

**Ps 1:1–6 (ESV)** <sup>(1)</sup> 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; <sup>(2)</sup> but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. <sup>(3)</sup> He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. <sup>(4)</sup> The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. <sup>(5)</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; <sup>(6)</sup> for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. What a message! We all want to be happy. All want to be blessed.

- A. But we can look for that joy in things that can't really satisfy – won't bring lasting contentment
  - 1). Reputation, possessions, position, worldly pleasure...
- B. But here God says "I have a way that guarantees blessing that is consistent and stable"
  - 1). Blessing so great the Hebrew word needed to be in the plural  
"Oh the blessedness(es)" "Oh the happiness(es)" of the man... who does certain things

**Question:** This Psalm presents us with this question.

Do you want to be so blessed by God that He has to describe it in the plural? *Yes Please! How?*

- A. Fortunately God tells us how in this Psalm
  - 1). He tells us what to do and what not to do
  - 2). If I follow His instructions He says I will be a blessed man – if I don't I won't
    - a). If I'm not I shouldn't get upset at God – I didn't follow His instructions
    - b). I didn't make those deliberate choices in my life that He says leads to blessing
- B. IOW there are some disciplined, deliberate choices we must make  
We don't coast nearer to God and into His blessings – we coast away from Him and away from blessing

**Transition:** What a passage! Almighty God telling us I want to bless you – here is how it works

- A. It's interesting it all really revolves around who we choose to be influenced by
- B. So were going to see what the blessed man does not do and what he chooses to do

## I. WHAT THE BLESSED MAN DOES NOT DO

**Ps 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;

**Intro:** Interesting section - We see a downward progression - a man moving away from blessing

- A. It begins with choosing to be influenced by the wrong source that leads him away from God into sin

### 1. The blessed man does not walk in the counsel of the wicked

- A. Walking is a series of steps – here it refers to the life choices we must make
  - 1). It refers to those decisions that happen on a daily basis
  - 2). Those choices of what our goals will be, choosing how moral our lifestyle will be
    - a). Choosing the direction of our life, the way we treat others, what our speech will be like

**Question:** This person chooses to take his advice from those who have no heart for God

- A. Those who don't take Him into consideration in what they choose. Who have no desire to please Him.
  - 1). Those Paul say are actually hostile towards God

**Ro 8:7 (ESV)** For the mind that is set on the flesh *is hostile to God...*

- B. Will the influence of a person who doesn't want God's will in their life  
Lead you closer to God and blessing or away?

**Transition:** David says if you want to be blessed you must be deliberate in your choices

- A. You must choose with the long term in mind – where do I end up if I choose this? Listen to this?
  - 1). If I let this person effect the decisions of how I'm going to live my life

- B. David tells us where the person who allows the world to influence their choices of morality ends up
- 2. The blessed man does not stand in the way of sinners**
- A. “Stand” refers to the commitments we make – the things we stand for – give ourselves too
- B. You need to see the sequence here – how step one and two link together
- 1). This person has been influenced by those who have no desire to walk with God
    - a). Co-workers. Friends. School mates. Their values have affected them.
- C. Here’s the erosion. Eventually they begin to do what those people do – joining them in sinful actions  
**Scripture warns us: 1 Co 15:33 (ESV) Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”**
- 1). Don’t be deceived! Don’t think the people you hang with won’t affect you!
  - 2). H.A. Ironside told a story of some boys who caught a couple of Linnets – small finch
    - a). The linnet chirps – they thought it would be great if it could learn to sing  
So they took their pet canary and set it’s cage next to the linnets cage
    - b). Guess what happened? The linnets didn’t start singing – the canary started chirping
      - 1a). The canary lost its song – became like who it hung around

**Point:** I can’t tell you how serious this is

- A. I know so many who used to walk with God but weren’t careful in this area
- 1). Eventually they were drug back into sin and the world – their spiritual song was stolen
- B. Notice what’s happening here - spiritually
- 1). This person was walking – moving forward spiritually
  - 2). He starts hanging out and being influenced by those who have no desire for God
- C. He stops moving forward spiritually – see it there – he was walking now he’s standing
- 1). He was progressing – now he has stopped growing

**Transition:** This is a very dangerous place to be – if it’s not corrected quick – look at the next stage down

**3. The blessed man does not sit in the seat of scoffers**

- A. This suggests a permanent state – a settled condition
- 1). One who is now comfortable with scoffers – those who mock God and Christianity - blasphemers
  - 2). So far away from God – what a dangerous place to get to – and how easy to get there

**Transition:** This process is deadly. Note it well. Guard yourself against it

**The Process of Moving Away from God**

**1. This person has chosen the wrong company. Listened to ungodly counsel**

- A. Therefore they begin to do what the ungodly do – they start dabbling with sin
- 1). They justify it – I can control it – no big deal – just a bit of fun – Don’t be Legalistic!
- B. Eventually that sin does what sin always does – hardens the heart – moves you away from God
- 1). Moves you so far away from God you find your comfortable sitting with those who mock God

**Transition:** This is a person who is in spiritual trouble – and needs to respond quickly

**2. The example of Lot (Abraham’s nephew)**

- A. He and Abraham lived near Abraham in Genesis 13 – they were both so blessed by God
- 1). So much livestock – so many people working for them – the land couldn’t hold both households
  - 2). The solution was to move away from each other – create a bit of space in-between them  
Abraham said to “Lot you go left I’ll go right. You go right I’ll go left. You choose”
- B. Watch the process. Lot looked toward the well-watered land NEAR Sodom (exceeding sinful)  
Some suggest there was something about Sodom that attracted his flesh – exciting – night life etc.  
He never really left the world behind in his heart

- 1). First stage: Lot looked toward Sodom – was attracted by it
- 2). Second stage: He pitched his tent towards Sodom

**Gen 13:12-13 (NIV)** Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. (13) Now the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD.

- a). He's not thinking – where will this lead me – how will it affect me
- b). Probably justified it. "Not living in Sodom. Just near it. It won't influence me. I'm good!"

**Transition:** Next stage we see how much it did influence him – like a tractor beam drew him in

- 3). Third stage: God decides to judge Sodom because of its wickedness – notice where Lot is  
Gen 19:1 (NIV) The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and *Lot was sitting (third stage down) in the gateway of the city.*
- a). Lot is now living a compromised life – comfortable in Sodom

**Question:** Did Lot's compromise matter? Did it affect him? Steal the blessings in his life? Big time!

- A. We see how much Lot is affected when God rescues him from Sodom
- B. Sodom is so sinful – God says enough – He is going to rain down judgment upon it
  - 1). Because of Abraham – God sends angels to rescue Lot and his family first

### 3. Genesis 19 shows us the fruits of a man who lived a carnal life

- A. Angels tell Lot to warn his family – Lot warns them but both his daughters fiancés think it's a joke
  - 1). Lot has lived such a foolish, frothy spiritual life  
Now when he tries to get serious they can't accept it from him – "Yeah Lot! Right!"
- B. When the angels tell Lot to hurry and get out or you will be swept away in the judgment
  - 1). Lot hesitates – his heart affected, attached to this wicked place  
The angels are forced to grab him and physically lead him out of the city
- C. The angels tell the family – don't look back or judgment
  - 1). Which is a lesson to us – when we choose to follow God – don't look back at the world
  - 2). But Lot's wife had been so affected by Sodom – she can't leave it – looks back – Pillar of salt
    - a). Three of Jesus most radical words "Remember Lot's wife"  
Don't try to follow Jesus without separating from sin – leads to disaster
- D. So his son in laws won't listen to him – he's lost his wife because of the carnal place they moved too
- E. Lot was rich and blessed - but ends up living in cave – he has lost everything!
  - 1). His daughters are so carnal – not trusting God – how will our family line carry on
    - a). They get Lot drunk in the cave - sleep with him to become pregnant with his child

**Point:** Peter tells us that Lot will be in heaven – but what a mess! How tragic to see what happened to his life

- A. A man who made foolish choices – hung out in the wrong place – influenced by the wrong people
  - 1). He thought he could toy with sin and win – He lost big time! Always the outcome
- B. By contrast Abraham moved away from Sodom – separation - and went from strength to strength
  - 1). He walked with God – talked with God – God called him His friend!  
Abraham lived a life of blessing – Lot ended up losing all the blessing he had

**Transition:** So we've seen how to become like Lot. Walk. Stand. Sit.

- A. How do we become like Abraham? Experiencing God and His blessing? V. 2 tells us

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## II. WHAT THE BLESSED MAN DOES

**Ps 1:2 (ESV)** but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

**Intro:** He goes to a different source of counsel – a source that leads him towards God not away

- A. He doesn't allow the ungodly to direct his choices – his morality – his goals
  - 1). If you want to have spiritual success you must plan for it. Deliberate choices for growth.
- B. We are going to see 3 ways the blessed man handles Scriptures.

## 1. The blessed man delights in the Word of God

**Ps 1:2 (ESV)** but his delight is in the law of the LORD...

- A. Here is what is guiding him
- B. Notice he delights in the law of God – it's not a burden – not irksome for him to read God's word

**Question:** Why is the Word such a delight to the believer?

- A. Because it is God's Word! Every page rings with the tones of His voice!

**John William Burgon:** The Bible is none other than the voice of him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every syllable of it, every letter of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High.

- B. Because it is a sure guide for life – that always leads us perfectly

**Ps 119:105 (ESV)** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

**Psa 19:8-10 (NIV)** The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. (9) ... The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. (10) They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.

- C. This sure guide is leading me to where I want to go. To God and to His blessings in my life

- 1). Without it I flounder – I move away from Him – away from blessing

**John Calvin:** Unless God's Word illumine the way, the whole life of men is wrapped in darkness and mist, so that they cannot but miserably stray. (Stray away from God. Away from blessing)

- D. This book magnifies God in my thinking – who He is – His glory, beauty majesty  
It increases my worship – always breaking my heart – what He has done for a wretch like me
- E. This book changes me in a way I want to be changed – that's why I delight in reading it

**E. Stanley Jones:** The Bible redirects my will, cleanses my emotions, enlightens my mind, and quickens my total being.

**Point:** What a book. Why wouldn't I delight in a book like this? I need to see the gift God has given to me!

**No wonder David said: Ps 119:47 (ESV)** for I find my delight in your commandments, which I love.

The blessed man delights in God's Word

## 2. The blessed man is disciplined in God's Word

**Ps 1:2 (ESV)** but his delight is in the law of the LORD, *and on his law he meditates...*

- A. Not a disengaging your mind – ooooooming – but a deliberate engaging of your mind
  - 1). It is lingering over the passage – praying over it - so that you understand it
  - 2). I try to give myself enough time to ponder – think - pray
    - a). I've been guilty of reading quickly – to check off daily reading  
I'm not sure that does much good. It doesn't affect me – change me – challenge me
- B. Learn to ask the passage questions -
  - 1). Is there a sin here to avoid? A command to obey? A promise to cling to?  
A blessing I should be enjoying? Does this speak to me in my present situation?...
- C. I grow. I'm changed when I read with understanding? Not just skimming the surface
  - 1). Then the scripture will change me – lead me – draw me to Him where I am blessed

The blessed man delights in God's Word • The blessed man is disciplined in God's Word

## 3. The blessed man is determined in God's Word

**Ps 1:2 (ESV)** but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates *day and night.*

- A. This is simply saying the blessed man takes the Word into his life with him

- 1). Doesn't read it in the morning – forget what it says – it doesn't affect him throughout the day
- 2). This is a person whose life is lived according to what the Word says in all he does
  - a). The Word isn't far from his mind – it guides him – directs his choices
- B. A good idea – the scripture that spoke to you in the morning – write down – go back to it again and again
  - 1). Standing in line at a store – pull that out – think it through – work it down

### **OBJECTION: Sounds like a lot of work**

#### **1. It is some work – but as you do it you'll see how valuable it is**

- A. The payoff is much greater than effort – you see that – it becomes more and more a delight
- B. Kind of like going to gym – hard at first – but you see what it's doing
  - 1). You start to feel better, stronger, more energy, losing weight – start looking forward to it

**Transition:** Now in v. 3 David gives a list (Not exhaustive) of some of the blessings this man enjoys

## **III. THE RESULTS OF DELIGHTING IN THE RIGHT COUNSEL**

**Ps 1:3 (ESV)** He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

### **1. Stability: Like a tree planted**

- A. Trees have this giant root system that gives them great stability
  - 1). The winds of adversity roar in everybody's life – this person is stable – not overwhelmed
- B. His roots are sunk deep into Christ and His promises – his peace and joy are stable – Blessed!

### **2. Vibrant: Planted by streams of water**

- A. Those roots go deeply into the source of this trees life – the water – constant nourishment
- B. So picturesque – Israel is an arid, dry place – the plant life reflects that
  - 1). But amongst the barrenness there are these trees planted by rivers – thriving – lush - green
- C. What a picture of Christianity – you see so many Christians that seem so barren in their faith
  - 1). Now and then one stands out – alive, vibrant, joy filled – ***NOW you know why!***

### **3. Productive: that yields its fruit in season**

**The fruit: Ga 5:22–23 (ESV)** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>(23)</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

- A. Whatever fruit is required at the moment – the Spirit produces it to meet the need
  - 1). If you need love – peace – patience – self-control – it is there – Spirit produced
- B. What a way to live – constantly seeing God give you what you need – taking you beyond yourself

### **4. Constant: Whose leaf does not wither**

- A. While others have their ups and downs – go through times of spiritual drought - barren
- B. This person living so near to Christ – guided by His word – spiritual droughts are rare

**Thought:** The beauty of a tree is found in its leaves – this person has that constant beauty of Christ

- A. Some Christians you don't know what you're going to get from moment to moment
  - 1). Will I get patience – kindness – love or the flesh. Anger
- B. This blessed person you know what you get – the beauty of Christ – the fruit of the Spirit

*Stable. Vibrant. Productive. Constant.*

### **5. Successful: In all that he does he prospers**

- A. Not man's idea of success but God's – this is much deeper than anything the world can offer
  - 1). This is a quality of life because God is in it – this is His peace and joy given to us
  - 2). This is being empowered to fulfill His purposes for us

## 6. Secure:

**Ps 1:6 (ESV)** for the LORD knows the way of the righteous... (NIV) Watches over the way of the righteous...

- A. How great is that? His loving eye is constantly upon me
  - 1). Everything I go through I run through this – God knows – He cares – He is working it out
    - a). I’m never alone – never on my own – so amazing to me!

**Transition:** Now David moves from the believer and how to be so blessed God uses a plural

- A. To the horrifying state of the unbeliever – who he calls wicked – that won’t stand in judgment

## IV. NOT SO THE WICKED

**Ps 1:4-5 (ESV)** The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. <sup>(5)</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;

### 1. Who is the wicked man?

- A. The one who doesn’t delight in God’s Word – doesn’t want to be influenced by Him  
The one who embraces the world and the ways of the world not the ways of God

**Thought:** Notice the difference – this blessed believer is so stable – like a planted tree

- A. The wicked is like chaff - The paper skin husk of grain separated when the grain is threshed
  - 1). Chaff = a great picture of instability - blown away by slightest breeze
- B. What a picture of how each handles the storms of life – one stable like a tree – roots sunk down
  - 1). The other is like chaff – overwhelmed and overcome
    - a). Of course they are – not influenced by God’s Word – no promises to stand upon
  - 2). They face life in their own resources and life’s problems are far too big!

**Transition:** The wicked man is like chaff – so unstable in this life – but it gets worse

### 4. The wicked man can’t stand in the judgment

**Ps 1:5 (ESV)** Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment...

**Ps 1:6 (ESV)** ...but the way of the wicked will perish.

- A. Not only is there an instability in life – there is no security in judgment
- B. The person who has no desire to be influenced by God and His truth – no desire to go His way  
The person who is living only for the pleasures of sin
- C. Of course they can’t stand in judgment – they lack the evidence they belong to God

**What is the evidence? Jn 10:27 (ESV)** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

- 1). Those who are God’s – who are changed by Him  
Have a desire to hear His voice in His word and a willingness to obey what they’ve heard
- 2). This person doesn’t want to hear what God says – is not going to alter their life because He says it

**Question:** But what if that person is going to church? That counts right? That’ll do it - NO!

**Ps 1:5 (ESV)** Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, *nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;*

- A. Plenty of people belong to a church but don’t belong to Christ
- B. Who is the church? What is the church? Is it a building? Is it everybody who attends?
  - 1). Jesus called the church His bride – it’s those who KNOW Him! In a relationship with Him
  - 2). It’s His sheep that follow Him!
- C. So just being in a building we call church doesn’t make you part of His church  
“Being in church doesn’t make you a Christian any more than being in McDonald’s makes you a Big Mac”

**Question:** So what do I do if I find myself in this category that doesn’t know Christ? That God calls wicked

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- A. One has had no desire to follow Him? Have their life directed by Him?
  - B. How do I move from the one being judged in vs. 4-5 to the one blessed in vs. 1-3?
  - C. Let me tell you what NOT to do! Buy a Bible and try to start trying to force yourself to delight in it.
    - 1). You can never move from judgment to blessing on your own
    - 2). You will never be able to work up a delight for God's word by yourself
      - a). Naturally you don't have any appetite for God's Word – you have an appetite for sin

Naturally you have no desire to please God – the sinner lives to please himself

**Point:** YOU NEED GOD'S HELP – YOU NEED TO BE SAVED!

- A. You need to go to Christ and admit you can't live like He wants you to  
You can't live in a way that will bring His blessing into your life
- B. You need to go to Him and ask Him to save you – forgive you – THEN He will change you
  - 1). He will place in you new desires that long to please Him  
He will then give you the power you need to live those new desires out
  - 2). He will give you an appetite for His Word
- B. Listen. He will move you up a few verses from one who can't stand in judgment  
To one who is His child – one who lives the kind of life through His power that He can bless!

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## CONCLUSION

### 1. So we've seen two portraits – the blessed believer the condemned sinner

- A. For the believer the application would be – don't toy with compromise and sin
  - 1). It has the power to take you where you don't want to go – Ask Lot!
- B. For the sinner – who sees today that he doesn't belong to God
  - 1). You're life has been characterized by sin not by what God has desired for you
  - 2). This morning if you've seen the danger you're living in
    - a). The solution for you is to go to Christ – you need His righteousness
    - b). Ask Him to save you – forgive you - and then He will change you  
He will empower you to live in a way He can bless! GRACE!