

God's Masterpiece

Psalm 112:1-10

Halifax: November 3, 2002

Introduction:

Man is the goal and climax of God's creation in Genesis 1! After everything else is created and declared to be good...there is a dramatic pause. God holds a divine counsel with Himself and declares: "Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..."

Then we are told: "God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female, he created them." It was then that God looked at His completed work and pronounced that it was "**very** good."

Man is God's Masterpiece. Everything else was created to be a habitation for man, but man is the apex of God's creation...created in God's very own image! God is the Original Artist! And in creating us, He made a portrait of Himself!

When an artist makes an image some subject, what is He doing? He is reducing his subject in an effort to bring out certain aspects of it for observation. A writer will highlight certain aspects of personality that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. He isolates them for us and presents them for our consideration. A painter presents an image that can be viewed without the distraction of movement and change. In one composition he highlights the play of light; in another, the contrast of colour; in another, the general shape of the objects without the details; in another, the relationship of one object to another. In a good work of art we are enabled to see things that are really there, but that we probably would not have noticed!

Last week, I spoke, in part, about how God "dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see." This does not mean we cannot **truly** know God, but rather that we cannot **fully** know Him! We simply can't contain His infinite glory in our little brains; yet, God is pleased to reveal Himself to us in ways that are suited to our weakness. And one of the ways He does that is in His own artwork...In particular in man, whom He created in His own image! God made us in His own image to show us certain aspects of His glory. He gave us some of His attributes—wisdom, power, love, justice, goodness, and truth—but on a level that we can understand. Man was like a mirror reflecting the image of God for the glory of God.

And this we did well until The Fall. Then all these attributes became dreadfully mangled. We went from being a glorious image of God to being a twisted, distorted image of God. As Solomon said, "Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes." (Ecc. 7:29)

You can see why sin is such a terrible thing. It is defacing of the image of God. It presents God as something grotesque and repulsive. No wonder man has been sentenced to the fires of Hell for this crime!

But there is good news! God did not leave us all to perish in our deformed and miserable condition! Look with me at Ephesians 2:1-10:

And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:1-10 NKJV)

Do you see what this is saying? God has taken up some of His fallen creatures again to reshape us into His image! Look at verse 10 again. You who trust in Jesus Christ are nothing less than: “[**God’s**] **workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works!**” You are a new creation in Jesus Christ!

With that in mind, we are ready to look at our text for today: Psalm 112. I have selected this for our Psalm of the Month. In this Psalm, we see the beauty of man as God’s image. We see Him as God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus! His masterpiece in whom He displays some aspects of His glory! Listen now as I read this Psalm:

Praise the LORD! Blessed *is* the man *who* fears the LORD, *Who* delights greatly in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches *will be* in his house, And his righteousness endures forever. Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness; *He is* gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man deals graciously and lends; He will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he will never be shaken; The righteous will be in everlasting remembrance. He will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD. His heart *is* established; He will not be afraid, Until he sees *his desire* upon his enemies. He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever; His horn will be exalted with honor. The wicked will see *it* and be grieved; He will gnash his teeth and melt away; The desire of the wicked shall perish. (Psalms 112:1-10 NKJV)

Here is man at His best! Man as he was created—as the image and likeness of God! No more equal to God than a painting is equal to a man—but still a true image of God, reflecting His glory on a level that we can understand.

I. Note well how the Psalm begins!

- “Praise the LORD!”

Praise the LORD that there are such men as the one described in this psalm! It is all by His grace! It is His doing! As we read a moment ago in Ephesians 2...We were all dead in trespasses and sins...We were hideous, deformed, images of God...We had no way to deliver ourselves...We were “dead in trespasses and sins.” But He made us **alive** in Christ Jesus! We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus! That is why Ephesians says there is no room for boasting. If you are being renewed in God’s image today, it is all of God’s grace, it is not of **your** works or **your** goodness or **your** desires—You were utterly ruined by the Fall.

Do you want to know how ruined you were? You were **so** ruined that even though God should send His Son from Heaven to die on the cross to atone for your sins...And even though He should invite you to come to Him for the complete forgiveness of your sins...And even though He should promise to you that He would restore you to His glorious image—Your response would be “**NO!**”

Your eyes were too blind to see the glory of Christ. Your ears were too deaf to hear the call of the gospel. And your heart was too hard to turn to Christ for life. God had to make you alive because you were dead—totally dead in trespasses and sins.

So you see why we ought to praise God whenever we find a man who is like the man described in Psalm 112! If there is such a man to be found in this world, it is God’s doing! We ought to delight in beauty of God that we see reflected in His image!

Sure, as long as we are in this fallen world, the image is imperfect. But if God calls a renewed man blessed and accepts his imperfect works as good in Jesus Christ, so should you! He is God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works. He is a man God has chosen to reveal His glory! Praise the LORD for such a man!

You ought to be like Paul who wrote to the Philippian church, “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you!” You ought to be so thankful to God when you meet His people—just that they **are** His people. The very thought of them ought to cause you to give thanks! There is no place for a haughty, judgmental spirit toward another believer! The Bible says that if you don’t love those that are born of God, it indicates that you yourself are not born of God:

1 Jn 3:14-15: “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

Rejoice and praise the LORD whenever you see a man or woman renewed in the image of God! If you don't love the image, then you don't love God!

Jesus Christ is the perfect image of God. He meets the description of the blessed man in Psalm 112 perfectly. Do you remember what happened when He came into the world? He was rejected by the very people who claimed to be closest to God! They did not praise God when they saw His image because they were not born of God! They were dead in trespasses and sins! They tried to do what the Devil did in the beginning. They tried to destroy the perfect image of God. They crucified Him; but God raised Him from the dead to give life to the world. All those who have life have life through Him. They are created in Christ Jesus.

If you rejoice in Christ as the image of God—and if you come to Him that you might be created in God's image—God accepts you and begins to make you like the man described in Psalm 112! Jesus is God's Son who came in human flesh to save His people from their sins. He is the exact image and likeness of God and we ought to praise the LORD when we see Him. But what He is, in His human nature, He is making us to be who trust in Him. There is nothing wrong with the human nature per se—God created us to like the man described in Psalm 112. It is corrupted human nature, not human nature, that is the problem. Jesus shows us what human nature is like when it is not corrupted, and it is something we ought to praise God for! In Christ, we see the glory of God! Praise the LORD.

Let us now consider what man as the image of God is like according to this Psalm.

II. A very general description is given of the blessed man in verse 1.

Psalm 112:1: Blessed *is* the man *who* fears the LORD, *Who* delights greatly in His commandments.

The blessed man is said to **fear God**. To fear God is to regard Him with the reverence and honour that is due to Him. The blessed man sees the glory and majesty of His God. He sees the beauty and holiness of His wisdom, His grace, His justice, His power, His government, His works of creation, His works of redemption. He sees how God rules the world with equity and justice. He sees how He sent His only Son into the world to redeem poor sinners. He sees how He will be gloriously revealed in the last day when He raises His people from the dead and judges the wicked.

There is nothing more blessed for a man than to fear God—to have a reverent regard for all that He is in His glorious majesty and perfection! God fills up His life and becomes His motivation for living! But the fear of God is never separate from the delight in His commandments.

The man is blessed who fears God **and** delights in His commandments. There are many who claim to delight in God who do not delight in His commandments! But the truth is, if they delighted in Him, they would want to be governed by Him! You can't say that you have reverence and respect and admiration for God if you reject His counsel! It is not enough to simply delight in the righteousness and purity of God's commands, but you must also delight in keeping them!

The godly man is being renewed in God's image in Christ Jesus and he knows it! This is to him a most glorious, most desirable thing! There is nothing he wants more than to be shaped by God's will, so he does not look at God's commandments in a narrow legalistic way—the way people do when they are slaves trying only to do what is required of them. The blessed man wants to apply them to every nook and cranny of his life, both on the inside and the outside! He wants to love like Jesus loved and to walk like Jesus walked.

Let me urge you to believe that this description of the blessed man is true! There are too few who believe it! There are many who think that fearing God and delighting in His commandments will be a drag. That it will spoil their happiness and ruin their lives! That it will make them a cursed man! Search your heart! Where is that sentiment to be found in your life?

Children, do you think you will be happy if you honour your parents? Men, do you think caring for your wife and taking responsibility for the spiritual instruction and guidance of your home will be an intolerable burden that will spoil your life? Do some of you think that: forgiving your brother, tithing, keeping the Lord's day holy, wearing modest clothing, reading God's Word, praying, helping out a neighbour in need, caring for the elderly, giving to the poor, disciplining your children, doing good to your enemy, reaching out to someone who is cold and unresponsive, refraining from gossip, and all other things that God calls you to do will bring you misery?

God's Word says that the man is blessed who fears God and delights in His commandments! That is the truth and whatever else you might believe is a lie.

III. A further description of the blessed man is given in the verses that follow.

Verse 2 says: "His descendants will be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright will be blessed."

Ultimately, this promise is made to Jesus Christ. It is the promise the Father made to Him that He would always have a people in the earth. And how mighty His descendants are! How many times there have been those who sought to destroy them, but they have continued from age to age. They are always blessed with God's grace in their generations so that they continue and are not destroyed, but rather made able to stand against their enemies. And in the end, we are promised that all our enemies will be destroyed so that we will inherit the earth with Jesus Christ. The promise that the meek will inherit the earth will be fulfilled when we get to Heaven.

But this promise also pertains to you as a parent if you fear the LORD and delight in His commandments. The promise is that your children will be mighty in the earth. God will bless the children for the sake of the fathers. The promise to children annexed to the fifth commandment that they will “live long in the earth” when they honour their covenant parents also applies to the children’s parents if they train up their children in the LORD. It is frequently spoken of.

For example, in Psalm 127, children are described as arrows in the hand of a warrior who speak with their enemies in the gate! In other words, they speak with those who oppose God and His ways. Such are the enemies of every parent who fears God and delights in His commandments. The picture here is of your children serving beside you in the cause of Christ.

Certainly there are godly men and women whose children are cut off, but it is not because God has not kept His promise. The promise to parents is conditional upon the parents keeping God’s covenant. God has various ways of chastening us for our many violations of his covenant, and one of those ways is by cutting off our children. This doesn’t mean we can say that a man whose children are not cut off is better than a man whose children are; but we can say that when children are cut off, it is God’s chastisement of the parents. It ought to humble them. They should never say, “We did everything we were supposed to do, and they rebelled anyway.” That is to suggest that God did not keep His promise.

The reason I say this is because God **promises** that the children of parents who keep His covenant will be mighty in the earth (here, in this verse), will be blessed (Prov 20:7), will inherit the earth (Psalm 25:13), will be righteous (Psalm 103:17).

And so, this promise to the covenant keeping man ought to serve as a strong motivation to you to “fear God and delight in His commandments,” for the sake of your children. Those who truly do fear God and delight in His commandments will have a great concern that their children also fear God and keep His commandments. Their first concern will not be their children’s popularity, their success in sports, their comfort, or their vocational training. Their first concern will be for their godliness. If they themselves fear God and delight in His commandments, they will make this a priority in the training of their children. Will they have a different standard of what is important for themselves than they do for their children? Will they love Jesus Christ and not want their children to love Him also? Those who do love Him will be greatly encouraged by this promise!

There follows the promise in verse 3 that: “Wealth and riches *will be* in his house, And his righteousness endures forever.”

Once again, this is ultimately a promise to Jesus Christ for His church. And it is not only spiritually, but literally true! We need not think that God is against riches in this world—What He is against is man going after riches as if they were his god! And this is so very common!

And because it is so common, it is often a snare to God's people. The love of money chokes out the word of God so that it becomes unfruitful in our lives. As a result, even though God loves to bestow riches and wealth on his children, He often withholds this blessing in His mercy lest it should ruin them. We are wise to pray with Agur, "Give me neither poverty nor riches—Feed me with the food allotted to me."

But the truth remains that God has purposed to give every one of us abundant riches and He will! He presents heaven to us as full of gold and precious stones, but also as a place where the glory will be God's! In heaven, we will enjoy riches, not as rivals to God that make Him jealous, but as the gifts of God that make us glad.

Even in this world, God loves to bestow this blessing on the houses of his servants. All else being equal, a man who turns the LORD and trains up his children in godliness will often have children who prosper in this world. Like Solomon, they ask for wisdom and are also given riches and honour. In countries where Christians are persecuted, it often occurs that after two or three generations, those formerly persecuted become prosperous. Look in history at those places where the gospel has flourished and you will ordinarily find that prosperity soon follows.

But note well, we are not promised that we will always have wealth and riches now, only that they **will be** in our house. This promise may not be fulfilled right away, but it will certainly be fulfilled in heaven! Until then, the godly person should always be able to say what Paul said of himself and his companions in 2 Cor. 6:10:

"As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things."

But even more importantly is the second part of this verse: "His righteousness endures forever!" **Righteousness** is the greatest wealth that anyone can have! It is a right standing with God. It is the gift of God—because if it were up to us, we could never have a right standing with God. But God brings us into a right standing by giving His Son to us. Jesus Christ came to give right standing to all His chosen people, and He did it by representing us—first in His life, then in His death on the cross. By His life, He fulfilled all God's requirements for righteousness. By His death, He paid the penalty for all our sin. By faith, we are partakers of His righteousness—God *imputes* it to us or puts it on our account!

To have Christ's righteousness transferred to your account is to have God's favour for all eternity! The righteousness of Christ obtains God's favour forever and ever! What law did He not perfectly obey for us? What sin could His blood fail to cover?

What's more, now that we are in Christ, God also accepts our works so sincerity. Remember that He has created us in Christ Jesus for good Works. And these good works performed by us, though they be imperfect in us, yet in Christ they are accepted and will be rewarded. They are on our account forever so that when He comes, He will say:

“Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I *was* naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.”
(Matthew 25:34-36)

Your righteousness will endure forever; it can never be taken from you. Once you have God’s favour, you have it forever! God has accepted you in Christ to bear His glorious image forever and ever!

Enduring righteousness is such a precious, heartening blessing for God’s children that He graciously refers to it again in verse 9! Again, it says of the blessed man: “His righteousness endures forever!” Take heart, you have been accepted as God’s workmanship in Christ Jesus and so you will be a pleasing image and likeness of God forever! For all eternity you will reflect His glory to all around you!

In between the promise of enduring righteousness in verse 3 and its repetition in v. 9 are all sorts of blessings that belong to the righteous.

IV. All the blessings from verse 3 to verse 9 are rooted in this enduring righteousness!

Because you are accepted as God’s image, you can be sure that light will arise in the darkness for you! As long as you are called to live in this world, there will be periods of darkness. We are not yet perfect, and so there will be error in our lives. But all this darkness will be overcome by the light of truth!

We are yet in a fallen world and so have many losses to face. But the darkness of sorrow will be dispelled by the light of comfort! Not all our enemies have been brought under Jesus’ feet, and even death we must face. But the darkness of death will be removed by the light of life.

God will always have His image to shine in the end! That is a promise that you can be sure of. He will not hide His people’s light, but set it on a hill for all to see! Even the very sun did not shine when Jesus Christ was hung on the cross—He was enveloped in darkness and His glory was veiled. But He was exalted—the light arose! His exaltation began with His resurrection, was furthered when He was seated at the Father’s right hand, and will be fully revealed when He returns in glory!

Christian, you are told that in that day, the glory of the sons of God will be revealed! We have the darkness of our imperfection, slanders from our enemies, and all sorts of other things that hide the glory that will be revealed in us on that day. The light will arise for the righteous—Wait for it with confidence!

And though the darkness may hide you for a time, the second part of verse 4 tells what **God** thinks of those He has renewed in His image! He says that we are “gracious, full of compassion, and righteous!”

The language here is so bold that some commentators (and even the RSV translation) feel constrained to refer these words to God. Everywhere else that the words here translated “**gracious**” and “**full of compassion**” are used, they are used of God! But the beauty of this Psalm is that these refer to God’s image bearers! God graciously attributes to His redeemed image bearers what belongs to God! It shows that His people are made to be a true reflection of His glory!

Look back for a moment at Psalm 111. Look at verses 2-4.

In verse 2, you see that this is talking about the LORD. At the end verse 3 and verse 4, it describes Him in these words: “His righteousness endures forever,” verse 3, and “The LORD *is* gracious and full of compassion,” verse 4. Sound familiar? Isn’t that remarkable? The things that are said about God in Psalm 111 are said about His image bearers in 112! There are many other similarities between these Psalms, including the fact that they are both acrostic Psalms with the same number of lines. But what is different is that 111 speaks about the glory of God and 112 speaks about the glory of His image bearers! Here we have the precious truth that we are to be like our Father in Heaven, to be holy as He is Holy and perfect as He is perfect. He will cause His glory to shine in us as His image bearers! He has already accepted us to be His image bearers in Christ Jesus!

And what beautiful attributes these are: **gracious, full of compassion, and righteous!** Here we see the LORD Jesus Christ, God’s perfect man, His perfect image bearer! He is full of grace—His whole desire was to benefit others. He is full of compassion—He saw us in our sin, and though it was our own doing, He took pity on us in our need. He is righteous—He was perfect in all His ways, not once did He deviate from God’s Holy will. These are the attributes that God the Son brought to our nature and is now reproducing in His new creation, the church, by the transforming power of His Spirit! Christ is adorning us with these. It is His will for His church to be gracious, full of compassion and righteous. He told us to love one another even as He has loved us and given Himself for us!

He makes us **gracious**—so that our goal becomes doing good for others. Graciousness is not passive or dead, but it is very active, constantly looking for ways to bring a blessing to others. The man who is gracious will *deal graciously* as it says in verse 5. He will *disperse abroad* as it says in verse 9. He spreads a blessing all around. You can trace the gracious man’s path by looking at the trail of enriched people that he leaves in his wake! A thief comes through, and leaves in his path an impoverished, hurting people. But the gracious man comes through and leaves behind him an enriched, blessed people. Wherever he goes, he leaves behind his blessing.

This is the graciousness that Christ brought into the world and is now producing in His church. And when we get to heaven, we will all continually go about doing good, just

like our Lord did when He was here! His graciousness will be glorified in His image bearers!

Likewise, He makes us to be **full of compassion**. That is, He teaches us to pity those who are in need and to do what we can to relieve them! The compassionate person passes through the thirsty fields of this world with a cup of water. You can trace where he has been by the green trail that is left behind him. He is merciful, not in order that he might be repaid, but because he loves people and wants to meet their needs.

God is continually merciful to His creatures, supplying their needs. In heaven, we will still have needs because we will still be creatures—only in heaven, all our needs will perfectly be supplied. And as now, God will use our brothers and sisters to supply our needs—each supplying the needs of the other! The glory of His mercy will be seen in His image bearers.

This attribute, full of compassion, is referred to in verse 5 where it says that good man lends, and in verse 9 where it says he has given to the poor. The lending here referred to is not the lending with interest to take advantage of the needy, but lending with compassion to help him get back on his feet.

The compassionate man looks at what he has been given as something to be held in reserve for others! He is God's reservoir, which God fills up that he might supply others. What good would a reservoir be that is stopped up so that nothing can be taken out of it? Or what good would leaky reservoir be that squanders wealth in riotous living and luxury, or that wastes it away in gambling or reckless investing—or even in careless giving! The man described in Psalm 112 does not give indiscriminately, but he gives to the poor (v. 9)—the true poor. He does not give so as to subsidise laziness, but in a responsible way. Remember our recent study in 1 Timothy 5 where we saw that the church is not to indiscriminately support widows, but only those who are widows indeed. The righteous man gives to the poor who are poor indeed.

The third attribute mentioned in verse 4 is that the man is **righteous**. This is the third attribute that Christ gives to his people—he makes them **righteous**. Of course, we have already seen this in verse 3 and verse 9 where it says that the blessed man has righteousness that endures forever. But the word **righteous** as it is used here in verse 4 refers to righteousness in the sense of just dealings with others. It refers to man who: pays his bills on time, puts in an honest days work, does not lie on his income tax forms, speaks the truth to his neighbour and does not slander him, keeps his promises even when it invokes hardship, and so on.

This attribute is echoed again in verse 5 where it says that “he will guide his affairs with discretion.” The word “discretion” refers to judgement that is both wise and just. He acts with fairness, equity and practical justice—neither being wasteful nor miserly—neither neglecting the care of his own family or neglecting mercy to outsiders.

Here, you see, is a man renewed in God's image! Praise be to the LORD that by His grace there are such men and women in the world! And all because of the One man Jesus Christ who has gathered us to Himself to be renewed into God's image! What beauty there is in Christ as the perfect image of God! What beauty there is in His church that He is perfecting in the image of God! Now you can be sure—because God has promised—that where He has restored that beauty in His redeemed, He will not allow it to be destroyed

What security there is for you if you are restored in God's image through Jesus Christ! Look at what verse 6 says of the righteous man: "Surely he will never be shaken."

God promises that those in whom He has restored His likeness will never be shaken. Their root is in God Himself. Let them be attacked a thousand times, but they cannot be destroyed because they are kept by the Almighty. They are brought into His favour and so cannot be moved. They are under God the Father's eye, in God the Son's hand as their Shepherd, and have God the Spirit in their hearts. The Father's promise cannot be broken, the Son's righteousness cannot be corrupted, and the Spirit's power cannot be overcome. They will never be shaken. As Psalm 125:1 says: "Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever."

The same idea is repeated again in the second part of verse 6 in the words, "**The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.**" Once God has accepted you, He will never forget you! It is a great blessing to be remembered by God. When Noah was in the ark, we are told that God **remembered** Noah, and so the rain stopped and the flood waters began to recede. When Israel was in Egypt, we are told that God **remembered** them and the covenant he had made with their fathers. Therefore, He delivered them. God has a book of remembrance in which He records all the thoughts, words and actions of His people—And as it says in Hebrews 6:10: "God *is* not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, *in that* you have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

And so the righteous man has an **objective security**—God keeps him. But knowing this also gives him a **subjective security**—a security that he feels and that enables him to rest. This is spoken of in verse 7 and 8.

Verse 7 says that he will not be afraid of evil tidings! When someone comes and brings him a bad report that his house has been destroyed or that his children have been killed, he will not be afraid because he knows that God will see him through. This is how you can tell what you are trusting in and looking to for your happiness. Just ask yourself the question, "What do I fear that I might lose?" If you are trusting in riches, you will be afraid when your riches are threatened! If you are trusting in your status in this world, you will become frightened whenever your position is threatened. If you are trusting in your friends, you will always be afraid of losing them—second guessing about whether they like you—doing things not so much out of love, but in an effort to make them like you! If you are trusting in your looks, you will be constantly fretting about wrinkles and waistlines.

But those who fear God are trusting in that which can never be destroyed or taken away. Let the mountains be cast into the sea, and they will not fear because they are resting in the One who cannot be shaken. This does not mean that they are insensible to danger—They are not stones that are unmoved by the threats around them. They take precautions for safety. But they are not consumed by such cares. They are more concerned about pleasing God than they are about making sure that their bodies and bank accounts are safe.

In the same way, the man who fears the LORD is not afraid of his enemies because he knows that he will see his desire upon his enemies—as it says in verse 8. Since his aim is to glorify God, that is one thing that he knows his enemies cannot keep him from doing. In fact, even the threats of your enemies have a way of establishing your heart more firmly in God. Your enemy shows you how insecure the things you have in this world really are—your estate, your reputation, even your life. Your enemy can attack all those things. But when he does, that only causes you to flee all the more to what is secure and what cannot be shaken: namely, your righteous standing with God, and the promises of the gospel.

If you fear the Lord and delight in his commandments, your enemies are those who try to draw you away from the LORD and from obedience to Him. If you are in Jesus Christ today, then your heart is truly established in this purpose and there your heart will stay until your enemies trouble you no more—until you see them brought under Christ.

But in the meantime, what will your enemies see? They will see you growing stronger and stronger under their attacks! As it says in verse 9, they will see your horn exalted with honour! The horn is a symbol of strength. I can remember when I was first converted in university and my friends assured me that like so many other things in my life, religion would soon pass. But instead, they saw me grow stronger and stronger in my faith. It is the same for you Christian! If you are in Christ, God will increase your strength to serve Him. And on the last day, He will exalt you with glory before all those who tried to stop up your way on earth.

This is what makes the enemies of Jesus Christ so frustrated and angry. They are trying to destroy the image of God as it is revealed in His people, but the Church just keeps on getting stronger and stronger! When Jesus Himself was on earth, it was for envy that His enemies crucified Him. Now that He is in heaven, it is envy and fear that make his enemies rage against His church!

Sadly, the church in North America is weak today and our enemies often laugh at us. They look at believers as fools and do not feel much threatened. But God will exalt our horn with honour. That is His promise if we truly belong to Him. The day will come when your enemies will, as verse 10 says, “see it and be grieved.” In fact, “They will gnash with their teeth and melt away” in utter frustration and anger! All their desires to suppress the truth of God and find their own way apart from Him will be brought to an end. They will not succeed in suppressing the truth!

You see then that those who are being renewed in God's image are invincible! They are the blessed ones because they have the glory of God stamped on them! The glorious God has chosen to display His image in them! They are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus!

Praise the LORD that there are such men and women in the world! Let God's glory be seen in them forever!