



STUDY OF PSALMS 1

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Scripture: Psalm 1:1-6

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What kind of man does God bless?

1:1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers:

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

3 And he will be like a tree firmly planted by the streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does he prospers.

4 The wicked are not so, but they are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked will perish.

The first Psalm is one of instruction by means of contrasting the state of mind of the righteous man and that of the wicked man. The psalmist contrasts the righteous and the wicked in the light of how God sees them.

God blesses the man who does not do the things the wicked tell him to do. The righteous man distances himself from the wicked. The first step in our failing God is by doing nothing, or worse accepting, the evil that is so prevalent in our world today. By not running from the sin, like Joseph ran from Potiphar's wife, we open the door to actually committing the sins yourself.

Nor does he get in the way of sinners or be where they are going. If we hang out where we know that sin abounds how shall we keep ourselves pure? How can a man keep his way pure? By

keeping it according to the Word of God. (*Ps 119:9-10, Proverbs 4:14-17*) Neither does he scoff at the things of God. The final stage is to make fun of or to scoff at Godly people and attitudes. What we are talking about here is a mental attitude. Our arrogance that says we know better than God! (*Ps 5:9*)

By contrast verse 2 states what the righteous man does do. He delights in the Law of the LORD. (*Ps 119:14*) He meditates on it constantly. The Hebrew work for meditates means to constantly murmur or repeat, one who is searching and thinking. Thus the man of God memorizes and studies intently His Word allowing him to always have ready access to God's word when he needs it.

The psalmist follows with the ready blessing of God to the righteous man described in verse 2.

He will be like a tree firmly planted ... The righteous man is planted by grace to be strong and solid in character. God's living word produces this solid character in the believer.

... by streams of water ... healthy and well nourished by the living water.

... which yields its fruit in its season ... properly functioning in his role. When the righteous man is in fellowship with the almighty God he is able to achieve the plans that God has for him. How eagerly we should desire this intimate relationship with the living God of the universe.

... *and its leaf does not wither* ... the man's faith will not shrink when he needs it because of the Word of God stored in his soul.

... *and in whatever he does, he prospers*. Since the man of God delights in the law of the LORD he will be successful in what he does because he relies on God for all things and in all situations. The righteous man submits to God's word and benefits greatly from it.

Now we return to the wicked man and see his miserable state. The psalmist likens this man to chaff as opposed to a tree. Chaff has no root, no water, no fruit and is utterly useless. The wicked man will not stand acquitted in this world or the next. The wicked man does not have God to protect him and thus is judged and condemned by his own sins. (Job 21:17-18, Ps 35:5-6, Is 17:13-14)

This short Psalm gives us a great deal of confidence and instruction. We can know the good and perfect will of God simply by drinking deeply from His word daily. God's blessing is on us when we meditate on His word and store enough of it in our soul that He can write it on our hearts. When our minds have instant access to the perfect Law of God our daily walk becomes easier. "My yoke is easy my burden is light." (Matt 11:29-30)

What kind of man is blessed?

The man who delights himself in the law of the Lord and meditates on His Word day and night is so very blessed by God both in this life and in the life to come.

Notes

1. In this study I use the term man generically to mean mankind.
2. Unless otherwise noted the New American Standard translation is used for Scripture references.