



## A LETTER FROM YOUR PASTOR: AUGUST 2022

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### A MAN TO BE ENVIED

Two thousand years of church history has produced a full spectrum of personalities and particular religious camps. Today there is an array of doctrinal beliefs from holiness to "greasy grace" and from "name it and claim it" prosperity to poverty is godliness.

It is not difficult to pick which camp a believer belongs. The personality and character of a person, right down to how they dress, bears the image of their pet doctrine.

There is a hunger within all of God's people for the things of God. Every Christian camp would confess that they desire God and wish to honor Him. Every camp of religious persuasion would seek a solid and intimate prayer life. Indeed, all who pursue God hunger and yearn for His abiding presence. However, which method is correct? What is true spirituality? What characterizes the man who longs for God? What is he like? Is he jovial or stern? Is he happy or sad? Is he inviting or scary?

Take a look at Psalm 84 and you will find the portrait of the man who walks in holiness before God. Notice the spiritual longing. This is not the devotion of some flaky amateur or someone seeking some feel-good-make-me-happy contemporary church service. There is a real need in this man. He has passion. Notice the yearning, the fainting; the crying out; the awesome prayer life: My soul longs and faints for the courts of the Lord. My heart and flesh cry out for God (Psalm 84).

### A BLESSED MAN IS A HAPPY MAN

The Bible describes the man who is holy

and close to God as BLESSED! To be blessed means to be happy and have a life envied by those who observe him. He is not austere, which is to be stern, strict, and grim in one's appearance. The austere personality who claims to be spiritual is deceived; their serious mindset may seem authentic, but their holiness of life is unreal. The Bible says that it is joy and cheerfulness that characterizes those who walk with God! Again, notice the man in Psalm 84:

- Blessed are they that dwell in your house. They are not depressed and sad; they are full of praise.
- Blessed is the man who has God for his strength.
- Blessed is the man whose heart is filled with the ways of God.
- Blessed is the man who has God to trust.

**MY SADDEST MOMENTS  
AS A CHRISTIAN ARE BETTER  
THAN MY BEST MOMENTS  
AS A LOST PERSON.**

### WHY ARE THEY TO BE ENVIED?

Psalm 84 continues to show us this blessed life and why the blessed man is to be envied, why he is happy:

- His life makes the barren places fruitful.
- He goes from strength to strength.
- He has access to God.
- God hears his prayers.
- God is his shield.
- God gives him grace and glory.
- God gives him every good thing.

If people who desire God don't admire and envy you, then something is wrong with your spirituality. People who want to be like Jesus but don't want to be like you should reveal that something is wrong with you! If godly people can't fellowship with you then you are unlike Christ, and your spirituality is a farce! John said, "... *that which we have seen and heard we declare you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And*

*these things we write to you that your joy may be full!" (1 John 1)*

A preacher once said that many Christians are not happy because they are not holy; they are not holy because they are not filled, and they are not filled because they are not separate. The Holy Spirit will not fill what He cannot separate. Whom He cannot fill He will not make holy, and whom He can't make holy that man will not be happy.

The Bible says that the man who walks with God passes through the valley of Baca and makes it a well (Psalm 84). The valley of Baca is the valley of tears. It denotes the image of weeping. Even here, in a season where many suffer pain, heartache, and despair, those who walk with God are refreshing. Through their familiarity with God, they transform the barren and hopeless places of life into a spring of joy and expectation! These blessed souls are sought out when calamity strikes someone's life. In tragedy, we don't want the depressed and austere. We don't want the soulish and emotional. We want those who know God and who can be used by God to transform night into day and mourning into dancing!

### **WHY ARE THEY SO HAPPY?**

Those who walk with God are happy. They are happy because God is their strength! Who can overcome them if God is their strength? What force or invading horde can threaten their safety when they dwell in the arms of the Mighty God? What scenario could possibly depress them if it is God who works all things together for their good? Who can stand against them if God is for them?

They are happy because God is their sun and shield! He is a sun for the happy days and a shield for the dangerous days. Because He is a defense around His people, no weapon formed against them can prosper! They are happy because they have someone to trust! *"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from them*

*that walk uprightly"* (Psalm 84:10-12).

They are happy because God is the joy of their life! A day in God's courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. To open doors for God brings more honor than being a king over the wicked.

I can testify of the joy that Jesus is to me. All my joy is in Him. He is the source of all my expectations, and He delights in me. My saddest moments as a Christian are better than my best moments as a lost person. Some Christians must search for things to cheer them up because they are not joyful. They are not joyful because they have not been with God!

A man must know the Lord by the life of real faith, or he cannot rejoice in the Lord's worship, be at home in the Lord's house, take delight in the Lord's Son, or commit himself to the Lord's ways!

What a relief it is to have someone on your side. What comfort to have a companion. And when that companion is the Lord God Almighty, then how exceeding abundant is the comfort and support. Think of it; I have somebody to trust. What is my fear? I can trust Him! What is my worry? I can trust Him! What is my problem? I can trust Him!

*"Lord, You are my Light and my Savior, so why should I be afraid of anyone? The Lord is where my life is safe, so I will be afraid of no one! Evil people might attack me. They might try to destroy my body, yes, my enemies might attack and try to destroy me, but they will stumble and fall. Even if an army surrounds me, I will not be afraid. Even if people attack me in war, I will trust in the Lord. I ask only one thing from the Lord. This is what I want most: Let me live in the Lord's house all my life, enjoying the Lord's beauty and spending time in his palace. He will protect me when I am in danger. He will hide me in His tent. He will take me up to His place of safety" Psalms 27:1-5 (ERV).*

It is good for the ungodly; when they see Christians glad, they long to be believers themselves. It is suitable for our fellow Christians to see happy Christians for it comforts them and tends to cheer them. It is an unfortunate thing for the Christian to become depressed. If there is any man in the world that has a right to be happy it is the man whose sins are forgiven, who lives in the secret place with God.