

The Thing About TV...

Psalm 1:1

Blessed is the man who does not walk
in the counsel of the immoral,
and does not stand in the path of sinners,
and does not sit in the seat of scorners.

Commentary on Psalm 1:1

"Blessed is the man who does not stand in the path of sinners."

Having discussed the godly man's *walk*, the psalmist further describes his **stance**.

One would think that when we spoke of the sinners' *path*, we would talk about our not *walking* thereon. But the psalmist instead, in the first line, related our *walk* to the *advice* we follow. When it comes to our *path*, he is only concerned about whether we are *standing* on a certain road. Why is this?

It is because where our FEET come to rest spiritually, that's who we are.

The psalmist has us picture a stationary man, an **OBSERVER** of *who* travels this road and *how* they proceed. You see, *among whom* we stand, *on* their road we will also eventually take counsel and walk. The psalmist has moved **from** counsel in our HEAD making us walk **to** the position of our FEET leading us to become. He's telling us that there are two equally effective ways to corrupt us: one from within and one from without.

The FEET are also a **test** for the HEAD. If our Head has been cleared, it will comprehend the path on which the sinner's Feet will be found. We see why he is on that road and where it leads.

We will therefore steer clear of it. Our Feet will comply with our Head's knowledge.

Furthermore, our Feet tell us where we *really* are by the COMPANY we keep. Are those we invite into our hearts as brothers those who delight in God's instructions? Whichever their viewpoint, I'm certainly adjusting my own life rationale according to theirs.

The psalmist is therefore testing whether we have brought men's underlying principles out into the light of day. If we have, then we know that appearances alone will be deceiving. If we spend long on the concourse of the deceived, we will begin to accept their own deception that this road is really not *against* God, it is just *for* me. And if God Himself is *for* me, how can He be *against* that? Furthermore, many whom we will have to concur are sinners *do*, nevertheless, give God His due in their own way. Our decision as to whether their offering is acceptable ultimately reveals the basis for our own standing with God. The psalmist is being very thorough in DIVIDING mankind into its REAL categories: two and two only: for or against God. If I am *for* those who are *against* God...

Then, if we see and keep uncovered before us the underlying philosophies by which sinners live, we will always be aware of the unpleasant fact of their road's *final destination*. Psalm One makes this gloomy subject prevalent in its latter portion. Everything about how men think and act ends up in where they spend eternity.

The problem is, **IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THIS WHILE WE STAND SIDE BY SIDE WITH THEM ON THIS PLANET**. Therefore, while we must walk *physical* roads *with* the immoral, we are to keep before our mind's eye the *spiritual* road that dooms them. This, per our nature, is all that will keep us from envying their road, secretly (perhaps even secret to ourselves) or outright.

Those who **ignore** man's real underlying principles have a more carefree approach to life. *They* seem, on a certain level, like the ones who believe in the goodness of God. They just

to rest alongside them.

True, this is no different than reading a book. And the same warning applies to reading books. The characters in a book are there for our scrutiny. We are still standing on a road, watching these characters go by.

The point is, by watching TV or reading a book, we can be the man in Psalm One who stands on the path of the sinner. Any non-Christian characters we follow shape our evaluations. David is warning us not to compliment ourselves: we *are* affected by these characters.

Most of us don't pay the slightest heed to this. We invite these people into our lives, especially via the passive mode of TV-watching, and there we are: standing in the path of the sinner. No apology. This is our culture. What? I'm supposed to only watch shows about saint Paul?

TV *can* be watched critically; but a whole lot of shows will just have to be switched off and left off. We watch what we watch because of some level of pleasure. THIS PLEASURE TURNS OFF OUR CRITIQUE MODE. Or we might *begin* by evaluating, allow ourselves to be nudged further into the road, and soon we are just participants- even while the fact that this show is supposed to be 'on probation' is still nagging us on the edge of our minds.

I'm an average American: I'm a TV watcher. I'm a TV watcher: I'm standing in the sinner's path.

Get off this path. It is not blessed.

We can all think of ways in which TV does *not* have a negative affect on us. **Think of the ways it *does*.**

Any good done on Sundays is easily matched by a TV show that night. Any spiritual progress I made in my devotions is put in my backpack as I assume my favorite position on the sinner's road- right there on my couch. I get it out of my backpack next devotion time, but that's the extent of its affect on my life. It can't demand my attention. The SHOW has collected that.