

THE PSALMS

Series: Selected Psalms Phase 1

Lesson 1: Contrast ... The Righteous and the Wicked Psa. 1:1-6

Today's Study: Psalm 1 Part A ... The Righteous Psa. 1:1-3

1. Distance Himself from Degrading Habits v. 1
2. Delights Himself in the Things of God v. 2
3. Desirable Results/Divine Favor v. 3

NOTE: Psalm 1:4-6 will be discussed in Part B

Introduction to the Psalms

The English title "Psalms" and "Psalter" comes from the Septuagint (*Septuagint: a translation into Greek of the Hebrew Scripture; Septuagint means 70, seventy because it was translated by 70 or 72 Palestinian Jews*), which entitled the book *Psalmoi*, meaning "Sacred Songs to Musical Accompaniment." The Hebrew title for the book (Psalms) is *tehilim*, or *tehillim*, "praises" or "songs of praise." If one word could be used to describe the Book of Psalms, certainly "praise" could qualify, for there is no psalm that does not contain an element of praise. It should be noted that there are psalms that are classified as *tephilloth*, meaning "prayer" example note Psa. 72:20 yet contain some form of praise and gratitude to God.

The Hebrew Scriptures has three main divisions (*See below for a **brief** comparison of divisions of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures*); The Book of Psalms is positioned as the first book of the third division (of the Hebrew Scriptures). This third division of the Hebrew Scripture is known as *Ketuvim* or writings and was popularly referred to as the "first book" that is "The Psalms" (*This division consists of eleven books*). Jesus included the entire Old Testament (Hebrew Scripture) when He spoke of the prophecies concerning Himself in "the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms (see Luke 24:44).

Through the centuries the Psalms have been a source of inspiration and a means of nurturing. The Psalms has a place of special importance in the Bible, note a few quotes:

Martin Luther: (*German professor of theology, etc.*)

He spoke of the Books of Psalms as "A Bible miniature."

Rev. W. O. E. Oesterley: (*Church of England Theologian and Professor*)

He described the Psalms as "The grandest symphony of praise to God ever composed on earth."

Theodore H. Robinson: *(Biblical Scholar, Professor, etc. ... London)*

“The Hebrew Psalter holds a unique position in the religious literature of mankind. It has been the hymnbook of two great religions, and has expressed their deeper spiritual life through the centuries. It has ministered to men and women of widely different races, languages and cultures. It has brought comfort and inspiration to the sorrowing and to the faint-hearted in all ages. Its words have shown themselves to be adaptable to the needs of people who have no knowledge of its original form and little understanding of the conditions under which it was produced. No other part of the Old Testament has exercised so wide, so deep, or so permanent an influence on the life of the human soul.”

From the earliest of times the Book of Psalms in Hebrew has been subdivided into five divisions and these divisions are indicated in most of the modern translations:

- Book 1 ... Psalms 1-41
- Book 2 ... Psalms 42-72
- Book 3 ... Psalms 73-89
- Book 4 ... Psalms 90-106
- Book 5 ... Psalms 107-150

The following is a quote from Thomas Nelson King James Study Bible: **Purpose of the Psalms.**

“The purpose of the Psalms was well expressed by David when he instituted hymns in Israel. He appointed the Levites ‘to record [better: make petition] and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel’ (1 Chron. 16:4). The Book of Psalms is a record of petitions (or laments), thanksgiving, and praise to God by His people. As such it has brought comfort, encouragement, and blessing to God’s people through the ages. Every human emotion is covered in these hymns of aspiration to God.”

It should also be remembered that all the psalms were not written by David. Note the following (*scholars vary, the following is widely accepted*):

- Moses Psalm 90
- David Seventy-Three Psalms
- Asaph Psalms 50, 73-83
- Solomon Psalm 72, 127
- Heman Psalm 88
- Ethan Psalm 89

In addition to these authors 12 Psalms are assigned to ‘The Sons of Korah,’ though they were most likely performers rather than authors (see the superscription on Psalm 88). Sixty-one psalms are anonymous.

As promised above, the following is a **brief comparison of the Divisions of Hebrew and Christian Scriptures.**

The Hebrew Scripture Divisions

The Hebrew Scripture is organized in three main divisions:

1. **Torah or Instruction or Law** (*Also called the Pentateuch . . . consisting of five books*)
In essence to inform the Jews about their history, the laws they should follow and how to live according to God's will.
2. **Neviim or Prophets** (consist of eight books)
The division presents the history of Judaism after the death of Moses . . . the Jews relationship with Yahweh and their history.
3. **Ketuvim or Writings** (*consist of eleven books . . . as noted above the first of these books is the Book of Psalms*).
Intended to record history of the Jews and their actions within the covenant relationship with God.

The Christian Scriptures Divisions

The Christian Scripture is organized in two main divisions: The Old Testament and The New Testament; these are further divided as noted below ... briefly.

1. **The Old Testament**
Christians traditionally makes four divisions.
 - (a) **Pentateuch**
The first five books of the Bible.
 - (b) **Historical Books**
Telling history of the Israelites from their conquest of Canaan to their defeat and exile in captivity (Assyrian and Babylon).
 - (c) **Poetic and Wisdom Books**
Dealing in various forms, with questions of good and evil in the world.
 - (d) **Prophetic Books**
Warning of the consequences of turning away from God.

NOTE:

Some scholars divide the Prophetic Books into Major Prophets and Minor Prophets ... resulting in five divisions, instead of four.

2. **The New Testament (BRIEFLY)**
The New Testament is divided in four groups.
 - (a) **Gospels**
 - (b) **Acts of the Apostles**
 - (c) **Epistles**
 - (d) **Revelation**

*It is important to remember that the Old Testament **has not** become obsolete; please note the following statement:*

*"The Church of God stands now, as it has always stood, for **the whole Bible rightly divided and the New Testament as the rule for government and discipline***

Occasionally there are amplifications, but the basic doctrine of the church has

remained constant since the inception of the Church.” (Church of God ... Our Statement of Faith)

Psalm 1 Contrast: The Righteous and the Wicked.

Introduction

Over the years, the United States of America has been a center of interest for millions, seeking a more successful life with happiness as an end goal. The American dream is the belief that anyone, regardless of where they were born or what class they were born into, can attain their own vision of success in a society in which mobility is possible for everyone. The United States *Declaration of Independence* proclaims that God has endowed all men with the “Unalienable Rights” of “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

The sad reality is the pursuit of happiness is the futile quest of far too many. (*Time wouldn't allow for details*). In our pursuit of happiness so many things went wrong, including our personal blunders that resulted in great sadness, ruined lives, etc. There are so many examples of man's futile efforts, both within the Bible and otherwise . . . *I will note one Scripture that immediately comes to mind:*

Psa. 127:1 NKJV

“Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays up in vain.”

The question to be answered is **“Where can happiness be found?”** *This is another detailed study, however at this time note: As we carefully study the Word of God, it has become evidently clear that true happiness is a gift of God; it is one of the very special blessings. Some years ago we sang: Actually it is the refrain of “We Plough the Fields and Scatter”*

“All good gifts around us are send from heaven above
We thank You, God, we thank you, God, we thank you, for all your love.”

Beloved, the pursuit for happiness is not hopeless, it can be realized when we have a right relationship with God and as long as we wholeheartedly follow Him and live in obedience to His perfect will.

Psa. 34:7 Amplified Bible

“Delight yourself also in the LORD and He will give you the desires and petitions of your heart.”

See also: Neh. 8:10; Psa. 16:11; 19:8; John 15:11; 1 Peter 4:13; etc.

The first psalm is in the nature of a prelude to the entire collection; one source refers to it as: “The major passage way into the rest of the psalms.” It is quite possible that the Psalm was composed for that purpose. It has no title as to who wrote it but was apparently written and known before the times of Jeremiah, since Jer. 17:5-8 seems to be a paraphrase and expansion of a portion of it. In a very strong and powerful way, this

first psalm of the Jewish hymnal declares a most astounding and undeniable truth: ***we can only truly worship God if we have chosen to walk in His way and in the light of His Word.***

I have found the following a powerful statement worthwhile to be quoted and deeply pondered; taken from "The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible:

"The Holy Scripture is central to all worship. God has revealed Himself, His glorious plan of salvation, and His will to every one of us in His inspired Word. Only if we have chosen the path of righteousness can we have an audience with Him. Only if we meditate on His Word can we fully understand the ways of God and worship Him in truth. Anyone can be inspired and comforted by reading the psalms, but we can only experience intimate relationship with Him if we love Him and obey His life-giving instruction (John 14:21; 15:10, 14). Such a relationship gives us liberty to pour out our hearts to God."
(Emphasis mine)

As noted in my title for this lesson, Psalm 1 draws a sharp contrast between the righteous and the wicked. It sets forth what has been called "the doctrine of rewards". The righteous prospers and are happy. The wicked are troubled and of short life. Definitely, there are exceptions in individual cases to this rule; but the general has been accepted as true and valid.

The psalm is informative and provides instruction:

1. It teaches how anyone can experience blessings from God.
2. It clearly brings attention to God's Word.
3. It depicts two sets of people who chose different lifestyles.

Warren Wiersbe notes:

"The psalm present two ways—the way of blessing and the way of judgment—which was the choice Israel had to make (Deut. 30:15, 19). Jesus used similar image (Matt. 7:13-14). Bible history seems to be built around the concept of 'two men': the 'first Adam' and the 'last Adam' (Rom. 5; 1 Cor. 15:45)—Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, David and Saul—Bible history culminates in Christ and Anti-Christ. Two men, two ways, two destinies."

The contrast noted in the Psalm 1 is clearly seen in verse 6: "For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish." (NKJV).

Division of Psalm 1

There are two main parts as follows:

1. The Righteous Vv. 1-3

The happiness and blessedness of a godly man . . . what his practices are and what blessings he shall receive from the LORD.

2. The Rebellious Vv. 4-6

In contrast, we have the state and character of the ungodly, it reveals his future and describes in strong language, his ultimate doom.

As noted in the introduction, we will be discussing Psa. 1:1-3 in Lesson 1 Part A and Vv. 4-6 in Lesson 1 Part B.

THE RIGHTEOUS Psa. 1:1-3

A. Distance Himself from Degrading Habits Psa. 1:1

Psa. 1:1 NKJV

“Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful.”

Introduction

This Psalm is well loved, often memorized and frequently used in sermons, etc.; it instructs us how to meet the most significant needs of our lives and that is “how to be happy and blessed.” The godly man is described in terms of what he does not do ... he is blessed. The Hebrew word for blessed is “*esher*” and used in the plural form. Blessed, based on its Hebrew definition means: *many happiness; abounding in blessing, experiencing the full measure of joy, peace, and prosperity with nothing withheld.* For the word blessed the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) uses *makarios*, the same Greek term found in the Beatitudes as in Matt. 5:3-11.

Clearly demonstrated in this account (Psalm 1) is that the righteous man is happy in what he does not do. Religion is more than negatives but that fact is, it does involve the negative. Beloved, there can be no building (*generally speaking*) without excavation, and **there can be no holy living without renunciation of evil.** As noted earlier, man continues to consistently seek happiness; therefore, it is something each person deeply and earnestly desire. For us to receive this favor of being blessed and to dwell in that state, we must not associate with ungodly people. This requirement is not new, for example we discussed similar in our Joshua series (for example see notes on Josh. chaps. 23 and 24).

The posture of the God-fearing man is presented in Psalm 1:1

1. He does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly.
2. He does not stand in the path of sinners.
3. He does not sit in the seat of the scornful

Simply stated, the blessed man does not do certain things: there is a way he will not walk, a path he will not stand in, and a seat he will not sit in.

The following are highlighted quotes from The Preachers Outline Sermon Bible.

*“(1:1) Blessed: The best synonym the English language offers for the Hebrew word (*esher*) is the word *happy*. Yet *happy* falls short of beginning to express all that is contained in what it truly means to be blessed. Being blessed means:*

joy	protection
contentment	calmness
peace	assurance
satisfaction	prosperity
etc.	

Blessed is both an inward and outward state: we enjoy this happiness with others. It is a joy, peace and assurance that transcends circumstances. ‘Even when the righteous do not feel happy, they are still considered ‘blessed’ from God’s perspective.’

This blessing is a gift from God. It is the result of His approval, acceptance, and favor upon an obedient believer’s life. This gift however, is conditionally received. While God’s favor is always undeserved due to our sinfulness, this blessedness is the result of some action on our part. Throughout the *Psalms* we are said to be blessed because we . . .

1. Do not associate with the ungodly (1:1)
2. Trust in the LORD (2:12; 34:8; 40:4; 84:12)
3. Confess and receive God’s forgiveness for sin (32:1-2)
4. Live in a nation that worship the LORD (33:12)
5. Are generous to the poor (41:1-2)
6. Dwells in God’s house (65:4; 84:4)
7. Find our strength in the LORD (84:5)
8. Etc.

... ..”

NOTE:

Leisure reading also known as **recreational reading**, **pleasure reading**, **free voluntary reading** and **independent reading**, is independent, self-select reading of a continuous text for a wide range of personal and social purposes. It can take place in and out of school, at any time.

Leisure reading has its values and must not be discouraged. However, the Word of God needs more than **leisure reading**; it is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim.3:16), given to us to guide us in living according to His will (Psa. 119; etc.).

Details are not possible, but think on this thought: **“Do not just read the Bible . . . study the Bible!! (Acts 17:11; Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16)**. Take this psalm for example (Psalm 1); it contains such powerful messages that we cannot afford to just leisurely read (*this is applicable to ALL Scriptures*). In regards to Psalm 1, Adam Clarke notes: “The great lesson to be learned from the whole is, sin is progressive; one evil propensity (*tendency, inclination, etc. . . . insert mine*) or act leads to another. He who acts by bad counsel may soon do evil deeds; and he who abandons himself to evil doings may end his life in total apostasy from God.”

1. **Strolleth Not . . . in the Counsel of the Ungodly** (Psa. 1:1a)
“Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly” (v. 1a NKJV)

(a) Definition

- (1) **Stroll:** To walk in a leisurely or idle manner; just want to wander a little; roam around; etc.

Note three significant words in the reference (v. 1a)

- (2) **Walk:** Based on its original usage is translated as **go** in the Old Testament.
- It refers to our natural activity or movement. As used here, it applies to our behavior in daily life.
 - Walks (walketh ... KJV) suggests a casual or passing association with those who are out of touch with God.
- (3) **Counsel:** In general, it means: guidance, advising, direction, instruction. It should also be noted that sometimes **counsel**... refers to purpose, plans, or schemes.
- (4) **Ungodly:** Generally, it is translated “wicked” as in the NASB, RSV, Amplified Bible, etc.
- “It is the opposite of righteous, and speaks of a person who is guilty of wrongdoing and stands condemn before God” (P. O. S. B).
 - Scholar, H. C. Leupold notes that its root means loose, and it refers to those who have loosed themselves from God and have fallen into evil. In this context it is accurately understood as people who have cast off the restraints of God’s Holy Word. They have chosen to live according to their own sinful purposes rather than God’s righteous commands.

(b) The godly man is indeed a wise man!

*The righteous man knows how to stay away from the **counsel of the ungodly!***

- (1) The righteous man knows how to *discern* the schemes of the ungodly. Unfortunately, so many fail at this point.
- They do not even consider if the counsel (purpose, plan, etc.) is godly or ungodly.
 - They hear advice, or theories about their problems and find themselves agreeing or disagreeing without considering, **“Is this godly or ungodly counsel?”**
 - Such is a grave situation, especially that we are cautioned by The Word of God . . . for example see Matt. 15:13-14; Luke 6:39.
- (2) The righteous man is also discerning enough to know the **counsel of the ungodly** can come from one’s own self. Our own conscience, our mind, our heart, can give us ungodly counsel. (Prov. 3:5-6; 1 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 5:16-18; Rom. 8:1-17; etc.)
- (3) The righteous man knows where to find completely godly counsel: *“Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors” (Psa. 119:24 KJV).*
- God’s Word is always the best counselor, and godly counselors will always bring the truth of God’s Word to help someone who wants counseling.
 - The righteous man takes wise counsel, and walks in the commandments of the LORD his God.

- To the righteous, the ways of wholehearted devotion are the ways of peace and pleasantness.
- His footsteps are ordered by the Word of God. and not by cunning and wicked devices of carnal men.

Psa. 37:23 NKJV

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his ways.”

- C. H. Spurgeon notes:
“It is a rich sign of inward grace when the outward walk is changed, and when ungodliness is put far from our actions.”
- **Psa. 119:133 NKJV** (*will be repeated if necessary*)
“Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me.”
- Psa. 18:36; 40:2; Prov. 4:12; 16:9.

2. **Standeth Not . . . in the way of sinners** (Psa. 1:1b)

“Nor stands in the path of sinners: (v. 1b NKJV)

(a) Definition

(1) **Path (way ... KJV)** ... speaks of a way, a road, a direction that is chosen to travel on.

- Man’s idea is that in making our eternal choice there are different alternatives available to man, the Bible specifically says that there are two ways: the way of righteousness that leads to life and the way of wickedness that leads to death and eternal damnation!
- We are either travelling on one of those pathway, whether we want to believe the facts or not!
 - There is the way of evil: Prov. 2:15; 14:12; 15:19
 - There is the way of righteousness: Isa. 26:7; Jer. 42:3; Luke 1:79
- **Matt. 7:13-14 RSV** (*These verses will also be repeated*)
“Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”

(2) **Sinners**

- Because of “political correctness” so many pulpits have gone silent on the reality and awful consequences of **sin** (*This is a topic to be followed up another time*).
 - We are not here to degrade, judge, condemn, etc. but we must still be able to say **“Thus saith the LORD!!”**
 - Servants like Isaiah would be isolated, ridiculed, etc., his license would be revoked, etc. in today’s world **but God’s message must still be proclaimed (example Isa. 5; etc.) with love, care and compassion!!**

- **Sinners** refers to those who are guilty before God because of their disobedience to Him.
 - In essence, the term sinners refer to those who have “missed the mark.” God has His standards and like an archer who misses his target, so are we when we transgress God’s precepts (commandments) (See **Rom. 3:23**; Isa. 53:6; 1 John 3:4; etc.
 - Adam Clarke notes:

“The distinction between the *ungodly* or the wicked person of the first statement and the sinner of this statement: the wicked person is without God and is uninfluenced by Him. The sinner, however, rebelliously lives outside of God’s limits and willfully transgress against God’s law.”
- (b) The sinner has his pathway.
- (1) The pathway of the sinner is one where they categorically live in disobedience to God’s commandments and have no relationship with Him.
 - As we noted before, this pathway ends in death and eternal separation from God, in hell (Prov. 14:12).
 - **Psa. 36:4 NKJV**
“He devises wickedness on his bed; He sets himself in a way that is not good; He does not abhor evil.”
 - (2) The **genuine believer** stays away from the unrighteous way of life.
 - Although they are entertaining, clever, subtle and well learned, if they are ungodly they are the wrong person to mingle with.
 - Travelling their route is a danger zone!! The ungodly is well known to give their advice against the ways of God and their evil is presented so artfully that we know it is a blessing to escape being tainted (*corrupted, contaminated, etc.*) and ensnared by their evil.
- (c) **The righteous is not afraid of his choice!!**
- (1) To walk in the way of righteousness is not a popular way of life in the eyes of the world but **the righteous is not afraid to take a less travelled road because he knows it leads to blessing, happiness and eternal life!!**
 - (2) He does not stand in their way to be noted by them but keep himself from blending and adapting to their standards. Beloved, he that would be kept from harm must keep out of harm’s way!! (Note Prov. 4:14-15).
 - (3) If we sincerely desire to be blessed by God, we do not stand in this sinful way of the wicked, much less travel therein!
 - The true believers are committed to God and have chosen the way of life over the road that leads to destruction. Our minds are made up not to travel on the pathway of transgression and rebellion . . . **we will serve the LORD!!**

- If we return to the old pathway of the ungodly, we backslide and forfeit the blessings of God upon our lives (Prov. 26:11; 2 Peter 2:20-22 see also Prov. 14:14; Luke 9:62; Jer. 3:14, 22; etc.).
- (d) The reality must be faced, irrespective of how attractive Satan makes sin appears, **the way of the sinner is the exact opposite of the blessed life.**
- (1) Those who live sinful lives do not have lasting joy, satisfaction or contentment.
- That which man needs, whether is real peace or satisfaction, comes ONLY from God!
 - “But seek **first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Matt. 6:33 ESV).
 - See also Psa. 37:4; 103:1-5; Isa. 58:11; John 4:14; 1 Tim. 6:6; etc.
- (2) **The real life of the ungodly** (*Only limited pointers are possible ... briefly noted*).
- Instead of all the great expectations their experience is a bitter one! Their misery is a continuous flow of unsettled conflicts with others!
 - As a result, they are plagued with guilt because of their transgressions and the hurt they bring to those who love them.
 - Selfishness and their sin result in insolation and loneliness that separates one from others.
 - The sad reality is; **habitual** sinners are inclined to resort to addictive practices that only worsen their condition. Some may use drugs and alcohol or just any sinful habit to deaden their nagging consciences and ease their pain.
 - The righteous does not desire the way of the sinners.
 - His companions are now different than before his glorious change!
 - Indeed, the righteous is a sinner himself **but now he is blood-washed, quickened by the Holy Spirit and given a new heart** (Ezek. 36:25-27; Rom. 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:13).
 - He is standing by the rich grace of God in the congregation of the righteous, and has purposed in his heart not to mingle with the multitude that do evil (Col. 2:20-21; 2 Cor. 6:14-18).
 - **The amazing and awesome difference with those who walk the way of righteousness is something to be greatly desired!**
Psa. 16:11 NKJV
 “You will show me the path of life, in your presence is the fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forever more.”
3. **Sitteth Not . . . in the seat of the scornful** (Psa. 1:1)
“Nor sits in the seat of the scornful” (1:1c NKJV)
- (a) Definition
- (1) **Sits (sitteth ... KJV)**
- Sit down (as judge, in ambush, in quiet).

- To dwell, to remain.
- To lurk, to tarry, etc.

(Strong's Exhaustive Concordance)

(2) **Seat**

- A site; a session, an abode; an assembly.
- Inhabited place, sitting, sojourning
- A seat, a habitation, a dwelling place, inhabitants.
- The primary notion giving rise to this word is that of remaining or abiding in a given location. It signifies a place to be seated (1 Sam. 20:18; Job 29:7); the sitting of an assembly (Psa. 107:32); a place of habitation (Gen. 27:39; Num. 24:21)
(Strong's Concordance and Key Word Study Bible)

(3) **Scornful**

- *The Hebrew verb means:* to make mouths at; to scoff; to make mock; mocker.
- A verb meaning to boast, to scorn, to mock, to deride or to imitate. This Hebrew verb is frequently found in the Book of Proverbs (Prov. 9:7, 8; 13:1; 20:1), and means to deride or boast so as to express utter contempt. The activity of the scornful is condemn as an abomination to people (Prov. 24:9) and contrary to the Law of the LORD (Psa. 1:1)
(Strong's Concordance and Key Word Study Bible)

(4) Beloved, **sits (sitteth ... KJV)** implies being quite at home with those who mock God and the way of righteousness!!

(b) **Scoffers mock everything that is holy.**

(1) They have no respect for the Word of God or the things of God!

- As indicated above, the Hebrew verb form for "*scornful*" literally means "to make mouths at . . ."
- It is obvious, even in today's world, that anyone who is wholeheartedly committed to God is mocked, derided, scorned, torn-down, etc. but we must continue and publicly affirm by our lifestyle and by God's grace: "**I have decided to follow Jesus! No turning back!! No turning back!!**"
- Through continued rejection of God's Word, the scoffers have become hardened towards God and sin.

(2) Note a few biblical references in regards to scoffers

- General reference to mockers: Prov. 17:5; 30:17; Isa. 57:4; Jude 18.
- Jesus Christ, Himself, was mocked: Matt. 27:29, 41; Luke 22:63; 23:11, 36.
- Servants of God mocked: (*you **may** have to read the context of each reference for deeper understanding*) 2 Kings 2:23; 2 Chron. 30:10; Neh. 4:1; Psa. 22:7.

(c) Scorners are identified by their pride (Prov. 3:34; 21:24).

(1) The *scorner* is thoroughly discussed in Proverbs: Prov. 1:22; 3:34; 13:1; 14:6; 19:29; 21:24; 22:10; 29:8.

- (2) They elevate themselves above God and others, and they defiantly and consistently disobey God's commands.
- (3) As observed in our text, *the scorner is portrayed as sitting (Psa. 1:1c)*.
- **What we are seeing here is the scorner arrogantly perched on his self-appointed throne, disrespectfully scoffing at God and jeering all who walk in the path of righteousness.**
 - You have seen these people from time to time, they arrogantly look down on those who pursue a life above sinful practices and centered on God's holy Word.
 - The scorner exists solely to fulfill the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17)
- (d) **The righteous finds no rest in the presence of the ungodly scoffers!!**
- (1) The scornful love to sit and criticize the people of God and the things of God. The righteous man **will not** sit in that seat!!
- When others are putting down Christians, it is easy to sit with them and criticize others. It is easy because there are many things to criticize about Christians but it is wrong, because in such situation we are sitting **in the seat of the scornful**.
 - The best alternative is to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ!! Spurgeon notes:
 "But out-and-out for Him, unfurl your colors, never hide them, but nail them to the mast, and say to all who ridicule the saints, 'If you have any ill words for the followers of Christ, pour them out upon me . . . but know this—ye shall hear it whether you like it or not' – I love Christ!"
- (2) The righteous refuses to take even the first step on this downward path. He finds no rest in the ungodly scoffing.
- The following are two quotes from C. H. Spurgeon:*
- "Let others make a mock of sin, of eternity, of hell and heaven, and of the Eternal God; this man has learned better philosophy than that of the infidel, and has too much sense of God's presence to endure to hear His name blasphemed."
 - "The seat of the scorner may be very lofty, but it is very near the gate of hell; let us flee from it, for it shall soon be empty, and destruction shall swallow up the man who sits therein"
- (3) Sound words of wisdom from The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible:
- "If we desire to be blessed, we will not sit in his (*the scornful ... insert mine*) seat: we will not act arrogantly before God or others."
 - "We will not disregard God's holy commands. Instead, we will guard ourselves from being influenced by those who live in mockery of God's Word."

NOTE:

Psalm 1:1 clearly illustrates two outstanding examples:

1. **The progression down the sinful pathway:**

- (a) **First**, it is a simple **stroll**, but it is a stroll with the ungodly.
- (b) **Second**, he **standeth** (KJV), taking a pause because he is getting to like the way of the ungodly.
- (c) **Third**, he **sits**, now he feels at home in the company of sinners . . . how unfortunate!!

Quite clearly, we have seen the downward spiral into the ways of unrighteousness. In a subtle way it starts by considering ungodly advice. This is followed by walking in the way of the ungodly; the end result will be disastrous because the individual conforms to the ungodly lifestyle of those who live consistently in rebellion to God's Holy Word, His will and His way!

2. **The unmistakable progress, describing the path which the righteous carefully avoids.**

- (a) He **strolls not** (walks not) in the counsel of the ungodly.
- (b) Nor **Standeth** (KJV) in the ways of sinners.
- (c) Nor **sitteth** (KJV) in the seat of the scornful.

Psa. 1:1 Amplified Bible

"BLESSED (HAPPY, fortunate, prosperous, and enviable) is the man who walks and lives not in the counsel of the ungodly [following their advice, their plans and purposes], nor stands [submissive and inactive] in the path where sinners walk, nor sits down [to relax and rest] where the scornful [and the mockers] gather."

B. Delights Himself in the Things of God Psa. 1:2

"But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night."
(Psa. 1:2 NKJV).

Introduction

The godly man knows he can do that good and cleaves to it, by submitting to the guidance of the Word of God and by maintaining continuous intimacy with God. He knows that it is the Word of God that keeps him out of the way of the ungodly (see verse 1) and fortifies him against temptations.

Psalm 17:4b NKJV

". . . By the word of Your lips, I have kept away from the paths of the destroyer."

The righteous do not need to pursue the fellowship of sinners, either for pleasure or to succeed in our goals, as long as we continue focusing on the Word of God and maintain intimate fellowship with Him.

Prov. 6:22 ESV

"When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you."

We can evaluate our spiritual state by asking, “What is the Word of God to us?” What account do we make of it?” “What place does it have in our lives?”

Beloved, what we have in Psa. 1:2, is the character of the righteous described. There is much talk today about “born again,” “being a Christian,” etc. yet there is not only neglect of the Word of God, but a failure to spend quality time with God and to live a life of righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:17-32, NB Vv. 23-24; etc.).

The genuine believer finds his **delight in the law of the LORD!** (Psa. 1:2; 37:31; 40:8; Jer. 31:33; 32:40; etc.). He is a person who will not heed ungodly counsel, nor walk in their way nor feel at home in their midst; instead he pays attention to God’s inspired Word (I Tim 3 :16; 2 Peter 1:21; etc.). It is a fact and established reality, if we desire to enjoy a life of tranquility, happiness and hope then we **must be guided by the light and wisdom of God’s Holy Word!!** ((Psa. 119:33-38; 119:105; Psa. 24:4-5).

1. Loves the Word of God (Psa. 1:2a)

“But his delight is in the law of the LORD (v. 2a ESV)

(a) Brief Definitions

(1) Delight

- Multiscreensite.com:
“To **delight**, says Webster’s **Dictionary**, is to ‘Take pleasure’ or ‘give joy or satisfaction to.’ Therefore, to **delight** in God’s Law/Word is to take pleasure in the Word of God. In simple words, it means we enjoy the Word of God.”
- KJV Dictionary
 - Noun
“A high degree of pleasure or satisfaction of mind; joy.”
“*He delights in the law of the LORD. (Psa.1:2)*”
 - Verb
“To receive great pleasure in.”
“*I delight to do thy will” (Psa. 40:8)*”.
- **To summarize:** The term “*delight*” means something that we desire and enjoy. As used in our text (Psa. 1:2), it speaks of a deep moving involvement with God’s Word.

(2) “. . . **in the law of the LORD” (v. 2a)**

- “. . . *the law of the LORD,*” refers to the teaching or instruction of **Yahweh (Jehovah)**.
- Throughout the Book of Psalms, the phrase “*law of the LORD*” is used to describe God’s entire word, not only the “*law*” portion of the first five books of the Bible (*Torah or Instruction or Law also referred to as The Pentateuch*).

- It stands for the whole revealed way of life contained in the teachings of Moses and the prophets, and is used in parallel construction with “the word of the LORD,” to which it is practically synonymous.
- It should be noted that at the time when this psalm was written the Pentateuch was all the Hebrews possessed. How fortunate we are today to have possession of God’s complete revelation to humanity.

(b) Delights of the righteous!

“But his delight and desire are the law of the LORD” (v. 2a Amplified Bible)

(1) Fact Check: **What really makes you happy?**

- It’s very important for you to determine what is important to you! Decisions do determine our destiny!!
 - If personal pleasure is the only thing that makes you happy, then you are a selfish, self-centered person (Rom. 2:8; 16:18).
 - If you are worldly-minded, self-indulgent, then you are spiritually dead (I Tim. 5:6; Luke 8:14).
 - If you desire, your sole delight is to be with family or friends, unfortunately you have still fallen short.
- Martin Luther has been quoted for saying that he could not live in paradise **without** the Word of God, but he could live well enough in hell with it.
- Spurgeon noted:

“Man must have some delight, some supreme pleasure. His heart was never meant to be a vacuum. If not filled with the best things, it will be filled with the unworthy and disappointing.”

(2) The **blessed person** has a sincere passion, a deep fondness, love and affection for the Word of God!

- This affection for the Word of God is a fervent inner bonding that is rich and meaningful.
- The fact is, when we sincerely love the Word of God, we will receive His life-changing favor.

(3) The reality is, all who are well pleased that there is a God, must be well pleased that there is a Bible, a revelation of God, of His will, and of the only way to happiness in Him.

(4) If a person delights in something, you don’t have to beg him to do it or like it. He will do it all by himself. You can measure your **delight** for the Word of God by how much you hunger for it!

2. **Labors/Lingers in the Word of God** (Psa. 1:2b)

“And in His law he meditates day and night” (v. 2b NKJV)

Introduction

The **law of the LORD** represents the revelation of God to the people. It is not to be a legalistic burden, but rather a great delight of the righteous who **meditates** ceaselessly.

Those who are blessed by God not only turn from evil, but also build their lives around the instruction of the LORD. They genuinely take pleasure in God and in the beauty of His holiness, and pattern their lives according to His Word. **What motivates their actions is love for God and His Word. As they draw life from God, they live fruit bearing lives** (v. 3).

Those seeking to live under God's blessing meditate on God's law (i.e., His Word) in order to know God by revelation and shape their thinking, attitude and actions. They read the words of Scripture, ponder them as well as **all Scriptures**.

(a) Continuously focused on God's Word

"And in His law he meditates day and night" (v. 2b NKJV)

- (1) The picture presented in this account, is that of the righteous man, his deep ardent love for God's Word and that he unceasingly meditates in it.
- (2) The Hebrew word (*hagah*) indicates continuous action, ongoing meditation. No time is wrong for meditating on the Word of God, nor is any time unseasonable for those visits
- (3) As someone stated in regards to the righteous man, the Bible has not only "captured his full affection" but also "claimed his full attention."
 - True happiness is to be found not in ways of man's own devising, but in the revealed will of God. **The Christian is "Bible-bred, Bible-led, and Bible-fed."**
 - Herein, we have the intimate acquaintance with which the righteous keeps up within the Word of God: ***In the law doth he meditates day and night***; and by this his delight is revealed, for what we love, we love to think of (See Psa. 119:97).
 - "This we must do day and night; we must have a constant habitual regard to the Word as a rule of our actions and the spring of our comforts, and we must have it in our thoughts, accordingly, upon every occasion that occurs, whether day or night." (Matthew Henry)

(b) Meditation in relation to the Bible is not the same as with Eastern religions.

- (1) The meditation by Eastern religions is one in which individuals are to empty their minds.
- (2) **Biblical meditation is not content-less but content-full! It is not accomplished by eliminating the thought but by redirecting thought to the Word of God.**
- (3) "To meditate on Scripture is to be filled with it, "to discourse (*i.e. converse, talk . . . insert mine*) with ourselves concerning the great things contained in it, with a close application of mind, a fixedness of thought, till we be suitably affected with those things and experience the Savior and power of them in our hearts" (Matthew Henry)
- (4) Oh, Beloved! Spend time in the Word of God! Feed on it! Let it saturate your entire being! As a kid I usually wondered why our cows (cattle) would just lie there and continuously chew their cuds.

Note this quote:

“Meditation chews the cud, and gets the sweetness and nutritive virtue of the Word into the heart and life; this is the way the godly bring forth much fruit.”

(Ashwood cited by Spurgeon)

- (c) *Hagah*, the Hebrew word, from which we get meditate means: to murmur, to speak, to study, to talk, to utter.

(Due to time more details are not possible)

- (1) Based on the definitions mentioned above, meditation involves more than keeping God’s Word on our minds and in our hearts. It also includes keeping God’s Word on our lips, that is speaking it out loud.

(2) **Note some Few summarized pointers:**

- The Bible is the “sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17)
 - It is a weapon we use against the enemy.
 - Jesus used it against Satan (Matt. 4:1-11).
- In our spiritual warfare, the Word and prayer are our weapons (2 Cor. 10:3-4; Eph. 6:17-18).
- “To speak God’s Word is to release it and empower it, to unleash its conquering power against the enemy. By speaking God’s Word, we swing the sword of the Spirit against our deadly destructive foe” (P. O. S. B.)
- In His challenge to Joshua, the LORD connected meditating on the Word with speaking it. *(See Josh. 1:8 . . . note: “. . . shall not depart out of thy mouth.”*

C. Desirable Results/Divine Favor Psa. 1:3

Psalm 1:3 Amplified Bible

“And he shall be like a tree firmly planted [and tended] by the streams of water, ready to bring forth its fruit in its season; its leaf shall not fade or wither; and everything he does shall prosper [and come to maturity]. [Jer. 17:7, 8]”.

1. Planted by the Waters (Psa. 1:3a)

“He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters” (v. 3a NKJV)

- (a) The blessed person is seen as a tree and not just a tree but “a tree planted.”

(1) This is not a wild growth surviving by chance.

- It is not there by chance; it is not a wild seedling that randomly sprouts in an inconvenient place.
- He is not a wild tree but “a tree planted”, chosen and has an owner!!
- He is cultivated and secured from uprooting, because what God has not planted He will uproot (Matt. 15:13).

(2) He is planted by the Husbandman!!

- God is presented throughout the Bible as a husbandman or gardener.
- In Isa. 5, He is seen as the owner and dresser of the vineyard (Israel).
- Jesus Christ also described the Father as the vinedresser and the believers as branches of Christ, who is the True Vine.

- In Scripture, we also observe the Father’s work in trimming and nurturing (John 15:2-6). He is actively involved in the producing of believers who are pictured as a field sown and watered (1 Cor. 3:7-9).
- (b) He is planted by “the Rivers of water.”
- (1) The rivers of God’s provisions:
- The rivers of pardon (Eph. 1:7; 1 John 1:7).
 - The rivers of mercy and grace (Eph. 2:4; 2 John 3)
 - The rivers of promises (2 Peter 1:4; 3:9)
 - The rivers of communion (John 14:23; 1 John 1:3)
 - Etc.
 - **In Jesus Christ**, the believer has the assurance of continuous blessings.
 - He promised abundant life (John 10:10).
 - His Word says **all** our needs (Phil. 4:19)
 - The requirement is to abide in Him and He in us (John 15:1-8, NB Vv. 4-6).
- (2) He is planted by God’s grace!
- I am what I am by God’s grace!!
 - Likewise, such was Paul’s testimony (1 Cor. 15:10).
 - Referring to the wild olive trees that will remain wild unless grafted by the power of God . . . salvation of the Gentiles depends on God’s promise to Abraham (Example see Rom. 11:11-36, NB Vv. 17-18).
 - There has never been a good tree that grew up of itself; it is the planting of the LORD and therefore He must be glorified (Isa. 61:3). Oh, beloved, *“The trees of the LORD are full of sap . . .”* (Psa. 104:16)
- (3) Grace is referred to in this verse as *“the rivers of water,”* the blessed man is planted and maintained by God; it’s those rivers, *the constant flow of God’s blessings in the midst of His people*, that makes the city glad (Psa. 46:4-5).
- (c) The blessed man is settled, steadfast, sure and secure **in Jesus Christ!!**
- (1) The word **planted** (v.3) also express the reality that the blessed man is firmly fixed.
- He is like a deep rooted tree; he is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ.
 - He stands secure despite experiencing the raging, dashing, boisterous storms of life!
 - The anchor holds
Though the ship is battered
The anchor holds
Though the sails are thorn
 - See Psa. 40:2; Isa, 54:14; **Eph. 3:17**; Col. 2:17; Heb. 13:9.
- (2) The blessed (righteous) man is like a tree that is strong and stable, sending its roots deep down, his life is characterized by strength and steadfastness (1 Cor. 15:58)

2. Productive (Psa. 1:3b)

“That brings forth its fruit in its season” (v. 1b NKJV)

(a) the righteous man (as noted above) is **like a tree planted by the rivers of water**. The mental imagery is of a well-watered tree, advantageously placed (*transplanted; anchored*) by a stream or irrigation canal, cultivated and cared for and **consequently fruitful!!**

(b) **The righteous bears fruits!!**

(1) The fruit bearing comes naturally from this tree because it is **planted by the rivers of waters**. Beloved, it is abiding in a life-source.

(2) Its productivity is enhanced by the strong root system which delivers fresh water from the river, thus producing an abundance of fruits.

(3) **The Rivers of Living Water** (John 7:37-39).

Please note a few comments and see the website, livingwaterstudies.com for a brief study on John 7:37-39, subject: “The Living Stream.”

- When the gift of the Holy Spirit is given to believers, they experience His overflowing life. . . equipped for effective service and a victorious life (Acts 1:8; Gal 5:22-23; John 7:37-39; etc.)
- The “*living water*” will “*flow*” out from deep within the believer to others with the healing message of Jesus Christ (John 10:10; 14:12; 15:15; see also Psa. 1:3; 46:4; Isa. 32:15; **Ezek. 47:1-12**; Joel 3:18; etc.)

(c) **The Fruit of the Believer**

The righteous: *He is like a tree planted by the streams of water that yields its fruit in season . . .” (Psa. 1:3a ESV).*

NOTE:

Fruit bearing is not to be taken for granted and it is sad to note that it is an area greatly overlooked and neglected by so many who profess to be Christians. It is unfortunate to note that in the U. S. A. and similar countries Christianity is rapidly declining, however, worldwide we are still the largest religion. Christianity has been experiencing a boom in South America, Asia and phenomenal growth in Africa. Details are not possible at this time but it’s time for an awakening and for Christians to get busy and become fruitful, to the glory of God!!

I did a lesson entitled “What Kind of Soil Are You?” (Matt. 13:1-23). I will be highlighting two pointers from the introduction followed by a quote from The Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible.

Highlights from “What Kind of Soil Are You”

(a) **Conditions for Bearing Fruit** (John 15, selected verses)

- (1) Cleansing (John 15:3) (*also in verse 2 we have the word “purge”, also translate ... cleanse, purify*)
- (2) Abiding in Christ (John 15:5)
- (3) Obedience (John 15:10, 12)
- (b) **What does it mean to Bear Fruit?**
 - (1) To bear converts (Rom. 1:13-14)
 - (2) To bear righteousness (holiness) (Rom. 6:21-23; Phil. 1:11)
 - (3) To bear Christian Character or the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

*Above I have listed **three** areas noted as fruit production; P.S. O. B. has listed six . . . three are noted above and in our studies emphasis have been placed on the other three noted in the quote below. Due to time I will not write out each verse as in the quote*

Summarized quote from The Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible

“The Fruit of the Believer: God commands us to bear fruit for the Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom. He has chosen us for this very purpose: that we should go and bring fruit, spiritual fruit that remains even after we are gone (John 15:16; Rom. 7:4). Jesus cursed the fig tree that did not bear fruit (Matt. 21:19), and He is equally displeased with us when we are unfruitful in His service (John 15:2).

The New Testament mentions six fruits that we should bear for the Lord:

- (a) The fruit of telling others about Jesus Christ and sharing the gospel with them (Rom. 1:13-16).
- (b) The fruit of holiness (Rom. 6:22).
- (c) The fruit of giving (Rom. 15:28; Phil. 4:17)
- (d) The fruit of the Spirit, which is Christ-like temperament and character (Gal. 5:22-23).
- (e) The fruit of good work (Col. 1:10).
- (f) The fruit of praise and thanksgiving (Heb. 13:15).”

John 15:2 Amplified Bible

“Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit [that stops bearing] He cuts away (trims off, takes away); and He cleanses and repeatedly prunes every branch that continues to bear fruit, to make it bear more and richer and more excellent fruit.”

3. **Preserved** (Psa. 1:3c)

“Whose leaf shall not wither . . .” (v. 3c NKJV)

(a) **“Whose leaf shall not wither”**

- (1) Caution is necessary! Those who bring forth only leaves of profession without fruit, even their leaves will wither!!
 - This was referred to above . . . note again John 15:2
 - The fruitless branches: that is those that cease to bear fruit are those who no longer have life in them that comes from enduring faith in love for Christ.

- These branches the Father, Husbandman, severs from the vine, that is He separate them from that vital union with Christ (Matt. 3:10).
 - When they stop remaining in Christ, they cease having life; thus they are severed and thrown into the fire (John 15:6).
 - The alternative is going back to God: Isa. 55, NB Vv. 6-7; 1 John 1:9; etc.
 - Beloved, **it's mandatory that that the Word of God rule in the heart** as that is how we will keep our profession of faith and flourish! (*I will have a few more highlights on this subject in our Practical Lesson Below*).
- (2) The righteous, the man who sincerely and continuously serves God wholeheartedly will, flourish!!
- Not only his fruit will be preserved but also the leaf. The righteous who abides shall neither lose his beauty nor his fruitfulness.
 - Brown, dead and withered leaves are signs of death and dryness as in preparation for winter; it is for the trees to protect their fragile organs during the cold dry season. Spiritually, the righteous man does not have these signs of death and dryness; his leaves are green and alive and he produces fruits.
- (b) As noted before, the righteous' strong root system distributes needed sustenance from the rivers of water.
- (1) "The tree flourishes, the leaves do not wilt and fall off. Its foliage is rich and lush."
- (2) Blessed! Blessed! Blessed! Indeed, the righteous are blessed, their lives are meaningful, prosperous and produces fruits abundantly to the glory of God!
4. **Prosperous** (Psa. 1:3d)
"And whatever he does shall prosper" (v. 3d NKJV)
- (a) Clarifying **"prosperous"** (v. 1d) (*Briefly noted*)
- (1) This is not advocating the "Prosperity Gospel"; absolutely, God promises to abundantly bless and prosper His people but too many have used that fact in a way that is inconsistent with what Scriptures really teaches. . . ***but this is a subject for another time!!***
- (2) **"Prosperity"** is not about attaining wealth or living a life of luxury, but about thriving as the person God created you to be. Sure, God may bless you with wealth . . . but there is no guarantee. **True prosperity is about living a life fully engaged with the principles laid out in the Bible.**
- (3) *"And whatever he does shall prosper" (Psa. 1:3d NKJV).*
- the phrase "whatever he does shall prosper" does not mean immunity to failure or difficulties. Nor does it guarantee health, wealth, and happiness (*as indicated above*).
 - In addition to what is stated above, note also. . . the Bible is saying:
 - When we **apply God's wisdom**, the fruit (results or by-products) we bear will be good and will receive God's approval.

- Just as a tree soaks up water and bear luscious fruit, we also are to soak up God's Word, producing actions and attitudes that honor God. **To achieve anything worthwhile, we must have God's Word in our hearts.**

(b) Be not deceived by the eyes!!

(1) It is not always safe to estimate the fulfillment of God's promises by our own eyesight (perception) . . . in fact such is not recommended!

(2) We have often made our judgments in which we obtain a similar painful/discouraging conclusion as it was with Jacob: ". . . *all these things are against me*" (Gen. 42:36 . . . *read the chapter for context . . . if desired read other related chapters*).

- It is a fact that we know our interest in God's promises as Jacob did, but when we are tested, tried, and troubled, we tend to see things in the reverse of what the promise foretells.
- However, despite what the physical eyes see. to the eye of faith, the promise is sure and by faith we become aware that "all is well" (2 Kings. 4:26). even though it seems that all is working against us!

2 Cor. 5:7 Amplified Bible

"For we walk by faith [we regulate our lives and conduct ourselves by our convictions or belief representing man's relationship to God and divine things, with trusted and holy fervor; thus we walk] not by sight or appearance."

(3) In a statement Spurgeon made, he noted that:

"Our worst things are often our best things. As there is a curse wrapped up in the wicked man's mercies, so there is a blessing concealed in the righteous man crosses, losses, and sorrows. The trials of the saints are a divine husbandry, by which he grows and brings forth abundant fruit."

(4) **Oh! Beloved! It is not outward prosperity which the Christian most desires and values; it is the soul's prosperity which he really longs for!!**

- The song: "**My Soul Longs For**" (*Several versions available*)

My soul longs for you
My soul longs for you
Nothing else will do
Nothing else will do

I believe you will come like the rain
You'll come like the rain

So let it rain
Let it rain.

- **Isa. 26:9a Amplified Bible**

“My soul yearns for You [O Lord] in the night, yes, my spirit within me seeks You earnestly . . .”

- **Psa. 37:4 NKJV**

“Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desire of your heart.”

(c) *It has been my objective to reinforce the facts on “prosperity” and The Preacher’s Outline Sermon Bible has a concise coverage:*

“Prosperity may include earthly possessions, but God’s richest blessings have nothing to do with material blessings. Scripture speaks of a more valuable prosperity of the soul (3 John 2). True prosperity in our lives is producing the fruit of God’s Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience. Bearing the fruit of God’s Spirit is the result of loving God’s Word and obeying it.

Also note this: water in Scripture is a symbol of the Holy Spirit (John 7:38-39). It is the Spirit who produces fruit in our lives (Gal. 5:22-23). Water is also a symbol of the Word, specifically of the washing and cleansing of Scripture (John 15:3; Eph. 5:26). Sin can quickly make us unfruitful in the service of the Lord. **Living in obedience to God’s Word** protects our fruit from becoming contaminated, diseased and destroyed by sin.”

5. Practical Lessons

(a) The reason for being blessed (*A brief comparison*)

Psa. 32:1 ESV

“**Blessed** is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.”

Psa. 1:1 ESV

“**Blessed** is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.”

“The reason for being ‘blessed’ are not the same here (*Psa. 1:1 . . . insert mine*) as in Psalm 32:1. Here (*Psa. 1:1*) blessings are a result of right conduct, while Psalm 32 speaks of blessings that come from God’s forgiveness. The forgiveness of God in Psalm 32 makes it possible to accomplish the practical righteousness of Psalm 1. However, both situations result in the spiritual and emotional joy and contentment which the word ‘blessedness’ expresses.” (Key Word Study Bible)

(b) When meditating on a passage in the Bible, **some questions to ponder are:**

- (1) Is God’s Spirit applying this verse (these verses) to my life and personal situation?
- (2) Is there a promise here for me to claim?
- (3) Is this passage revealing a particular sin I must strive to avoid?
- (4) Is God issuing a command I must obey?
- (5) Is my spirit in harmony with what the Holy Spirit is saying?

- (6) Is the passage expressing a truth about God, salvation, sin, the world or my personal obedience on which I need to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit?
 (7) Etc.

Psa. 119:2, 10-11 NKJV

“**Blessed** are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart! With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.”

- (c) A call for complete dedication!

As observed in Psa. 1:1, a decision must be made, it’s either we choose the way of righteousness or that of the ungodly. In my series, “Accept the Challenge and Move On”, we saw Joshua challenging the people to make a choice as to who they will serve and what is expected of them. They resoundly responded that they would serve the LORD (Josh. 24:18, 21, 24). Joshua made sure that they seriously consider their choice and in Josh. 24:19, he noted God’s holiness and what it means to sincerely and wholeheartedly serve God but they reaffirmed that they would serve the LORD (24:21).

The challenge is for us to live a life of commitment on a daily basis. We must have a made-up-mind to **sincerely** and **wholeheartedly** walk in obedience to God, His Word, His will for our lives and the way we must travel. Paul’s passionate plea continues to challenge us all!!

Rom. 12:1-2 NKJV

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

The presentation of ourselves to Jesus Christ, means that we must lay our all on the altar of sacrifice, to His honor and glory!! Beloved, this requires more than lip service, more than going through the motion of worship, etc. (Matt. 15:8); it is a call to service and a life of righteousness and true holiness (Luke 9:23-26; Eph. 4:24). It is a call to consistently live a separated life, free from the entanglement of sinners (**2 Cor. 6:17**; Psa. 1:1)

- (1) **Our commitment is to refuse to listen or heed to worldly advice!**

*“**Blessed** is the man Who walks not in the **counsel** of the ungodly ...” (Psa. 1:1A NKJV)*

- We are constantly confronted by ungodly counsel.
 - Some of these ungodly sources are: writers, those who regard themselves as experts, producing movies and similar means of

entertainment; worldly friends and a host of other means used by Satan to deceive; their objective is for us to live contrary to the will of God!!

➤ Unfortunately, we have many who live inconsistently with God's Word, will and way, within the Church. They deceive many (2 Tim. 3:13; etc.) and at times we must exercise caution (Matt. 7:15; 2 Cor. 11:14; **1 John 4:1-5**).

- If we intend to be **blessed** and remain **blessed**, we need to know what God says in His holy Word and we must live accordingly.
- We must completely reject that which is inconsistent with the Word of God and wholly trust God enough to choose His way over the counsel of others.

Prov. 1:10 NKJV

"My son, if sinners entice you, Do not consent."

(Read Prov. 1:10-19, NB Vv. 10, 15-16)

(2) **Our commitment is that we will never depart from the pathway of obedience; never to depart from God's righteous command.**

*"Blessed Nor stands in the **path** of sinners ..."* (Psa. 1:1b NKJV)

- It is Satan's nature to seek to destroy the people of God in any way that he can and he is continuous in his efforts (1 Peter 5:8-9).
- If we become careless, we will give in to sinful desires of the flesh and disobey God's holy commands (Rom. 8, NB Vv. 12-14; Gal. 5:16-21)
- The world will continue to present repeated opportunities to indulge in the flesh but we must remain focused on God (1 John 2:15-17).
- If we sincerely desire to be blessed, we must faithfully hold fast to God's Word. We must refuse to even stand, much less walk in the sinful way (Psa. 19:13; 119: 11,133)

(3) **Our commitment is that we will guard ourselves against the continuous effort of scoffers to influence us to have doubts about God's Word.**

*"Blessed Nor sits in the seat of the **scornful**."* (Psa. 1:1c NKJV)

- As noted earlier, it's unfortunate that Christianity has experienced a decline in U.S.A. and other similar countries. God be praised for the exponential growth in other nations! Indeed, God is never without as witness (Acts 14:17).
- We have witnessed a full onslaught by Satan upon every nation in the world and there is pressure on believers to accept immorality, dishonesty, injustice, etc. . . . the pressure to adapt to sinful living (Isa. 5, NB Vv. 11-25).
- Scorners of God's Word tempt believers to be tolerant of sin and it is alarming to see some denominations yielding to and adapting unrighteousness (Rev. 3:14-22; etc.).

We have heard the statement: **“God will be LORD of all or He will not be LORD at all!!**
I will close this pointer with a partial quote from hymn: **“Is Your All on the Altar?”**

Is your all on the altar of sacrifice?
Is it laid?
Your heart does the Spirit control?
Now, you can only, you can only be blessed
And have peace and sweet rest
After you have yield unto the Lord
Your body and soul.

Finally, I will close with some brief thoughts . . . these you may add to if you so desire:

1. Loving God’s Word requires of us not only to **read it** and **study it** but for us to **obey it!!** (James 1:22-25; 2 Tim 2:15; 3:16-17).
 - (a) Joshua was charged and shown the necessity of obeying God’s Word and be wholeheartedly committed. (Josh. 1:8-9).
 - (b) The Holy Spirit, who inspires all Scripture, has linked these passages to Psalm 1 . . . it is the doer of God’s Word that is truly blessed (2 Tim. 3:14-17; Josh. 1:8; Psa. 92:12-14; 119:35, 97).
2. Failure to love God’s Word is a symbol of a deeper spiritual sickness which is a lack of love for God. When we truly love God we will naturally love His Word above the allurements of Television, the internet, all forms of social media, sports, etc., that distracts from being wholehearted commitment. (1 Peter 2:2; Psa. 119:97, 103; 148).

Psa. 119:97, 103, 148 Amplified Bible

“Oh, how love I Your law! It is my meditation all the day [Psa.1:2] . . . How sweet are Your Word to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! [Psa. 19:10; Prov. 8:11] . . . My eyes anticipate the night watches and I am awake before the cry of the watchman, that I may meditate on You word.”

DO NOT JUST READ THE BIBLE STUDY & OBEY IT (2 TIM. 2:15; 3:16, 17)

2 Tim. 2:15 NKJV

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Tim. 3:16-17 NKJV

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

PSALM 1 PART A (Psa. 1:1-3)
REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Briefly explain the source from which we derive the English title “Psalms” and “Psalter.” Give the meaning of the word.

2. Complete by choosing the correct answer. Rev. W. O. E. Oesterley describes the Psalms as: “_____ to God ever composed on earth.”
- (a) The greatest selection of music
 - (b) The most magnificent music presented
 - (c) The grandest symphony of praise
 - (d) The most thrilling deepest praise.

3. Complete the following:
A portion of a quote by a great scholar commenting on the Psalms (noted in our lesson)
“... It has ministered to men and women of (a) _____ different races, languages and (b) _____. It has brought (c) _____ and (d) _____ to the sorrowing and to the (e) _____ in all ages. Its words have shown themselves to be (f) _____ to the needs of people who have no (g) _____ of its original form and little (h) _____ of the conditions under which it was (i) _____.”

4. What are the three divisions of Hebrew Scriptures, give a brief description of each division?

5. It has been earnestly sought by so many but with great disappointments; briefly explain **“Where can happiness be found.”**

6. Complete by choosing the correct answer:
“We can only truly worship God if we have _____ and in the light of His Word.”

- (a) chosen to follow our own inclinations
- (b) sometimes choose to walk in His ways
- (c) chosen to walk in His way
- (d) choose to follow the large crowds

7. Although God has revealed Himself; what is the only way of having an audience with Him? Explain.

8. How is the godly man described in Psalm 1:1? What posture does he maintain?

9. (a) Briefly explain what is “Leisure Reading.” (b) Is it recommended for “Bible Study” Explain your answer?

10. Complete the following:

Comment by Adam Clarke on Psalm 1.

“The great lesson to be learned from the whole is (a) _____ is (b) _____; one (c) _____ propensity or act (d) _____ to another. He who (e) _____ by (f) _____ counsel may soon do (g) _____ deeds; and he who (h) _____ himself to evil (i) _____ may end his life in total (j) _____ from God.”

11. Explain the meaning of (a) **stroll** (b) **walk** (c) **counsel** (d) **ungodly**; as discussed in our lesson in reference to Psalm 1:1.

12. (a) Answer True or False. (b) Explain your answer:

“One’s outward walk, has nothing to do with the inward work of grace in our lives.”

13. How would you describe the pathway of the sinner?

14. Define “scorners” (“scoffers”) as used in Psa. 1:1; and give examples of their conduct.

15. List and briefly explain the **progression** down the sinful pathway—based on Psa. 1:1.

16. How does the godly man delight himself in the things of God; why is this source of help so very important?

17. Explain what is referred to in this statement **“the law of the LORD” (Psa. 1:2a)**.

18. Complete the following:

“Those who are blessed by God not only (a) _____ from evil, but also (b) _____ their around the (c) _____ of the LORD. They (d) _____ take (e) _____ in God and in the beauty of His (f) _____, and (g) _____ their lives according to His (h) _____. What motivates their (i) _____ is love for God and His Word. As they (j) _____ life from God, they live (k) _____ bearing lives.”

19. Meditation by Eastern religions differ from Biblical meditation. Explain the differences.

20. What three pointers are noted in our lesson about the commitments of the righteous?
