

aired on KALS August 9, 2005

Psalm 1

1. “How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
2. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.
3. He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.
4. The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away.
5. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
6. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.”

The first Psalm gives us a sharp contrast between the righteous person and the wicked. The righteous are secure and enduring, pictured as a tree firmly planted by streams of water. The wicked are likened to chaff which the wind drives away. They are waste which comes to nothing.

Verses 1 and 2 describe the righteous man. Verse 1 points out what the man blessed of God does not do. He

does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers. Notice the progression of the verbs here as listed: walk, stand, sit. As evil ensnares a person it gets him to slow down and eventually stop. Listening to worldly counsel is where the progression starts. The next step downward is to stand where sinners pass by; in other words placing yourself in situations where temptations are inevitable. When a person flirts with sin, sooner or later he is ensnared. Finally the sinner takes a seat, getting comfortable in and with his sin, and scoffs. Scoffers often ridicule those who are trying to better themselves.

Psalm 1 instructs us, so that we don't want to go there. How blessed is the man who does not do these things.

Verse 2 goes on to share that the man blessed of God delights in the law of the Lord and in God's law he meditates day and night. The righteous person who loves communing with God is constantly filling his mind and heart with God's word. For us today under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, Paul writes in Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you."

Verse 3 of Psalm 1 then illustrates what the person who delights and meditates on the law of the Lord is like. "He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water."

When I was a kid of about twelve years old I had a fishing hole down on Taylor Creek, which was about

three miles from our house. My brother and I would bike to the creek, then hike upstream from the road.

At one point the creek made a sharp “S” turn and had undercut a huge, knarled doug fir tree. Most of the tree was on solid footing in the rock and soil, but the creek flowed under one side of it, just after a small, terraced waterfall. This created a deep pool besides, and part-way under the base of the tree. Its huge roots extending through the waters and into the rocks and gravel on the bottom.

For me this is the picture of the tree planted by streams of water given in Psalm 1. This is a spiritual depiction of a mature Christian, constantly nourished on the word of God. His roots extend deep into the word, like that old tree on the banks of Taylor Creek. He bears fruit in his season of life, his leaf does not ever wither, and in whatever he does he prospers--steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of our Lord.

Come to the waters, drink of His word.