

LESSON 1

THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

Psalm 1

- ¹Blessed 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;
- ²but his delight is in the law of the Lord,
 and on his law he meditates day and night.
- ³He 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.
- ⁴The wicked are not so,
 but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
- ⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
 nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
- ⁶for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
 but the way of the wicked will perish.

WELCOME: *Fixing Our Focus*

Leader: Use this first lesson of *The Psalms: Songs to Keep Your Life in Tune* series to share your testimony with the group. In three to five minutes, share how God led you from following the “way of the wicked” to walking in the “way of the righteous.”

You could include something like: “Just like many of you, I experienced a lot of struggles in my walk with Jesus. But as I continued to reflect on the Bible and learned to submit to the Holy Spirit’s guidance, I saw my behavior gradually changing. My heart started rejecting the things I used to enjoy doing. I felt that the desire to please the Lord became more important to me. So here I am, our Father God is not finished with me yet. I am still learning

the “way of the righteous” and I am grateful that I am growing in my Christian faith together with you.

Lead in prayer.

WORSHIP: *Adoring Our God*

Suggested songs:

Grace by Laura Story

Your Grace Still Amazes Me by Phillips Craig

Amazing Grace by John Newton

WORD: *Understanding the Word*

Introduction

The Statement of Faith of Greenhills Christian Fellowship begins with:

The Bible is the inspired Word of God written without error, so it is our only sure source of knowledge about God and His plans, and is our absolute guide for doctrinal teaching and godly living (*2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:20-21*).

Most people have a code to live by. They adopt a set of standards that govern their thoughts and behavior. For followers of Jesus Christ, we regard the Bible as that standard. Our church’s Statement of Faith plainly declares that. It is, therefore, rightful that we begin our study series, *The Psalms: Songs to Keep Your Life in Tune*, with Psalm 1. It sets forth the Word of God to which our lives are to be in tune with.

Leader: Lead in reading Psalm 1 aloud together. Then read the paragraph on the “Key Verse.”

Key Verse: The key to understanding this psalm is verse 6—“for the Lord knows the way of the righteous but the way of the wicked will perish.” According to the psalmist, there are only two ways of living to choose from: the way of the righteous or the way of the wicked.

Psalm 1:1-3. Theme: _____

Read verse 1 and encircle all the verbs.

1. What does it mean when a righteous person **does not**:
 - a. walk in the counsel of the wicked?

- b. stand in the way of sinners?

- c. sit in the seat of scoffers?

**"Blessed" speaks
of certain kind
of happiness or
contentment that
comes from being
right with God.**

Read verse 2 and underline the words that describe a righteous person's attitude toward the law of the Lord.

2. What does it mean when a righteous person:
 - a. delights in the law of the Lord?

- b. meditates on the law of the Lord day and night?

Read verse 3 and put a check on the marks of a "healthy tree."

3. What blessings are implied when a righteous person is compared to a tree:

- a. that is planted by streams of water?

- b. that yields its fruit in its season?

In the book of Psalms, “the law of the Lord” is used to describe God’s entire Word—not just the first five books of the Old Testament.

- c. whose leaf does not wither?
- 4. “In all that he does, he prospers” does not mean that everything a righteous person does makes him rich and comfortable. What do you think this means?

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 1-3.

Psalm 1:4-6. Theme: _____

- 1. Explain the dangerous position the wicked are in today: they “are like chaff that the wind drives away” (v. 4).
- 2. Explain the dangerous future of the wicked (v. 5):
 - a. “Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous”
 - b. “the way of the wicked will perish”

Chaff is the husk or shell that is stripped from newly-harvested rice.

In the space above, write what you think is the theme of verses 4-6.

WALK: *Applying the Word*

Questions for Adults

1. Recall the “walk...stand...sit” in verse 1.
 - a. Who or what are the harmful influences in your life today?
 - b. What can you do now to protect yourself from these influences?
2. In a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest), how would you rate your current practice(s) of “meditating” on the Word of God? Explain the reason for your rating.
3. What help do you think you need in order for your rating to move closer to 10?
4. Years of research by the Center for Bible Engagement show that the life of a person who engages Scripture 4 or more times a week is radically different than the life of a person who does not. Download the **GCF Life Journey** app at the Play Store (Android) or App Store (Apple) to help you receive, reflect on and respond to the Word of God daily using your mobile device.
5. Individually and as a group, pray back this psalm to God. You could start by saying something like:

Father, I understand the choice before me and I choose the way of the righteous. However, I admit that I fall short in terms of staying in tune with your Word. Help me to delight in your Word. I want to develop this spiritual discipline of meditating on your Word day and night...
6. Pray for GCF (Prayer requests supplied by the Leader).

Questions for the Youth

1. Influencers and social media personalities dominate social media platforms today. Who are the people we regard and follow as such?

2. Influencers shape the way people live and choices that they make. How have they affected yours?
3. Thirty to 40 years from now, how significant would an influencer's choice be? What values do they instill?
4. How different or similar are these values from the Word of God? Do we take time to understand the values that God's Word teaches?

Questions for Children

1. One of your closest friends decides to cheat during an exam and he passes the answers to you. Following Psalm 1, what are you supposed to do in moments like these?
2. In verse 2, the Psalmist says that "his delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night". What is one promise from God in the Bible which you hold on to?
3. Psalm 1 tells us to read and study God's word day and night. What distracts you or stops you from doing so? Is it too much use of gadgets, is it schoolwork? List the reasons and ask God to help you have more time with Him.
4. Do you have a friend or someone you know who loves to do the wrong thing such as gossiping or bullying even when he or she knows they are not supposed to do it? Take time to pray for this person and that God will change their heart to become more obedient.
5. A tree needs many things in order to grow such as water, sunlight, carbon dioxide, and the nutrients that come from the soil. As Christians, we also need to grow in the Word of the Lord. Why not rewrite Psalm 1:1-3 on an index card, color it, and then memorize it? Don't forget to "meditate on it day and night".