

A Blessed Life

Scripture Reading: Psalm 119:1-8

God gives us an ideal – a direction towards which we should strive. The ideal is a goal of perfection. Can we be perfect in this life? – of course not! The first three verses of this psalm could discourage many people from trying. But why strive for anything except the best? If we lower the goal, we lower the effort and limit the outcome. The Gospel brings some basic facts into focus:

- God is Holy - His requirements must be perfect. (Psalm 5:4)
- Man is sinful – He is in a state of condemnation and total depravity and cannot please God. (Romans 3:23)
- We can do nothing to please God without mercy and grace – We need a Savior. (Titus 3:3-7; I Timothy 2:5-6)
- Christ was sent to change the equation – He has paid the penalty for our sin and also provided the way to give us a new nature which is in harmony with His will. (Romans 3:19-26; Ephesians 2:8-10; II Corinthians 5:14-21; John 15:1-8)
- We are to have faith in Christ and follow Him on a pathway to perfection that will culminate in a glorious end – We will live in a new world with new bodies and no more sinful temptations to deal with. (John 8:12, 30-36; 10:27-30; Hebrews 13:20-21; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 3:20-21; II Peter 3:10-14)

Let's get back to the ideal that God has put before us in Psalm 119. It is only through the Word of God that we can **know** the will of God. It is only through the Word of God that we can **do** the will of God. Psalm 119 helps us see how the Scriptures are a lifeline to connect us to an intimate and fruitful life with God.

Please note the word “blessed.” We usually associate the word with the idea of happiness. Unfortunately, the world has a shallow concept of happiness (i.e. earthly, temporal pleasures and prosperity). When we see the word “blessed” in the book of Psalms, it is a word that means, “to walk straight on.” It implies a direction in life that will avoid pitfalls and dangers. Staying on a straight course will bring ultimate and final satisfaction and prosperity (Note Psalm 1).

The Blessed Life – The presentation of the ideal. Psalm 119:1-3

Sin undermines and destroys our blessedness. We can't walk the safe and straight path as long as sin is given a foothold in our lives. God's laws were not meant to inhibit us from enjoying life. They are actually designed to bring us joy, peace and prosperity that lasts. See Psalm 119:45, 103-104, 165 cp. Psalm 16:11; 19:7-11; Proverbs 15:24.

The Blessed Imperative – The pathway to the ideal. Psalm 119:4

God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. We must trust the wisdom and love of God – not just fear His powerful judgement against sin. In a sinful world, it is good to know that God is holy. It is good for us to take heed and listen to Him. See Psalm 119:9, 11, 68, 105, 130, 133 cp. Psalm 34:8-22; 97:12; Romans 7:12, 22; Acts 17:30-31.

The Blessed Sigh – The passion for the ideal. Psalm 119:5

When we acknowledge the goodness of God and His commandments, then we must also lament our sinfulness and weakness. Only religious pride will boast confidence in the flesh. The law of God will drive us to the end of ourselves and to seek God for mercy, grace and help. See Psalm 119:17-20, 28-29, 36-37, 57-59 cp. Philippians 3:1-8; Galatians 3:21-24 cp. Romans 7:14 – 8:11.

The Blessed Vision – The prospects of the ideal. Psalm 119:6-7

When faith is in operation, the commandments of God become the promises of God. What God requires of His children He will also provide through His grace – the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We need to anticipate the blessings that will come when we trust and obey the Lord. See Psalm 119:32, 80, 88, 97-102, 116-117 cp. Psalm 51:6; John 3:17; Philippians 1:6; 2:13; I Thessalonians 5:24; I John 5:1-5

The Blessed Resolution – The pursuit of the ideal. Psalm 119:8

Seeing God's ideal as necessary and desirable, a hunger for God and His ways is created. We will desire God to have control in our life. We will seek His mercy, grace and power. See Psalm 119:9-16, 169-176 cp. Psalm 105:4; Galatians 5:16-26; I Timothy 4:13-16; II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:14-16; I Peter 2:1-3; II Peter 1:1-11