



Sunday 9th August

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

Psalm 1

INTRODUCTION

In modern society we see mankind pursuing various lifestyles or comforts based on what is commonly perceived as bringing happiness, joy or contentment into ones life. In Psalm one we read of two 'ways' in which an individual could live their lives. One clearly being describes as 'blessed' (or happy) and the other 'wicked'.

1. What the righteous man does NOT do (Read v1) 20 minutes

What the righteous do NOT do can often be just as distinctive as what we DO do. In v1 we see a very clear illustration of what a 'blessed' man does NOT do.

a. The Psalmist opens the Psalm with the word 'Blessed', a word hardly used today (outside of church!) but one often used in scripture. Compare Psalm 1:1 to Jesus' sermon on the mount in Matthew 5:3-12. What does Jesus' use of the word 'Blessed' suggest about its possible meaning?

b. v1 shows us three negatives, what does the use of language suggest about the progression of this behavior and what present day examples do we have which demonstrate similar behavior?

2. What the righteous man DOES do and the result (Read v2-3) 20 minutes

Universally, the right way can often seem like the long boring way with slow or no results and minimal reward or recognition.

a. Read The Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5:6-21) do these laws bind us, or set us free?

b. Read Deuteronomy 6:24-25, what impression does this give us of the law? How about Joshua 1:8?

c. What biblical examples do we have of people 'prospering' as a result of seeking the LORD?

3. The fate of the wicked (Read v4-6) 20 mins

This should cause us to not only fear our GOD who has the power to judge, but also be comforted knowing that we serve a GOD of justice who is also unchanging in goodness.

a. The wicked often seem to 'prosper' on earth, but how does Jesus describe earthly possessions in Matthew 6:19-21?

b. John the Baptist talks about 'chaff' in Matthew 3:12, how does what he describes contrast the tree which we read about in Psalm 1:3?

c. Read Romans 3:21-24, what reassurance can this give us when we read Psalm 1:5-6?

Summary

We are all born into sin and are instinctively wicked, but by grace and through faith we are righteous, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We can be confident knowing that 'the LORD *knows* the way of the righteous and we do not serve him in vain.

Prayer (10 mins)

Romans 5:6-9

Romans 7:21-25