

Principles to cultivate a blessed life

An in-depth study of Psalm 112(Part-1) on 24.1.2014

Introduction:

It's a usual practice for many to make a resolution of one kind or the other at the beginning of the New Year. Whether, we admit or not, as human beings we desire change. So, lets look and learn for a change in 2014, that is more appropriate for us as believers. In this ever changing world-full of chaos, where nothing is certain, how to live a BLESSED life is a challenge that I want to bring out for all of us in 2014. Question of-course would arise, How to maximize our present life and where to look for direction and guidance. Thank God that there is a manual / book in existence that gives all the instruction you & I need. The best selling book of all times-The Holy Bible.

As God's Word to us, The Bible has all the wisdom we need for living life successfully. It covers every thing- from health, finance, business and work to relationships, marriage and parenting- any thing and every thing you could ever want to know. No matter how many times we read it, there is always something new which is quite relevant for our circumstance.

Among the diverse range of characters in the Old Testament, there is one I have recently discovered during my recent visit to Jerusalem- which I have started to admire and aspire. I love his thinking and approach to life. His name is not mentioned, but he lives by the Bible principles and in just 10 verses of Scriptures, you may read how God's Blessings crosses the spectrum of his life. This new found Bible hero of mine is the righteous man described in Psalm 112 and by applying the key principles with which he conducts his life, we can live a blessed life and meet the challenges of 2014 & beyond.

So, lets read Ps:112 (English & Urdu)

I would like to speak around this Psalm not only today but also in the future as I think, there is lot to learn. There are many subjects/topics and if we can dig deep into them, we will surely be BLESSED. This Psalm is a picture/photo/image of a righteous person (Men or Women) according to the Word of God. Whether we fully or partially fit into this picture frame or not is something we have to evaluate for ourselves (individually & collectively).

V 1 *Praise the Lord! Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who delights greatly in His commandments. .*

Praise the Lord !- These three words gives us the **powerful beginning and foundation** for a Blessed life. It starts with knowing who God is and praising Him. Praise is always a starting point. It means thankfulness. That is why we give thanks before a meal and start church with songs of praise. {unfortunately, we don't do that in our personal fellowship at home, most times}. Jesus-the Son of God, began to thank God before Lazarus was raised from the dead and Moses praised God before he parted the Red Sea. Human nature makes us to wait until after an answer is received, but blessing begins with praise.

The Word of God tells us to "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts

with praise(Ps100:4). Yet praising the Lord is not limited to singing a few songs once a week in a church service. Worship is **life-style** that embraces the entire spectrum of life. We can praise God at any hour of the day, seven days a week- in the car, in the shower or anywhere else. Remember, its not about singing a particular hymn or reciting a prayer- its about a relationship with our triune God who loves and cares for us. No matter what situation we may be in, we are not alone. Circumstances begin to turn around when we start praising God.{Dr. Reginald's release from his kidnapers is a great living example}. Not only praising God put Him in focus, but it causes you& me to see things from a whole new perspective. When He becomes the focus of our life, things begin to change for the better.

Do you know that expressing our praises to God is obligatory upon believer's.

It's obligatory upon Angels.(Ps 103:20 & Ps148:2)

It's obligatory upon believers. (Ps 30:4 & Ps149:5)

It's obligatory upon all people. (Ps 107:8; Ps117:1; Ps145:21 & Rom 15:11)

It's obligatory upon children. (Ps 8:2; Matt 21:16; Ps 148:1 & Ps 148:11)

It's obligatory upon young & old. (Ps 148:1 & 12)

It's obligatory upon small and great. (Rev 19:5)

It's obligatory upon those who are in heaven and on earth. (Ps 148:1 & 11)

It's obligatory upon All Creation. (Ps 148:1-10 and Ps 150:6)

We must ponder as to why so much of emphases is placed upon offering praises to the God Almighty.....because the Bible says

It's beautiful and pleasant. **Ps 33:1** says "Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! For praise from the upright is beautiful. Also **Ps 147:1** says "Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God; For it is pleasant and praise is beautiful. Our God is worthy of praise. **2Sam 22:4** reads "I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies". In **Ps 50:23** God says "whoever offers praise glorifies Me; And to him who orders his conduct aright I will show the salvation of God".

Likewise Christ is worthy of our praises. In Rev 5:12, we see that millions of angels are singing with loud voice in a mighty chorus " Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" Also in John 12:13, we see that a huge crowd took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out/shouted "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" The King of Israel.

Remember that our praises are only acceptable through Jesus. Heb 13:15 reads "Therefore by Him(Jesus) let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

Let me take you still deeper in the subject of Praise & Worship....Remember, I told you, it serves as the foundation of our faith & righteous. We have to build our life-a life of blessing upon this foundation in 2014. **So, let's see** what should be in our mind, heart, imagination, conscious and sub-conscious- as a believer, a born-again child of God when we praise and worship our Triune God (Father, Son & the Holy Spirit). **We praise God**

Because of:

His Majesty (Ps 96:2; 96:6 and Is 24:14)

His Glory (Ps 138:5 and Ezek 3:12)

His Excellency (Ex 15:7 and Ps 148:13)

His Greatness (1-Chr 16:25 and Ps 145:3)

His Holiness (Ex 15:11 and Is 6:3)
 His Wisdom (Dan 2:20 and Jude 1:25)
 His Power (Ps 21:13)
 His Goodness (Ps 107:8; 118:1; 136:1 and Jer 33:11)
 His Mercy (2-Chr 20:21; Ps 89:1; 118:12-4 also compare Ps 136:1-26)
 His Loving kindness and truth (Ps 138:2)
 His Faithfulness and Truth (Is 25:1)
 His Salvation (Ps 18:46; Is 35:10; Is 61:10 and Luke 1:68-69)
 His Wonderful works (Ps 89:5; 150:2 and Is 25:1)
 His Consolation (Ps 42:5 and Is 12:1)
 His Judgment (Ps 101:1)
 His Counsel (Ps 16:7 and Jer 32:19)
 His fulfilling the promises (1-Kin 8:56)
 His Pardon for sin (Ps 103:1-3 and Hos 14:2)
 His Providing Spiritual & Physical Health (Ps 103:3)
 The Constant preservation He provides (Ps71:6-8)
 His Deliverance (Ps 40:103 and Ps 124:6)
 His protection (Ps 28:7 and Ps 59:17)
 His Answering Prayer (Ps 28:8 and Ps 118:21)
 His being the Hope of glory (1-Pet 1:3-4)
 All Spiritual Blessings (Ps 103:2 and Eph 1:3)
 All Temporal Blessings (Ps 68:19; 104:1; 104:14 and Ps 136:25)

Every thing that I have just mentioned, are actually the Characteristics of God. We should ask ourselves, is this the God I know because knowing God fully will impact upon our praise & worship and has bearing on the BLESSINGS that we want to receive in 2014.

The 2nd part of the first verse in Ps:112 gives us 2fold qualification of a Blessed Person.

- (a) Fear of God
- (b) Experiencing great delight in keeping God's Commandments.

Brief Introduction:

In the Old Testament the fear of the Lord was something good and wholesome. The foundation of true wisdom (Pr 9:10). In the Bible, there are 4 general categories of fear:

- 1. Slavish or demonic fear (1-Jh 4:18)
- 2. Fear of man (Pr 29:25)
- 3. Normal fear of danger in the physical realm
- 4. Holy fear in the Spiritual realm.

It's a very important subject and we don't have enough time to deal with it today. Only know that it has a direct bearing on our BLESSINGS. God willing, next month we will look into it. For now, just remember that the fear of God is both a choice (Pr 1:29; Ps 34:9) and a gift of God imparted by His Spirit (Is 11:1-3a). As a choice, it involves the decision of our will to respond to the gracious invitation of God's Word & Spirit.

There are 3 blessings of Godly Fear (Pr19:23)

- 1. Aids in obtaining eternal life
- 2. Gives personal satisfaction
- 3. Protects from sin and danger

The person who fears God need not fear anything else, but the person who does not fear God in the true sense is vulnerable to fearing every thing else.

May God Bless you all with His word.....Amen.