

Following the Path of the Righteous

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We all want happiness, but some look for it in all the wrong places. Even as Christians, it's easy for us to be enticed by the world around us and neglect the things that are most important. Open your Bible to [Psalm 1](#), written over 2500 years ago, and you'll see this is not a new struggle. Here's what we learn:

You can't be in neutral with God

[Psalm 1](#) says that there are really only two ways of life open to us: the “path of the righteous” and the “path of the wicked.” These paths are not just going in different directions, they are going in *opposite* directions. And everyone, it turns out, is on one of these two paths. Jesus emphasized this in his own teaching when he said “Whoever is not for me is against me” ([Matt. 12:30](#)). In other words, there is no neutral. The daily choices we make will move us a little further down one of these two paths. [Psalm 1](#) gives us some helpful advice.

Don't be seduced by the world

When we allow the things of this world to grab our attention and consume our lives, we tend to drift away from God. It's usually not intentional and it almost never happens overnight. In [Psalm 1:1](#), we see the 3-step progression:

Step 1: Walking in the counsel of the ungodly. The drift starts when we begin to forsake godly wisdom and seek out worldly advice or wisdom instead. The “ungodly” here simply refers to those who are controlled by their own desires rather than by what God wants.

Step 2: Standing in the way of sinners. Without regular time in God’s Word we become more and more connected to the world. Instead of opposing an ungodly viewpoint, we begin to embrace it.

Step 3: Sitting in the seat of mockers. The final step is to actively engage in putting down the things of God and His Word. If we’re “sitting” it means that we’ve landed on a position that we feel very comfortable with, going “all in” against God.

The psalmist says those who follow this progression are like “chaff” (v.4), which is worthless and blows away in the breeze. In the short-term this pictures a life that is futile and empty, ultimately leading to destruction (v.6). What solution does the psalmist offer? The second verse gives the answer.

Psalm 1:2 *Blessed (happy) is the one whose delight is in the Law of the Lord, and who meditates on his word day and night.*

Be intentional about Pursuing God

The psalmist points us to the “Law of the Lord” – which is the Bible for today’s Christians. He uses the term “meditate”: to slow down long enough to really process what God says and how that applies to our lives. It's not enough to just read words from the Bible; we need to allow those words to shape our thinking and ultimately our decision-making. Notice this is not something the blessed man *has* to do but something he *loves* to do. He “delights” in it. The Apostle Paul echoes this advice in his letter to the Romans.

Romans 12:2 *“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and*

perfect will."

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In Psalm 1:3 we learn that the person who delights in God's Word will be like a tree planted by a river. Trees planted by water are strong, healthy, refreshed and nourished. These kinds of trees yield fruit, do not wither, and prosper in whatever they do. But perhaps the most important truth for those who delight in the Law of the Lord is found in verse 6.

Psalm 1:6 *For the Lord watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction.*

Life is filled with important decisions every day. But in the end, we are blessed or condemned on the basis of one major decision: righteous or wicked? The path that you choose will make all the difference.

[\[Related Topic: Introducing the Psalms\]](#)

Discussion Questions:

1. Watch the video together or invite someone to summarize the topic.
2. Who or what has your attention right now? Is this a good thing?
3. The things that tend to grab our attention are often things we should avoid.
4. What negative things tend to grab your attention?
5. In what ways are these things undesirable? Why is it so easy to fall in line with the way the world views things?
6. Describe the wisest person you know. What makes that person so wise? What evidence can you see from your life that you are on the path of the Godly?
7. This psalm states "blessed is the one whose delight is in the law of the Lord." What does it mean to delight in the Law of the Lord?
8. What are you intentionally doing right now to become more like the tree planted by streams of water?
9. What would your life look like if you were bearing fresh fruit every month?
10. Write a personal action step based on this conversation.