

Sermon Text: Psalm 128:1-4 Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, Who walks in His ways. ² When you eat the labor of your hands, You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you. ³ Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine In the very heart of your house, Your children like olive plants All around your table. ⁴ Behold, thus shall the man be blessed Who fears the LORD.

Sermon Theme: The Psalmist Reveals Important Ingredients for a Happy Family Life.

In the name of Jesus Christ, whose blessing we seek for our families, dear fellow redeemed;

How would you characterize your family life? Would you say that it is a happy one? In thinking about whether or not happiness is an apt description of your family life, we understand there is no family in this world that has perfect and complete happiness. There are all manner of problems, stresses, and strains that can put a damper on having happiness of life. Still, in spite of all the difficulties that buffet the family, with the gracious help and blessing of the LORD, we can experience a measure of happiness in the home.

Look at the case in today's Old Testament Bible reading. Strife arose between the family and workers of Abram and his nephew Lot because of crowded conditions in the workplace. However, the strife between them was removed when Abram, moved by the Spirit of God, made a loving, selfless gesture of offering Lot to choose where he wanted to set up camp, while Abram would take what was left. How important it is to have the Spirit of God at work in the hearts and lives of our families so that when strife arises it can be defused and problems overcome, and so that a loving, caring environment can be found in the home which makes for happiness of life.

Our Gospel reading reminds us of how happiness can be lost in the home when through sinful behavior marriages end in divorce and thus break up the family. Here too the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God is needed so as to preserve and promote the marriage union, and provide healing and restoration wherever families have been broken up.

For the sake of promoting happiness in the home our sermon text reveals some helpful ingredients. These words of God are directed to the head of the family, as well as to the wife and mother, and also to the children, that is, for all of us to take to heart and apply in our lives.

First of all, it would be helpful to dispel some faulty and vain thinking as to what can make for happiness in the home. Many are the families who have been deceived into thinking that happiness can be found in the various ways of people getting ahead in life, such as, having a good paying job, a nice home to live in, a new vehicle to drive, fashionable clothes to wear, and enough time and money to enjoy the other niceties this