“Allegiance to the King: Who Wants to be Happy?”

**Psalm 1:1-3 (see also all of Psalms 1 & 2)**

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 1/2/22)

 It’s a brand, new year!

 Psalms 1 and 2 tell of the world we will encounter this year, and also how to relate to this world. These psalms paint a clear picture of the believer and the unbeliever, showing their lives and their eternal destinies. The challenge for 2022: examine yourself in the light of these two psalms.

 The “bookend” verses of these two chapters give away the secret of true happiness, true blessedness. Ps. 1:1-3 says that blessed is the one who lives in allegiance to God. Ps. 2:12b says that “blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.” (Q1) The best life is the life lived under the blessing of God. Good relationships, good health, a better job, healthy finances… these things are all desirable, but they are NOT God’s measure of happiness. Biblical happiness is not the shallow, counterfeit happiness of the world. The happiness from God is the joy that comes from a right relationship with Him. Happiness is the security and prosperity that come only from a right relationship with God.

 The blessed life is not directed by the counsel of those who are apart from God. The ungodly oppose God’s standards of righteousness. They may name God, but they think and live as if God does not exist (see Ps. 10:4). They are outside of a covenant relationship with God. Who are you listening to as you make directions for the new year? (Q2) Who will define for you what it means to love your neighbor? Will the church in 2022 move towards the needy, or slip into self-preservation?

 Walk, stand, sit. Verse 1:1 shows the progression of people falling away. They hear the advice of the world, they stop to listen, then they sit and take it all in. Pretty soon they are most comfortable with those outside of God’s people. But don’t forget this: the way of the ungodly shall perish. There is a life that God will bless; there is a life that He will not bless.

 The blessed (happy) man delights in God’s law. And God delights in you when you are personally immersed in His Word, focused on His Word, living out His Word, and being shaped by His Word. (Q3) I’m talking about something more than a perfunctory devotional time, something more than an academic exercise. I’m talking about thrilling in God Himself! The Bible is the voice of your Beloved! He has spoken, and He is speaking! The people of God NEED the Word of God. It is our sustenance. Hayden Bible Church has many classes and other helps to help you feed on the Word of God. What is your plan for 2022 to feed on His Word and delight in His Word?

 The meditation mentioned in verse 2 is NOT about emptying your heads. We are meant to fill our minds with the Word of God. Even if you are busy, this is for YOU. Make the time, give it your energy.

 Our passage today speaks of two kinds of people, two ways of living, and two eternal destinies. God’s people are shaped by His Word, but who can meet the standard of Ps. 1:1-2? Can you say that you are never influenced by ungodly thinking? I can’t. None of us can. But there is one Man who was never influenced in that way. Jesus, in His humanity, could do what we could never do on our own. Jesus is the ultimate blessed Man. We are able to live righteously because we are attached to Him. Take a quick look at verse 3. If I plant my tree next to His living water, He provides the growth and the nourishment and the fruit. (Q4) Apart from Christ, none of us is blessed. The blessed life belongs only to those who are attached to Christ. His blood was shed to take upon Himself the wrath of God that your sin deserves. He not only saves us, but He indwells us. We are born rebellious, but we are born again to delight in Him and His law. We become fruit-bearing trees when we are attached to Him. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him. (Q5)

**QUESTIONS**:

1. Compare Ps. 2:12 with Isa. 26:3. What is the relationship between peace and happiness? What creates a steadfast mind? What does it mean to “take refuge in Him”?
2. Who are you listening to as you make directions for the new year? Fox News? MSNBC? The Word of God? We would all love to say “the Word of God”, but the truth is, we often get distracted. Do you have any hints to help us all make the right choice in 2022?
3. Read 2Tim. 3:16-17. How does immersion in God’s Word equip you “for every good work”? Do you have an example of this to share with your group?
4. My friend Gary said, “If we take care of the tree (v. 3), God causes the fruit to grow.” How do we take care of the tree? What fruit is God talking about?
5. We often think of prosperity (v. 3) in a financial sense. My friend Austa thinks this verse is referring to spiritual prosperity. What does it mean to prosper spiritually?

“Blessed Assurance” (Fanny Crosby)

 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;

Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!

Heir of salvation, purchase of God,

Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

 This is my story, this is my song,

Praising my Savior all the day long.

This is my story, this is my song,

 Praising my Savior all the day long.

2

 Perfect submission, perfect delight,

Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;

Angels descending, bring from above

Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

3

 Perfect submission, all is at rest,

I in my Savior am happy and blest;

Watching and waiting, looking above,

Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.