disciples climbed with Him (**v. 1**). When spending time with Jesus feels difficult, we need to remember that everything worthwhile is uphill. Sometimes to hear God’s voice, we need to draw away from the crowd and embrace the climb.

### 2. Admit Your Need for God

Self-help and self-empowerment is the culture’s counterfeit. God wants us to recognize our need for Him, so His power and strength can be on display in our lives. **V. 3** says, “**How happy are those who know what sorrow means for they will be given courage and comfort!**”

### 3. Through Your Losses, Allow God to Love You

**V. 4** says, “**Happy are those who claim nothing, for the whole earth will belong to them!**” And **Psalms 34:18** says, “**The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.**” When you feel like you’ve been knocked down, allow God’s perfect love to lift you up. Your

faith will grow stronger as you allow God to guide you and hold you together through every challenge as you learn to trust in His strength.

#### 4. Live a Life of Contentment

A life of contentment isn't a life of more stuff, more fame or even more comfort. A life of contentment is found when we walk with Jesus and enjoy His presence, submit to Him, and follow His example: **"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly"** (Matthew 11:28-30)

#### 5. Develop a Hunger and Thirst for God

We can discipline ourselves to crave the right things in life. When our souls feel empty, instead of reaching for retail therapy or entertainment, we can reach for God's presence. His love, mercy, guidance and fellowship never runs dry.

### 3. THE SOLEMN PATH AND PROSPECT OF THE UNBLESSED MAN

Unbelievers are described as the wicked (**vv. 1, 4, 5**), sinners (**vv. 1** and **5**), and mockers (**v. 1**). Notice that:

- A. The path, the position and the prospect of the unbeliever is quite different from that of the believer (**v. 4**)
- B. The unbeliever is like "**chaff**" – no life, no vitality, no fruitfulness, no security, no stability – no value (**v. 4**)
- C. The unbeliever will be condemned in the judgment (**v. 5**)
- D. The unbeliever will be separated from the believer (**v. 5**)
- E. The unbeliever will perish (**v. 6; John 3:16**)

➤ **Conclusion:** Based on how I am living, is there evidence that I'm blessed?