

True Happiness

by Walter Chantry

True happiness is being cared for by God, being well provided for spiritually, and being useful to God.

Duration: 32:18

Scripture: Psalm 1, Proverbs 1:7, Proverbs 1:33, Matthew 6:33, John 14:27

Topics: "Righteous Living", "True Happiness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Psalm 1, which is a well-known and beloved psalm. The psalm begins by describing the blessedness of the person who does not follow the advice of the wicked, associate with sinners, or mockers. Instead, their delight is in the law of the Lord, and they meditate on it day and night. The psalm compares this person to a tree planted by streams of water, which bears fruit and does not wither. In contrast, the wicked are like chaff that the wind blows away, and their way will ultimately lead to destruction. The preacher emphasizes that true happiness and blessing come from following God's law and living a righteous life.

Transcript

Now will you give your attention please to the first psalm for our meditation this morning, psalm number one. A psalm that is quite familiar to many of you, one of the earliest psalms after the 23rd that children memorize and one that ought to bring constant blessing and instruction to our hearts.

Psalm number one, will you hear it read and then speak to fix your attention upon it.

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers but his delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night he is like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither whatever he does prospers not so the wicked they are like chaff that the wind blows away therefore the wicked will not stand in judgment nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous but the way of the wicked will perish it's customary for all of us to say to one another at this season of the year happy new year at the start of a new calendar year we say happy new year or blessed new year and you know that the words happy

and blessed are virtually synonyms this morning we're going to go a step further and guarantee that certain of you will have a blessed new year a happy new year guarantee that yours will be happiness not only for a year but for all of the time that is in the future and for eternity beyond we can do this without fear

of being in error because we have the assertion of the fact not from a human opinion but from the word of God the Lord is announcing the fact that there are certain men and certain women and certain young people who are blessed they are happy blessed is the man says our text well what is the true happiness of which the text is speaking perhaps you have enjoyed greeting cards that have on the front of them happiness is and then inside the message may change in a hundred

different ways to fit the person that you're thinking about happiness is a cuddly kitten for a little child or happiness is a week at a favorite golf course for a grown man or happiness is and on and on it goes maybe you know of the song that was sung some years ago happiness is and the idea was that there was something different for every person depending on his profession or his age whether it was a man whether it was a woman well there's something very misleading about that very misleading very mistaken so the same elements go into true happiness for everyone and our text tells us exactly what those elements of happiness or blessedness are you must not imagine that happiness is to be identified with sensual pleasure like kitty cats like golf courses for a man's life and happiness in

life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions nor does it consist in the moment in which he feels pleasurable sensations or has enjoyable experiences that is not true happiness our text will tell you what true happiness is not light-hearted moments relaxed moments or pleasurable sensations but the truly happy person is cared for by the almighty verse 3 he is like a tree planted not like the scrub oak that you see by the side of the road that has sprung up accidentally that is growing on its own but a tree that is planted a tree that is cared for positioned carefully by a caring hand by streams of water and the picture is really referring to not a tree that's planted by natural streams but by little irrigation ditches that flow on every side of it in the well manicured garden

of an individual who has planted it because he does care about the plants that are there he is a purpose for it he values it and he guards it therefore we read psalm 92 and in verses 12 to 14 it speaks of god's people as trees that are planted in the house of god now the picture we don't usually plant trees in our houses but especially in the middle east and in places like florida and california you will find houses that are built in a square with a courtyard in the middle and trees planted there and that's the picture that's being given god planting a tree in the very midst of his dwelling place because he cherishes that plant and he cares for it and it has an importance to him the psalm expresses this same idea psalm 1 in verse 6 the lord watches over the ways of the righteous he

watches with deep interest and with managing care he is concerned for he cares for certain human beings that man who is watched over by god who is planted in his very dwelling place who is valued by god who has the concern and care of god is a truly happy man the whole description suggests that where the tree lives is not very congenial to the growth of the tree perhaps it's in a desert area and that's why there are irrigation ditches all around to provide the water that's needed this world in which we are living is quite arid for the people of god there is no natural sustenance there are many storms and winds that blow that are against us and without the secret provisions that the lord brings through the irrigation ditches the tree would wither and die and perish unpleasant storms blow

against the tree but that does not make the tree unhappy or unblessed it is blessed if god cares and manages for its whole estate and condition and life and indeed troubles do come into the life of the truly happy man heart-rending problems arise job 14 and verse 1 says man is who is born a woman is a few days and full of trouble and it doesn't matter whether he's a righteous man or a wicked man it's true that all men have but few days and filled with trouble but god cares for his people and he is concerned for his

people and where god's concern is there is a happy man the second element in true happiness is that the truly happy person is fully provided for we've already suggest that suggested that verse 3 uses the phrase his leaf does not wither his liveliness his vitality does not give

way psalm 92 speaks of the tree flourishing and staying green all its years and this must be because god's care is practical and the secret streams of grace that feed his people in regions where they would not survive without his care the grace that he brings enables them to endure and survive and grow and increase and be blessed happiness is no need to worry because as the new testament says your god will richly supply all your needs according to the riches of his grace and glory when a man passes through the valley of the shadow of death to be strengthened and comforted not to be healthy necessarily but to have the strength to suffer not to live on and on but to have grace to die in the lord not to have prosperity but to be content and satisfied with the will of god whatever my life

happy new year we say are these the things you have in mind thirdly the truly happy person is a useful person you notice that it does say in verse 3 that this tree yields fruit in season and all trees do not have the same season or the same fruit necessarily peaches and pears do not ripen at the same time and they're not meant to be picked at the same time there are various seasons for various of the people of god there are various fruits the fruit of bringing praise and worship to god from the heart love to god which is the greatest of all gifts the heart that overflows and abounds in love to him and love to fellow men what a fruit the best of the gifts to be desired the fruit of service to god the fruit of missionary service in our adult class today we were pondering again ways in which

to take the gospel to neighbors and friends and to the ends of the earth mission to serve god in taking the gospel to the others fruitfulness to god usefulness true happiness consists of being under the almighty's care of being well provided for spiritually in all conditions and in being useful this is not the universal condition of mankind and this is the shocking part of the song after this beautiful description of the tree that is cared for planted intentionally watered sustained made useful you have the contrast in verse 4 not so the wicked not so the wicked not so all mankind it is very emphatic the wicked are like chaff what is chaff chaff is worthless as viewed by the eyes of god not cared for not valued worthless they do not have the affectionate approval the cherishing of god

psalm 92 contrasts the righteous man as a tree that is growing in the house of god with grass that is growing in the field when it is mown down it's of little use he does not keep them in the windstorm chaff he protects his tree and keeps it well it is rooted it is grounded it is not driven away in the windstorm of life but the chaff is like the dust that you see swirling down the street when the winds blow in a savage way it is driven away by trials and troubles of this life the two awesome things of coming into judgment and not standing not standing not succeeding in the day of judgment not entering into the courts of the righteous in the eternal dwelling place that god has prepared remember how the lord jesus christ said to his people i go to prepare a place for you there's no place

for the wicked in the house of god no place amongst the righteous they will not be in the company sometimes the wicked people do not want to be in the company of the righteous but if only for a moment the people who feared god were taken out of this world who would want to live in it much longer not to dwell with the righteous not to stand in the judgment and chaff serves no useful purpose however pleasant its momentary enjoyment of privileges chaff is of no use life is like the growing and harvesting of grain the scripture tells us over and over again grain and chaff live on the same stock come from the same families do they not they enjoy the same sunshine and rain for a season but when the harvest comes the grain is

cherished and brought into the barn and the chaff is scattered to the

wind let it go where it will now this is shocking that god would speak of some human beings in these terms but he does so and he does so in his own words god cherishes some men and women and young people as trees that he has planted not so the wicked to god they are chaff that he does not value they are not useful to him and they are not being protected by him cursed is the man we could say cursed is the man who is not loved by god provided for by god made useful to god the happy man who is valued by the lord may live through a life that is filled with trouble and so are the lives of the saints in scripture often far more troubled than those of the wicked around them but he's a happy man who is loved by god and prepared for his kingdom the cursed man may enjoy the days on life he may have

experiences that delight him all of his days good health robust prosperity he lacks for nothing but if he is not valued by god and he will not stand in the judgment he is a cursed man appearances you see and what we often mean when we say happy new year i hope it's peaceful for you and everything goes well for you the psalm gets to the depth of it doesn't it what is real blessedness the majority is not always blessed like the blades of the grass that seem to flourish they're in the majority but they're cut down and gone well i ask you is your future one of guaranteed blessing or not will this next year be a blessed year for you a happy year a cursed year how does the psalm evaluate your situation and certainly in a hall like this there are some who are wicked and some who are righteous i

hope under god that most of you are the righteous and that you may know what the blessedness of the coming years will be this year may hold for some of you dead but you may be blessed this year may hold for some of the rest of you a joyful partying atmosphere but you may be cursed let's look again in the text at the signs of who are the blessed we know what the blessedness is who are the blessed and who are the cursed if it does not come from outward appearances in the circumstances most men look at who are they well there is a distinction throughout isn't there between the wicked and sinners on one hand and righteous on the other verse foreign very plain words aren't they the wicked will not stand in judgment nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous wicked and sinners on one side the

righteous on the other side what do these words bring to your mind the issues of morality morality righteousness wickedness no man can be happy in the sense that we have explained it from the psalm unless he is decidedly righteous now i'm sure that there's not a man in this assembly or a woman or a child who is sinlessly perfect but unless you are decidedly righteous you cannot be happy when god plants a tree one of its fruits is righteousness moral uprightness in the thought of a man in the words that he speaks in his actions do they conform to the moral standards of god his holy law the commandments it's not that by keeping the commandments we can get ourselves planted by god's rivers of water no one ever became a precious tree of god by doing good deeds but when god in his mercy and

grace plants a tree by his streams it produces the fruit of righteousness morality there's a great difference between the practices of the wicked and the righteous and it is not difficult to discern what we're talking about and i'm sure that if you're not argumentative in your mind that you can tell for yourself when you look around at the world that you walk through the difference between the righteous and the wicked there are some negative tests given of the man who is blessed in verse one he does not walk in the council of the wicked nor stand in the way of sinners nor sit in the seat of mockers at the word of god and the ways of righteousness he will not walk in the lifestyle of immorality he will not adopt the philosophy that is so popular among the wicked what are some of the signs

well what are the commandments to worship god faithfully regularly he will not adopt the lifestyle of the wicked and walk in the ways of those who think that the worship of god is unimportant but he will own god to be his god he will not be able to take god's name lightly upon his lips in a joking manner in a cursing manner he will not rebel against all authorities parental governmental speaking without fear of the dignitaries that god has placed over him he will not use abortion for convenience snuff out another life because it is embarrassing to me to bring it to birth or because it is expensive and i don't want the inconvenience he will not practice free sex manipulation of the sex of others he will have respect for the private property of other individuals he will not lie and cheat to

get ahead he will not covet what others have but be satisfied with what god has given him the wicked have their philosophy to defend another standard of living to mock the word of god and it's not easy to go through the whole educational system of our society and avoid walking in the ways of the wicked sitting in the seat of the mockers it is difficult for our young people as some of you are finding out who have left your christian homes and gone to campuses where the whole life of the dormitory system is the way of the wicked and the whole council that you hear from the classroom is the council of the mockers it is difficult to be a righteous man but those who adopt the system of the world are like the chaff which the wind drives away and whatever their momentary pleasure they are not

blessed the positive the opposite of that is in verse two the truly happy man takes pleasure in god's law he does not always keep it and the more he knows of it the more he is mourning in his heart that he has broken it but he loves the standards of god's law and he does all in his power to keep from falling into the ways of wickedness he chooses it and prefers it and applies it to his life in the word of god he meditates day and night this word is precious to him he does not just read a chapter a day but he ponders what he has read he hides up the word in his heart day and night it returns to him happy is that man he appreciates god's way he feeds on the word it's not a gruesome and difficult task so there are unpleasant aspects to reading the word of god and applying it to myself for i

see how far short i am of the likeness of jesus christ and his truth and that makes me to mourn and to grieve but there is that appetite i cannot turn my back on the word i must have more of the he is the happy man and the blessed man and so you say happy new year young people some of you are still torn some of you are still torn why are you torn between the ways of the wicked and the ways of the righteous why is the word of god not your delight why do you see something promising in the ways of the ungodly well there are momentary pleasures aren't they the scripture talks about the pleasure of sin for a season and sometimes that season can be elongated to walk in the ways of sin you can have years years of pleasure in sin well the man who is experiencing those pleasures is cursed and not

blessed some of you may say well nobody has proven to me yet that the bible is god's word no one ever will the word of god is to be declared and not judged by men it will judge you and it does judge you and it says whatever your condition if this word is not your delight and your constant companion you are cursed you are not the happy man of our text some have chosen decidedly the ways of the wicked have not announced it publicly yet neither this year nor the next will be blessed for you no fruit of usefulness will come from you people talk all the time about meaningfulness what's the meaningfulness of life what's the use to life there is only one use for the human life and that is bringing glory to god it was for that that you were made it was for that that jesus christ came into the

world to save sinners who were not glorifying god to bring them back into a way that was honoring to the their maker and their king and apart from that there is no meaning to life our righteous god loves

righteousness and the god of truth loves those who love truth and those who find righteousness in christ are precious in his sight he keeps them with streams of his mercy and grace and they glorify him all the days of their life be it long or short have you been planted in the house of the lord there's chaff and there's wheat here now there's grass and there are trees here now before you are cut down in death you ought to flee to jesus christ for pardon of your sins and be planted in the house of the lord before you come into judgment you must prepare to stand can you imagine standing

before a judge and having made no preparation if you knew that the judgment was going to come would you not get a lawyer someone to argue your case would you not prepare what your plea would be what are you going to say before the judge of all your life who knows your heart who knows your deed who knows your word do you have an advocate with the father someone to stand in court and argue for you you're guilty you are guilty you have broken the law of god you are guilty in the courts of god who is going to argue your case before a judge who can't be fooled or bought off who is going to argue for you it is given to you to all men wants to die after the death of judgment before god who is going to argue for you in the day there's only one advocate it who has ever pled the case of sinners

with a just and upright god and gotten guilty sinners off with the verdict of not guilty in an honorable way and that is jesus christ who came into the world and suffered the just punishment due to the sins of other men so that in standing before god in judgment he could plead for guilty sinners on the basis of his shed blood that they might be pardoned honorably with a pardon that satisfies all of god's just demands because he suffered the punishment due to their sins he experienced the wrath of god that they might be set free before you face eternity with the gambler's spirit of hoping that maybe somehow you'll end up with the righteous the wicked will not be with the righteous the psalm assures you of that you must become righteous in this life by the power of the spirit of god and

through the work of jesus the redeemer you must be righteous in this life if you're going to stand with the righteous in the assembly of eternal blessedness people hope to get to heaven you hope to get there you'd better make it more than a hope there are many people who hope to get to heaven who are cursed and not blessed can there be a happy new year for the man outside of jesus christ i tell you there cannot he may feel happiness but the reality is he is cursed i plead with you at the start of the year turn to the lord jesus christ and call upon him and where is he he's god's right hand and how do you plead for mercy he's a king at god's right hand you bow you submit you beg jesus son of david have mercy on me pardon my sin grant that in the last day i may be represented by you and

freed from my guilt and the condemnation i justly deserve and lord jesus christ grant that i may live with the righteous forevermore and not be cast into that place where the devil and his angels and the wicked alone will be and you can pray that prayer where you are you can repeat that prayer in your heart and the lord jesus christ can make you a blessed man and this moment plant you by the streams of his mercy and protecting an eternal grace let's bow together in prayer oh lord our god may the people of your choice the people who are precious to you because jesus christ is precious to them may each one of them assembled here know that he is a blessed man and in the work midst of his worst moments be assured that he is a happy man and our father we pray for those who are outside of

christ that they may begin this year with the conscious unhappiness that comes from the conviction of sin and that they may be disturbed by your spirit and word until they come to the place that they have an abiding and eternal happiness and blessedness in you we pray in jesus name amen

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