

Psalm 1 – The Two Ways

We're going to spend our time in small groups this year studying the book of Psalms. We aren't going to work through every individual psalm. Rather, we're going to spend time exploring some of the major themes throughout. For tonight, we're going to begin with chapter 1.

This Psalm, in some sense, orients our study of the entire Psalter. The Psalms expound on the beauty and value of God's Law. The contrast is made throughout the Psalms between those who love and keep God's Law and those who refuse and live a life of disobedience. Those who ignore His Word are warned and those who love His Word are blessed. Here, in Psalm 1, the "law" of God is not merely the legal code handed down by Moses. The term "law" is a kind of summary of all God's revealed word.

READ THE ENTIRE PSALM AND SPEND TIME MAKING OBSERVATIONS UNDER THE FOLLOWING HEADINGS

1. The major contrast in these verses is between the godly and the ungodly. The main illustration for this contrast is the difference between a fruitful tree planted by streams of water and the lightweight chaff that's blown away by the wind. How is the tree different than the chaff?

Thoughts: The tree is deeply rooted and long lasting while the chaff is easily blown away and quickly forgotten. The tree is large and substantial while the chaff is lightweight and inconsequential. The tree is useful because of its shade and fruit while the chaff is worthless and deservedly thrown away. The tree is growing and increasing while the chaff is dead. In short this psalm presents the tree's "muchness" and the chaff's "nothingness". Think about how this illustrates the differences between the godly and ungodly.

2. According to this psalm, who are godly people and what do they do?

Thoughts: The answer is both negative and positive. Negatively speaking, the godly man does NOT walk in the counsel of the ungodly, stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scorner. When you look at the company of wicked men and their ways - the godly man cannot be found among them!

Positively speaking, the godly man DOES delight in God's word and meditate on it constantly. The phrase, "day and night" indicates a continual daily course of action. Each and every day, the godly man dwells on the words of the God He loves. Also notice the presence of desire. The godly man DELIGHTS in the word of God. His obedience to Scripture is not obligatory or begrudging. Believers love and keep God's word - because we love God Himself!

3. Consider the end of the godly and the ungodly. What does this psalm say about the ultimate destiny of these two groups?

Thoughts: The godly are like the fruitful tree that will endure forever! We will never fade as we soak in the living waters of God's Person and presence. The wicked, on the other hand, will be lost altogether. Like the chaff, they will be blown away and both their name and place will be forgotten.

How has the word of God changed your thinking?

What blessedness have you seen in your life as a result of delighting in God's Word?