

# How To Be Blessed • Psalm 1

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. *New Book*

1. We start a new study this morning - in the Book of Psalms
2. The book has proven to be a source of comfort and encouragement for the people of God for centuries
3. I look forward to going through it together with you

### B. *The Psalms*

1. The Psalms are a bit different from the rest of scripture
2. If the other books of the Bible may be called the *speech* of the Holy Spirit TO men -
3. Then this book is the *answer* of the Holy Spirit IN men
4. The Psalms are songs of praise, petition, and in some cases lament
5. They are the emotional cries of the believer's heart, either in joy or in pain
6. I think as we go through them, we will all find much to identify with

### C. *Who Wants To Be Blessed*

1. Now, let's begin this morning with this question:
2. Who here wants to be blessed?
3. Well, Psalm 1 tells us how we can be a blessed people . . .

## II. TEXT

### A. *Vs. 1-3*

- 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;**
  - 2 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.**
  - 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.**
1. This song of only 6 verses presents two kinds of people to us,
    - a. the godly and the ungodly
    - b. the saint and the sinner
    - c. the good and the wicked
  2. Each of them are described - as are their ultimate destinies
  3. First we see the godly person
  4. And the psalmist tells us he is "blessed"
    - a. this word has been variously translated in different modern translations to try to bring across the real *flavor* of the word
    - b. the word is best understood as "happy" - but it's in the plural
    - c. so we shouldn't just think of a general kind of happiness that is merely dependent on circumstances

- d. it is a word which speak of an abundance of happiness that really is not effected by circumstance - it is rooted in something deeper
  - e. it is rooted in an inner trust and confidence in something unshakable
  - f. it's a happiness that allows a person to maintain their cheer when things aren't going well
  - g. the NT word is JOY
  - h. and a good way to read verse 1 would be - "Oh how happy is the man"
  - i. or "Happy, happy is the man"
5. But notice how the Psalmist begins - Abundant happiness is found in some *negatives*
  6. Now, modern psychology would tells us to emphasize the positive; but the psalmist begins by emphasizing the negative - and there's a very good reason
  7. We live in a fallen world that lies under the influence of the evil one
    - a. it is filled with traps and snares
    - b. while there is much in nature and life to enjoy and celebrate -
    - c. the world system is calculated and designed to entrap and destroy
  8. Picture a man standing in the middle of a mine-field
    - a. he is happy when he doesn't walk through it haphazardly
    - b. he is blessed when he doesn't stand on top of a mine
    - c. he's fine when he doesn't sit down on a bomb meant to take out an M1 Abrams tank
  9. This world is a moral mine-field - so happy is the man who lives carefully - taking time to look around and consider his steps - rejoicing in what is good, while avoiding what are the inherent dangers
  10. Note the progression toward evil in verse 1 - Let's define our terms and then put it all together
  11. There are three different actions here: walking, standing, and sitting
    - a. *walking* speaks of daily life - just the general way we go about living
    - b. *standing* pictures someone who has stopped and taken a position; they are now standing their ground
    - c. *sitting* is the posture of someone who has settled down and come to identify themselves in a certain place, usually in the company of others; when one sits, it is the position of rest - of having reached the end
  12. Sin is so insidious because of the way it slowly insinuates itself into our lives and then eventually takes over
    - a. it usually begins in some small and subtle way
    - b. as with the serpent tempting Eve in the garden
    - c. there was the subtle suggestion that God wasn't telling Adam and Eve the full truth about things
    - d. he counseled the woman to consider the possibility that there might be something good God had not revealed to them
    - e. and the beginning of mankind's ruin came when she chose to heed his ungodly counsel
  13. Being blessed begins by not walking in the counsel of the ungodly
    - a. this means that we take care who we listen to and by whose authority we live
    - b. who's counsel frames your life?

- c. in both the big and small decisions of life - what wisdom base do you draw from
  - d. do you order your life after the counsel of the ungodly - those who do not consider God or care about Him?
  - e. you husbands and wives - who's counsel directs your marriage?
    - 1) a high school or college family life class?
    - 2) Sally Jessie Raphael or Ohprah?
    - 3) radio talk show hosts?
  - f. parents - who's counsel drives the raising of your children?
    - 1) your past - your upbringing by your parents?
    - 2) Dr. Spock?
    - 3) *Parent's* magazine?
  - g. on the great issues of life - like where did we come from, why are we here, and where are we going - where do you go for guidance?
    - 1) biology class?
    - 2) Philosophy 101?
    - 3) Redfield's *The Celestine Prophecy*?
  - h. do not take our guidance and counsel in life from the ungodly - from those who do not consider not care for God
14. To stand in the path of sinners means that one has progressed from merely *listening* to godless counsel to adopting it as their own position
- a. we see this in those in the church who are involved in some sin,
  - b. and rather than repent and forsake it,
  - c. they find some rationalization for it
  - d. having listened to the counsel of the ungodly, they join in it and become one of those who give that godless counsel to others
  - e. and if a person gets to this point, then it won't be long until they arrive at the next . . .
15. To sit in the seat of the scornful
- a. the scornful are those who mock at righteousness
  - b. they turn the strength of virtue into weakness
  - c. they scoff at what is good and turn what is evil into something *sophisticated* and *cool*
  - d. the scoffers and scornful of our day are the elites; the media professionals who seem to delight in taunting God and flaunting sin
  - e. they are the professors of our most prestigious universities who would turn morality and truth upside down
  - f. they may be culturally sophisticated, but they are moral barbarians
16. Blessed is the one who does not begin this digression into wickedness!
17. Instead,
- 2 His delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.**
18. He or she takes their counsel from God - from His word!
19. The blessed person, walks, stands, and rests in the revelation of God
20. Does v. 2 describe you?
21. When it comes to the word of God, are you more like a butterfly, botanist, or honeybee?

- a. the butterfly flits from bloom to bloom, barely resting before it takes off again; it quickly takes a little taste, then flies away
  - b. the botanist comes with his magnifying glass and notebook and plant manuals; he gazes and studies and inspects - he reads and records, and then after being very impressed, departs
  - c. the honeybee lands on the flower, works it's way right down into the heart of it and gathers as much sweetness as it can hold and flies away full - returning to the hive where it shares what it has gleaned with it's companions
  - d. which of these best describes your interaction with the Word of God?
22. The one who delights in the law of the Lord and meditates in it day and night .  
..

**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.**

- 23. True prosperity is not accounted by possessions, lands, and wealth
- 24. It is measured by success in living - and success in living is found in living by and for the Lord
- 25. There is not greater reward and treasure than that which belongs to the child of God when on that great day we are gathered to Him he or she hears the words, "Well done my good and faithful servant. Enter in to the joy of your Lord."
- 26. This verse tells us that true success in living is the result of faithful obedience to the Lord
- 27. This obedience will yield a life that knows the continual supply of grace and strength
- 28. A few years ago, the Associated Press released a study done by an agricultural school in Iowa.
  - a. it reported that production of 100 bushels of corn from one acre of land, in addition to the many hours of the farmer's labor,
  - b. required 4,000,000 pounds of water, 6,800 pounds of oxygen,
  - c. 5,200 pounds of carbon, 160 pounds of nitrogen, 125 pounds of potassium, 75 pounds of yellow sulphur, and other elements too numerous to list.
  - d. in addition to these things, rain and sunshine at the right time are critical.
  - e. it was estimated that only 5% of the produce of a farm can be attributed to the direct efforts of man.
  - f. verse 3 reminds us that fruitfulness in life doesn't come from self-effort; it comes from abiding in the word of God day and night
  - g. the Word is the soil and water of spiritual health and fruitfulness
- 29. Now, in verses 4 & 5, we read about the way of the ungodly

## **B. Vs. 4-5**

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

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

- 1. Contrasted to the green leaf and healthy life-filled branch of the godly is the dry, blasted husk of the ungodly

2. While the good man or woman has taken root in secure ground, the wicked are as light and insecure as cut grass
3. A day of judgment is coming - a day when all will stand before the Righteous Judge of heaven and Earth
  - a. the books will be opened
  - b. and everyone whose name has not been written in the Book of Life will be swept away
4. How can those who today are marked among the vast number of the ungodly, change to take root in the congregation of the righteous?
  - a. by hearing and heeding the Word of the Lord
  - b. and that word says that God offer His forgiveness and cleansing as a free gift to all those who will believe in Jesus Christ
  - c. if you will believe in Jesus - that He died for your sins and rose again from the dead to give you new life, you can change your state from sinner to saint, from ungodly to righteous - right now (Opp in a moment)

### **III. CONCLUSION**

#### **A. V. 6**

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

1. Friends, there are only two ways a man or woman may walk
2. Either they walk in the counsel of God by the Cross all the way to glory
3. Or they walk in the counsel of the ungodly by worldly wisdom, to destruction
4. Either we take a stand for Christ - or we stand for the world
5. Either we sit with Christ in heavenly places, or we sit among the scoffers of this age
6. Where do you walk, stand, and sit?

#### **B. Want To Be Blessed?**

1. Then exercise care in who you listen to
2. And immerse yourself in the Word of God!
3. The November 24<sup>th</sup>, 1986 issue of *Newsweek* magazine ran the story of Roy Whetstine who purchased a rock from an amateur rock collector at an Arizona mineral show for \$10,000
  - a. Roy was a diligent student of geology and knew the piece was worth well more than the selling price, so he was glad to pay it, though it was a lot of money
  - b. you see, he immediately took it to have it assessed
  - c. it was valued at \$2¼ million and declared to be the world's largest sapphire.
4. We have in our possession a precious gem of far greater value than Whetstine's sapphire, but many of us are like that amateur collector - we don't know its real worth
  - a. we fail to avail ourselves of the joy such wealth could bring
  - b. instead, we leave it lying wherever it happened to be the last time we brought it home from church

5. Every one of us has our own personal gold mine - a virtual treasure chest, just waiting to be opened and mined
6. Let's dig in!!!!!!