

SBC – Sept. 10, 2023

Psalm 1:1-6 (NKJV)

“Two Men, Two Ways, Two Destinies”

Intro:

In our study of the Psalms we have noted that there are 5 basic divisions that follow the basic structure of the 5 books of Moses.

Slide # 1

- A. **Psalms 1-41** – Genesis – Man & Creation – Doxology, Ps. 41:13
- B. **Psalms 42-72** – Exodus – Israel & Redemption – Doxology, Ps. 72:18-19
- C. **Psalms 73-89** – Leviticus – Worship & the Temple – Doxology, Ps. 89:52
- D. **Psalms 90-106** – Numbers – Sojourn on Earth – Doxology, Ps. 106:48
- E. **Psalms 107-150** – Deut. – Praise and the Word of God – Doxology, Ps. 150:6

We have also noted in our study that there are various types of Psalms including, Wisdom, Royal, Lament, Imprecatory, Thanksgiving, Pilgrimage, Enthronement, and Messianic Psalms. The largest category is actually that of lament Psalms. We have studied through 30 Messianic Psalms which comprise one fifth of all the Psalms. Now, I want to go back and deal with the other more general Psalms of the various categories.

The Psalms were the song or worship book of God’s people the Jews. There is something in the Psalms that deals with everything we go through in life. I also see it as a PRAYER BOOK for God’s people. Whatever you are going through there is an appropriate Psalm to pray through. So many times the Psalms have comforted me in the battles of life and ministry. God meets us in the Psalms in a special way.

Tonight we are looking at Psalm 1. Fittingly this Psalm is the gateway to the entire book. It sets the plate for who is a true worshiper and who is not. What Psalm 1 does is contrast the godly with the ungodly. This at the end of the day is the ultimate issue as everyone is either in one category or the other.

Psalm 1 does not have an author named but many closely link it to Psalm 2 and it is clear that David wrote Psalm 2 as attributed to him in Acts 4:25-26. So perhaps David wrote it.

Slide # 2**Psalm 1****Title:** “Two Men, Two Ways, Two Destinies”**Outline:**

- A. vv. 1-3 The WAY of the Righteous
- B. vv. 4-5 The WAY of the Ungodly
- C. v. 6 The CONCLUSION of the Matter

The BIG IDEA in this Psalm is that the way of the godly person is CONTRASTED with and shown to be distinctively different from that of the ungodly person. They have two entirely different WAYS. In effect this Psalm destroys “**Easy Believism**” which says the way of the wicked and the way of the saint can as a way of life be the same. Psalm 1 shows this is not true.

1 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;

How appropriate that this introductory Psalm to the entire book starts with the word “Blessed”. This is comparable to the sermon on the Mount which begins with the beatitudes (cf. Matt. 5:3-12). The word “Blessed” means “happy” but it is more than mere happy. It denotes a deep joy that is found in the Lord. It is the idea of being joyfully “fulfilled” or “satisfied”. The word “Blessed” is actually plural emphasizing its intensity of being supremely spiritually happy.

It is not ‘Blessed is the king, blessed is the scholar, blessed is the rich,’ but, ‘Blessed is the man.’ This blessedness is as attainable by the poor, the forgotten and the obscure, as by those whose names figure in history, and are trumpeted by fame. - **Charles Spurgeon**

This Psalm shows that it is an illusion to think that the sinful life is one of happiness and satisfaction. Rather lasting joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment belong to the blessed man who lives a HOLY or SEPARATED life.

“Man” is here understood as generic in the sense of “Blessed is the person”.

The Psalmist describes the blessed person first from the negative side of things (in terms of what they don't do) and then from the positive side (in terms of what they do).

The blessed person “**walks not in the counsel of the ungodly**”. It seems everybody has advice. Everybody wants to tell you how to run your life. The world certainly wants to influence and govern a person. This is where the journey starts. The longest journey begins with a single step and the way you go depends on who or what you LISTEN to.

The counsel of the ungodly directs one away from God and His Word. It is self oriented – it is now oriented. The world's guidance leaves God out of the equation. The blessed man won't LISTEN to the world – he rejects the ungodly counsel of the ungodly. This person heeds the advice of Paul who said, “do not be conformed to the world” (cf. Rom. 12:2).

The blessed person does not have one foot in the world and one foot in the Bible – rather they are sold out to God listening only to God. This relates to who you listen to which governs your values, convictions, and direction. The blessed person has a whole different worldview than that of the ungodly. The word “**ungodly**” says it all. The ungodly don't take God into consideration. He doesn't rule their thinking or their counsel. In contrast, the godly man LISTENS to God and rejects the counsel of the ungodly world.

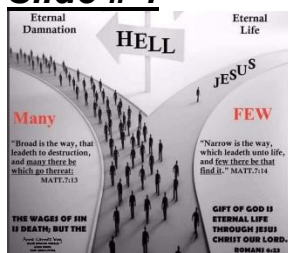
Slide # 3

Psalm 119:24 (NKJV)

24 Your testimonies also are my delight And my counselors.

The blessed person does not stand “**in the path of sinners**”. To stand in the path is to be more entrenched. It takes it's stand with the sinners in their rebellion. The path of sinners is their course – the course of their life. The blessed person refuses to stand with them. He is on a different path going in a different direction. The righteous person takes the path less traveled.

Slide # 4



The blessed person practices biblical separation and refuses to enter into a life of sin. He desires to follow God and not take his stand on the path of sinners. God's path is a good path and always leads to a good place.

And the blessed person does not sit "**in the seat of the scornful**". To take a seat is to be in a settled state. It is to be at home and comfortable with the scornful. The scornful are those who scorn, mock, and scoff at the things of God.

If you want an example of this just look at most of what passes for entertainment. It is a mockery of all that holy and godly. Those that can laugh at blasphemy and enjoy it are those who take their seat with the scornful. The scoffers mock the people of God and the things of God.

Slide # 5

2 Peter 3:3 (NKJV)

3 knowing this first: **that scoffers will come in the last days,**
walking according to their own lusts,

Some think the triple statement of related to the ungodly, the sinners, and the scornful is just a matter of emphasis while others see a progression of thought here that becomes more and more wicked until it is in a seated and settled position.

This is a form of Hebrew poetry so a case can be made for either view.

Slide # 6

Walk, Stand, Sit

Ungodly, Sinners, Scornful

"Negatively, the righteous man does not believe like, behave like, or belong to the realm of wicked men (v. 1). – **Charles Ryrie**

"Be out-and-out for him; unfurl your colours, 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.'"

-Charles Spurgeon

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

Verse one comes from the negative side – what the godly person does not do. But now in verse two the positive is stated – that is what he does do.

His delight is in the law of the LORD. The law of the Lord here represents the whole of OT Scripture. Sometimes “the law of the LORD” can represent just the 10 commandments, the Mosaic Law, or the books of Moses. But often (as here) it represents the whole of the OT Scriptures.

This is a way of saying the blessed person delights himself in the Word of God. He meditates in it day and night. Want to be blessed - “live in the Word”.

What makes a person happy – where they find their joy – what they take pleasure in is telling. This reveals what is really important to the person. If worldly or carnal things are the only things that make a person happy that is telling. It reveals a person who is flesh and self-centered.

If a person delights in something they don’t have to be begged to do it. They want to do it! True believers are defined as those who “receive the love of the truth” (2 Thess. 2:10). It’s not enough to simply believe the Word in a cold intellectual way. Even the demons do this. A true faith warmly welcomes the Word as the Word of God “which effectually works in you who believe” (1 Thess. 2:13).

Slide # 7

The verb meditates means “to mutter something under one’s breath,” referring to the quiet recitation of Scripture to one’s self. It signifies the filling of the mind with the biblical text and careful consideration of both what the text means and how it applies.

– *The Moody Bible Commentary*

The godly person loves the Word. They ponder it. They study it. They can’t get enough of it because it draws them close to God. It is the means by which they commune with God.

There is an old saying that says “We master the Word through memorization – the Word masters us through meditation.”

Someone has said the righteous person has the Word of God on his mind only two times a day: **day and night**.

To have your mind immersed in the Word molds your thinking and convictions. It becomes a part of your walk. It guides and guards you in all your ways. This person never has the Word completely out of their mind. It saturates their thinking. This is a deep interaction with the Word.

Slide # 8

Job 23:12 (NKJV)

12 I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food.

God instructed Moses to write concerning the future kings of Israel.

Slide # 9

Deuteronomy 17:18–20 (NKJV)

18 “Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall **write for himself a copy of this law in a book**, from the one before the priests, the Levites.

19 And it shall be with him, and he shall **read it all the days of his life**, that he may **learn to fear the LORD** his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes,

20 that his **heart may not be lifted above his brethren**, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

The blessed man separates himself from the ways of the world and immerses himself in the Word of God. The Spirit-filled life in Eph. 5 is parallel to the Word-filled life in Col. 3.

My mother made me memorize Scripture as a boy. I had to memorize 2 verses each week in order to get my allowance. Even as an unbeliever seeds of truth were planted in my heart. When I actually got saved as age 21 I did not know what Christians were to do -but since mother had made me memorize Scripture I started memorizing 3 verses a day. I carried them around in my pocket and focused on them every chance I got. It was long until I had memorized a lot of Scripture. To this day work doing memory work almost every day being one of the last things I do before going to sleep and the first thing before I get out of bed.

I have metaphorically called Scripture memory and meditation my “long hair”. Just like Samson if it should ever be cut off my strength would be gone.

3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

The metaphor of a tree planted by the water is one of being well nourished and refreshed. This person has a “hidden root system” that is the secret of their vibrancy. This spiritual root system is seen to be their delight and Word-focused life just mentioned in verse 2 (cf. Col. 3:16) and the result is the Spirit-filled life (Eph. 5:18) and the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

This person is consistently spiritually fruitful. In John 15 Jesus spoke of bearing fruit as we abide in Him. That is the picture here.

Slide # 10

John 15:5 (NKJV)

5 “I am the vine, you are the branches. **He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit;** for without Me you can do nothing.

The blessed person is continually in the Word and consequently is continually bringing forth spiritual fruit. Their leaf does not wither. In other words, they continue to maintain their spiritual vitality.

D.L. Moody said, “All the Lord’s trees are evergreen.”

Such a person prospers in whatever he does. This means they are successful in the sense of bearing fruit and serving the purpose for which they were created. To be prosperous is to bear lasting fruit. It is to make a lasting difference for the glory of God.

Slide # 11

Joshua 1:8 (NKJV)

8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall **meditate in it day and night,** that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have **good success.**

As a young man my grandfather told me that the word “success” in the KJV is found only one time and it is right here in Joshua 1:8 and the focus is on the person who meditates on Word day and night.

Slide # 12

John 15:8 (NKJV)

8 By this My Father is **glorified, that you bear much fruit**; so you will be My disciples.

John 15:16 (NKJV)

16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should **go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain**, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

And this matter of fruit-bearing in one form or another continues on and does not stop until God takes the believer home to glory (cf. Jer. 17:7-8).

Slide # 13

Psalm 92:12–15 (NKJV)

12 The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 Those who are planted in the house of the LORD Shall flourish in the courts of our God.

14 They shall **still bear fruit in old age**; They shall **be fresh and flourishing**,

15 **To declare that the LORD** is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

In contrast...

4 The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

In contrast to the fruitful vibrancy of the blessed person are the ungodly who are worldly-focused. They have no lasting fruit. There is no common ground here between the unbeliever and the believer. The believer has purpose and his life is really counting and making a difference for time and eternity. In contrast the ungodly unbeliever is bidding time – their life is empty, meaningless, and futile.

They are like chaff which the wind drives away into oblivion. Chaff is worthless shell of grain that is good for nothing. It's hollow and dead. At first appearance it might look like something of substance is there but on close examination its just empty and without value. This is the end result of an ungodly life.

If our lives are not lived for God in the end they are found to be worthless and good for nothing! How sad! What a contrast between the fruit of the well watered tree and that of the chaff. The life of the believer has lasting fruit – the life of the unbeliever in the end stands for nothing that matters or lasts. It's all chaff that is blown away into eternal insignificance.

“Only one life to live – twill’ soon be past – only what’s done for Christ will last.” Live for Jesus!

5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

Here is the conclusion of the matter. The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment. Come judgment day they will not stand. The sense is they will not survive the judgment. They will be blown away in eternal judgment.

The sense here is that they will have no defense – they don't have a leg to stand on (so to speak). On what basis can anyone be found standing on judgment day before God. The answer is only on the basis of a right relationship with God through Jesus.

Slide # 14

1 John 2:1–2 (KJV)

1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, **we have an advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

2 And he is the **propitiation for our sins**: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

In the day of the Lord with God's wrath coming hard and strong those under judgment will cry out...

Slide # 15

Revelation 6:17 (KJV)

17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

The answer is the only those found in Christ will be found standing. In the end all the wicked ungodly will not stand in the judgment but will be blown away in eternal judgment.

Sinners will not share in the congregation of the righteous. They don't belong there with the saints. In the end, God in judgment will separate the righteous from the wicked. The wicked will be forever excluded from the company of God's people.

6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

The LORD knows the way of the righteous. Knows in the Bible often denotes intimacy of relationship. Christ will one day say to unbelievers, "I never knew you" (Mt. 7:21-23). It's not that He was unaware of them, it means they never had a saving relationship with Him.

The LORD knows all about His own. He knows their path. He knows all they go through in this hostile world. And He knows the destiny that He has planned for them. He protects and preserves His own all along the way and ultimately ushers them into the kingdom.

Slide # 16

Psalm 121:7-8 (KJV)

7 The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

8 The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

In contrast the ungodly do not have this special care from the Lord and their destiny is one of perishing. To perish is to come to ruin or destruction. The end of the ungodly is like chaff blown away to eternal ruin. They have Eccl. 1:1 written all over their life, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Verse 6 shows the great contrast between the WAY of the righteous and the WAY of the ungodly. The difference is seen in the WAY each one takes. It wasn't just their words – talk is cheap. The difference is seen in diametrically opposite WAYS.

Way denotes an entire lifestyle, desires, and ultimately one's destiny (cf. Prov. 1:15). The way of the righteous is completely different from that of the ungodly. That is the KEY point of the entire Psalm. The great difference is that the righteous hunger for God as seen in the desire for the Word. The ungodly care not for God or the things of God. Their entire WAY is different.

A glib profession means nothing. The WAY of a person tells the true story on them and judgment day will reveal all.

Slide # 17

At the day of Doom men shall be judged according to their fruits. It will not be said then, Did you believe? But were you doers, or talkers only? -**John Bunyan**

Slide # 18

The Contrast of the Godly and the Ungodly

Lives a life of holy separation

Lives a life of sinful rebellion

Life revolves around the Word

Life revolves around the World

In the end shall prosper

In the end shall perish

The Bible speaks of two ways (Prov. 2:8; 4:19), only one of which leads to God. This is a consistent biblical theme, culminating in the celebrated words of Jesus, "I am the way" (John 14:6).

– ***The Nelson Study Bible***

The righteous carves his name upon the rock, but the wicked writes his remembrance in the sand. The righteous man ploughs the furrows of earth, and sows a harvest here, which shall never be fully reaped till he enters the enjoyments of eternity; but as for the wicked, he ploughs the sea, and though there may seem to be a shining trail behind his keel, yet the waves shall pass over it, and the place that knew him shall know him no more for ever. – ***Charles Spurgeon***

God help us to walk in the way of the blessed for whatever they do shall prosper for all eternity to the glory of God!