



CAPITOL COMMISSION

Finding True Blessing in the Capitol Psalm 119:1-2

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We are undertaking a study of Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible. All 176 verses speak of one topic, the importance and value of God's Word. We provide our weekly Bible studies for legislators, elected officials, lobbyists, and staff to help focus on the Scriptures during the hectic days of the regular session. I pray you may be able to follow the exhortation of this Psalm and spend time regularly in God's Word during your busy schedule.

Before we begin each week's study let us take time to read the next section of this wonderful Psalm:

PSALM 119:9-16

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Beth

*⁹How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping it according to Your word.
¹⁰With all my heart I have sought You;
Do not let me wander from Your commandments.
¹¹Your word I have treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You.
¹²Blessed are You, O LORD;
Teach me Your statutes.
¹³With my lips I have told of
All the ordinances of Your mouth.
¹⁴I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,
As much as in all riches.
¹⁵I will meditate on Your precepts
And regard Your ways.
¹⁶I shall delight in Your statutes;
I shall not forget Your word.*

What is the evidence of life and work in the capitol that is truly blessed? Winning elections? Achieving positions of significant leadership and influence? Seeing valued laws or policies passed? Gaining funding for important causes or projects? Many would look at achievements such these as the result of being "blessed". The Bible defines the true blessings of life in an entirely different way. Our Psalm, particularly verses one and two, show us what is true blessing in one's life and how to gain it. Let us go back and look closely at the first two verses and consider how the Bible says we might find true blessing in the capitol and in life.

Psalm 1:1-2

*¹How blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD.
²How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, who seek Him with all their heart.*

These first two verses serve as an introduction to the rest of this wonderful Psalm. They speak of the blessing that is found in seeking God through His Word. We might say the remaining 174 verses of this chapter expound upon the broad truth stated in these first two.

The writer uses the word "blessed" to describe the life of one who is seeking God and striving to follow His Word. When we read these verses we cannot help but remember the words of Jesus from our previous study of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7): "**Blessed are the poor in spirit...**"; "**Blessed are those who mourn...**" Just as Jesus was proclaiming the way to true blessing in the introduction to His great sermon, the Psalmist is exhorting us to the way to true blessing in this passage. The entire book of Psalms is introduced in similar way, speaking of the blessing of following God's Word:

*¹How 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!
²But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.
³He 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.*

Psalm 1:1-3

This term, "blessed" is used 25 times in the Psalms. While we know the Old Testament was written in Hebrew and The Beatitudes in Matthew 5 were given to us in Greek, the words translated "blessed" in English have nearly identical meanings. The word has the idea of "happiness" but it goes far beyond our understanding of the word. "Happiness" today means a state of mind or emotions largely determined by our circumstances. "Blessed" speaks of a deep seated joy, peace, and contentment which comes from knowing we are right with God. It is talking not so much about our emotional state of mind as it is a statement of fact about our life situation. "How fortunate!" perhaps would be a more accurate understanding of what both the Psalmist and Jesus are saying. The author of Psalm 119 is challenging

BIBLE STUDIES

LOBBYIST / STAFF STUDIES: **TUESDAYS, 12:00 NOON, TREASURER'S CONFERENCE ROOM (EB 54)**
LEGISLATOR / ELECTED OFFICIAL STUDIES: **THURSDAYS 8:00 A.M., SENATE PRESIDENT'S CONFERENCE ROOM (M219)**

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us that the way to true blessing in life is through seeking God and following His Word. In so doing He points us to the nature of true blessing and the way to find it.

THE TRUE NOTION OF BLESSEDNESS AND BLESSED PEOPLE.

Thomas Manton (1620-1677) preached that these verses showed us “the true notion of blessedness and blessed people”. Just like the Sermon on the Mount this Psalm would teach us that the Bible’s idea of true blessing goes against the grain of what the world might consider it to be. The world says happiness is found through self confidence, success, achievement, or activities. The Psalmist makes it clear that genuine happiness is only found by those who are in a right relationship with God. These are the people who are truly blessed. The blessings of which the Psalmist speaks are primarily spiritual blessings, especially for us as New Testament believers. Paul wrote of the blessing we have in Christ when we said: **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ...”**
Ephesians 1:3

“MANY SEEK HAPPINESS IN RICHES, HONORS, AND PLEASURES. IN DOING SO THEY FLY FROM THAT VERY THING THEY SEEK, EVEN WHILE THEY SEEK IT. INTENDING TO FIND HAPPINESS, THEY FIND MISERY.”

THOMAS MANTON

We can simply review the section of this Psalm we read today and continue reading this chapter to see how many ways our life is blessed when we seek to follow God’s Word.

HOW TO FIND TRUE BLESSING IN LIFE

The first two verses give us, in poetic form, how to find true blessing in life. In keeping with the parallelism of these verses, let us look at the two statements regarding those who are “blessed”. **“Blessed are those whose way is blameless”** and **“Blessed are those who observe His testimonies”**. The question that comes to mind immediately is who then can be blessed? Whose way is blameless? Who observes God’s Word perfectly as He requires. Remember how

a large part of the Sermon on the Mount was given to show those who thought they were keeping God’s law that they really couldn’t do it. David writes in another Psalm, **“The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.”** (Psalm 14:2-3; 53:1-2) None of us are blameless. All of us have failed to observe His Word. So who can be blessed? In yet another Psalm David gives us the answer:

How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!

How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity...
Psalm 32:1-2

For the Old Testament believer transgressions were forgiven and sin was covered by the sacrifices offered through the priests. For us transgressions are forgiven and sins are covered through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. To find true blessing in life, we must first and foremost have our sins forgiven so that we might be right with God. When through repentance and faith our sins are placed on Him and His goodness and righteousness (blamelessness) is given to us, then indeed we are truly blessed!

Note the two descriptive statements in our verses. **“Who walk in the law of the Lord”** and **“who seek Him with all their heart”**. “Walk” has the idea of consistency and direction in seeking to follow God’s Word. It is used many times throughout the Bible to refer to living out the Christian life. (Ps.1; Eph. 4:1, Col. 1:10). One who is truly blessed will constantly seek to apply the Word of God to their daily lives. Seeking God with all our heart is the key to finding true blessing in life. Jesus affirmed this when He shared “the greatest commandment”: **“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”** (Matt. 22:37)

- **HAVE YOU FOUND THE TRUE BLESSING OF BEING BLAMELESS BEFORE GOD; OF HAVING SIN FORGIVEN THROUGH CHRIST?**
- **THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING GOD WITH ALL THEIR HEART AND STRIVING TO WALK IN HIS WORD ARE THOSE WHO WILL FIND TRUE BLESSING IN THE CAPITOL AND IN LIFE.**