

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adults Sunday School

PSALM 1 – TWO WAYS OF LIFE CONTRASTED

I. INTRODUCTION

Verse 6 summarises the key thought of Psalm 1 very well: “For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.” In this psalm, the way of the righteous and the way of the ungodly are contrasted. This is a very effective way of teaching the truth by warning against the way of the ungodly and showing the right way in which all Christians ought to walk upon and that is the way of the righteous. We have no excuse to say that we are not warned beforehand. God knows our heart and how we can be prone to sin and temptation easily. Therefore Psalm 1 is an excellent psalm for us as we begin the study of the Psalms that we may be encouraged to do that which is right in the sight of God. May God help us.

II. THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS

A. What the Righteous Does Not Do

Verse 1, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

1. **Blessed is the man** – Blessed translates the Hebrew word “*esher*” which has the idea of happiness or contentment. *Esher* comes from the Hebrew word *ashar*, which in its root means “to be straight” or “to be right.” Blessed is the man speaks of the happiness, the blessedness, the contentment in the life of the man or woman who is right or “straight” with God. The righteous man will be a blessed man. He is a happy man.
2. **Walketh not, ... nor standeth, ... nor sitteth** – The blessed man does not do certain things. There is a counsel he will not walk accordingly, a way he will not stand upon, and a seat that he will not sit on. All these action verbs describe the actions of the whole person, in his entirety that he will not be found involved with anything that is contrary to his faith.
3. **Walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly** – The people of the world are ruled by Satan to follow after his wicked counsel. And these people are the ungodly ones. And they will “attack” those who are not the same as them by offering counsel so that they may also fall away from God and follow the evil one. With all the counsel that come, the righteous man must know how to stay away from the counsel of the ungodly. It must mean that the righteous man knows how to discern the counsel of the ungodly. Many fail at this point. They hear advice, and often find themselves agreeing without discernment whether they are acceptable before God or not. The only way to be discerning is knowing God's Word through the help of the Holy Spirit. There is no other way to know if the counsel is godly or not, apart from the wisdom from God's Word. God's Word offers the best counsel that a believer needs to be discerning so that he will not walk in the counsel of the ungodly.
4. **Nor standeth in the way of sinners** – The way of the sinners is where the activity of sin is found. Believers must never be found standing in the way of sinners. It includes the direction, the road, the path which sinners are heading towards in their life. The righteous is not afraid to take a road that is unpopular, or mocked by the majority for being anti-social, narrow-minded or old fashioned because he refused to follow the same way as they are. “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13-14). God has a path for the righteous and he must follow God and not the

way of sinners.

5. **Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful** – The scornful loves to sit and criticize the people of God and the things of God. The righteous will not want to be found sitting together with such people. When others are mocking Christ and blaspheming His name, it is easy to be intimidated by them because they seem so popular and influential. We are afraid of losing friendship and be ostracised by them. Such fear should be removed from us totally. Why should we be afraid of losing that friendship when the wrath of God is burning against those who blasphemed His name? Should we not be even more afraid of God rather than our friends? If we choose to keep quiet or even join with the scornful, be warned that God will surely judge!

B. What the Righteous Does

Verse 2, “But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.”

The word “but” gives the contrast from what the righteous will not do and what he will do.

1. His delight is in the law of the LORD – Throughout the Psalms, the phrase “the law of the LORD” is used to describe God's Word in its entirety, not only the law portion of the Pentateuch. The righteous is delighted with the word of God. Does God's Word bring delight to you? Is it important to you? If it is taken away from you, will you be affected? The righteous must find his delight in the law of the Lord. There is no way we can live without God's word.
2. In His law he meditates day and night – This does not mean that the righteous does nothing else but read God's Word day and night. He does not just hear God's Word, he meditates, ponders, reflects and obeys God's Word. It is food to our soul. The more we consume it, the stronger our spiritual body becomes. We may be busy at work or study, but our mind can be filled with God's word of comfort and strength to help us through each day.

C. How the Righteous Is Blessed

Verse 3, “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

1. A tree planted by the rivers of water – A tree planted by a river has a continual supply of water. It will not be easily withered away, because it is getting what it needs and that is water. Without water, it is only a matter of time that the tree will wither away and die. Likewise, as Christians, we are provided and supplied with spiritual “water” for our sustenance. And therefore we will live and not only we live, we will also grow strong and healthy. If we are not growing, then it is time to examine if we are truly planted by the rivers of water or not. The life of the righteous is marked by his spiritual strength and stability.
2. Bringeth forth his fruit in his season – A healthy tree will bear fruit. Likewise a growing Christian will also bear fruit in his life. This is not automatic that every Christian will definitely bear fruit. If a Christian lives in constant disobedience, he will not bear fruit at all. At the end, his faith might even be questionable since there is no sign of repentance. And how can that be if he is truly a believer? A true Christian will want to repent and return to God, no matter how down and out he has become. The Spirit which indwells in him will strengthen him to return to God. And eventually he will bear fruit by his obedience to God in his life. That's the season of fruit bearing.
3. His leaf shall not wither – Brown, dead, withered leaves are signs of dryness and death. However the righteous will not have these signs of dryness and death. Probably it might look as if he is dying because of sin that constantly and actively present in his life. If he is truly a believer, his

leaves are green and alive. And it is God that causes him to live. God gives him life to live. And therefore he will not be dead. He will live as a living man and not a dead one.

4. Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper – This is the promise for being righteous. And God is pleased to bless him. For the face of God is now turned to him with much love and favour.

III. THE WAY OF THE UNGODLY

A. The Condemned Life of the Ungodly

Verse 4, “The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.”

1. The ungodly are not so – Everything that happen to the righteous is not so for the ungodly. They have no blessing, nourishment and prosperity which God withheld from them. It is a direct opposite kind of life which the ungodly live in the this world without God.
2. Are like the chaff which the wind driveth away – Chaff is the light 'shell' around a kernel of grain, which must be stripped away before the kernel of grain can be ground into flour. Chaff was light enough that it could be separated from the grain by throwing a scoopful into the wind and letting the wind blow away the chaff. This is a picture of how unstable, and lacking in substance the ungodly are.

B. The Condemned End of the Ungodly

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

1. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment – They are guilty of sin and all form of transgression. There is no way they could stand on the day of judgment. Their end is sure and that is death in the lake of fire for eternity.
2. Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous – Sinners will not share the same glorious end with the righteous. Imagine in a place where everyone is God's child and you alone are standing by yourself. You will feel out of place. Sinners will not want to be found in the light. They hate the light because it exposed their wicked deed. They prefer darkness rather than light.

IV. CONCLUSION

Verse 6, “For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

- A. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous – It may be very trying and difficult to walk on the right way. And here the psalmist comforts our heart by saying, the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous. In oth er words, the Lord is looking out for us. We are not walking alone. He is with us and He knew exactly what happened to us along the way. This is how God cares and loves us.
- B. But the way of the ungodly shall perish – Destruction is the end for all ungodliness. Whosoever chose to walk on the broad way will definitely perish. There is only way to life, and if you reject it, the way left is the way of destruction. Why will you want to be d estroyed when there is a way of escape? Let us choose the right way that leads to everlasting life. May God help us. Amen.