

Sermon 6-4, 2017 Two ways of walking in life Psalm 1

Dear Walking believers in the Way of the Lord:

It has been said that the Egyptians were the best at preserving the memory of the dead. Look at the Egyptian pyramids.

- The Great Pyramid of the Pharaoh Khufu is nearly 500 feet tall
- It contains over 2 million blocks of stone each weighing two tons

Why did the Egyptians build these great pyramids?

- Because the Pharaohs wanted to be remembered for their power, wealth and accomplishments.
- Did the pyramids work? Do they help us remember the Pharaoh's of some 4000 years ago?
- How many Pharaoh's could you name right now?

Oh, we know about the pyramids. We have seen them on TV or in the movies or perhaps some of us have seen them in person. But, do we remember their names and their lives?

Now way! Most of the Pharaoh's are forgotten despite their wealth, power and worldly accomplishments.

King Solomon of Israel who knew something about the Pharaoh's and had his own wealth, power and fame once wrote: **"For the wise man will not be long remembered...the wise man too must die."** Eccle_2:16

The "wise" man Solomon speaks about is the one who is "worldly wise" --- those who live for this world and this world only --- like the Pharaoh's of Egypt.

Who really is a "wise" person? The wise person is not...

- The hedonistic playboy who forgets all restraints
- The "good times Charlie" who is living it up
- The wealthy person who seeks to find satisfaction in his possessions

The wise person is the one who is "Blessed or Happy" in the Lord. It is the person who follows the wisdom of God.

It is not this world's riches or wealth or honor or influence that makes a person "blessed or happy"

Psalm 1 says that the Blessed person **“Does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.” V1**

The truly blessed or happy person does not take the way of the world. The way of the world is opposite the way of God. Which way are we walking?

If we truly want to be blessed we will not...

- Take the advice of the world
- Take the way of the world
- Take the attitude of the world

Proverbs 4:14-15 “Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way.”

God’s blessings supersede what this world has to offer. There may be 2 ways before us that we could travel in this world but there is only 1 true way.

Who are the wicked, the sinners, the mockers of this world?

- Ephesians 2:1-5 Read
- We were taken out of the world of sin and darkness

The wicked are those who are still “loose” from God. They don’t have God as an anchor. They are controlled by their own desires, not by the Word and Spirit of God.

We are to avoid their counsel or their fellowship because they do not have God as their anchor. We are to ask God to show us how to walk and how to live. We are not to be trapped by the lifestyle and life attitudes of those who reject God’s Word. Hebrews anchor is our hope.

Read II Corinthians 6:14f “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common?...What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?”

Those who are described as “sinners” here in Psalm 1 are those who have chosen a way of life contrary to God’s Word. The mockers are those who are actively engaged in putting down the things of God. How do people mock God?

- By rejecting His Word
- By ignoring His Word
- By disobeying His Word

There is another way in life...the Way of God.

V2 “His delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night.”

Happy is the person who delights or knows God’s Word.

Some college students put down their understanding of God’s Word...This is what they thought...

- Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife
- Eve was created from an apple
- Jesus was baptized by Moses

We are to be students of God’s Word throughout our whole life. We are to consistently meditate upon God’s Word. We are to grow in our understanding of God’s Word so that we may be led by God’s will and guidance in our daily lives.

Joshua 1:8 “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”

We are to “meditate” on the Word of God. What does the word “meditate” mean?

It is a word that refers to a cow chewing on her cud. It means to go over it again and again. It means to allow God’s Word to share our thoughts and actions.

You may read a verse of Scripture and think there is nothing new here...I have read this verse before. But, then you let the verse sink in and you begin to think on it and you go over the verse again and again until it becomes a part of your life.

The blessed person who “meditates” on God’s Word is like a tree planted by the river.

V3 The blessed or happy person is described as a living and fruitful tree.

A tree has deep roots and is sturdy. It does not get blown around like a tumbleweed. A tree portrays stability and has the capacity to withstand the storms of life.

A tree is also a picture of growth and time.

- It takes time to produce a huge oak tree
- It takes time to grow mature in the Word

What does a tree need for life and growth? Water

We need the water of God's Word: Peace...Grace...Forgiveness

Jesus says: "Come! Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life." Revelation 22:17

A tree is "planted". The word here actually means "to transplant." Ever transplanted trees? We did here alongside the west side of our church building a few years ago.

We, too, were transplanted spiritually.

- We were dead in our sins
- We were enemies of God by nature
- We were lost souls doomed for hell

But, we were transplanted into Jesus Christ. We were taken out of Satan's control and placed into the kingdom of God. Like a tree planted by the water we have all the provisions and resources for the spiritual life from the Holy Spirit. By the Holy Spirit we will...

- Bear fruit
- Produce good works
- Be green and healthy spiritually even though physically we may be "wasting away"
- II Corinthians 4:16ff

The Matthews were a husband and wife missionary team in China at the end WW II. As the war ended the Communist took over China and the Matthews were placed under arrest by the government. They were forced to live with their young daughter in a small room. Their only furniture was a stool. They could not contact any of their friends. They had no money. Heat came from a small stove which they lit once a day to boil rice for lunch. Their only fuel to heat the stove came from dried animal refuse that they collected from the streets. This was a dry time for them.

After their release 2 years later they wrote a book about their experiences in that small room under Communists control. They entitled their book "*Green Leaf in Drought Time*" because they found that those who delight in the Word of God do not wither but instead produce the Holy Spirit's fruit.

We will prosper when we seek God's will...when we delight in His Word.

The happy person, the wise person is the one who follows the way of God.

However, there is another way that many people follow in this life. It is the way of doom and everlasting destruction. Vv4-5

In Palestine farmers made a threshing floor by picking out a slight depression in the ground or digging one out...usually on a hillside where breezes were common.

- The soil would then be wetted and packed down until it was very hard
- Around the perimeter of the floor rocks would be stacked to keep the grain in place
- After the stalks of grain were placed onto the floor, an ox, or team of oxen would drag heavy pieces of wood around over the grain...separating the wheat kernels from the chaff or straw
- Then the farmer would take a winnowing fork and throw a pile of grain into the air.
- The wind would blow the chaff away, while the kernels, being heavier, would fall back to the floor
- Eventually nothing would be left but the good and useful wheat

The wicked are like the chaff in 2 ways.

- Chaff is worthless and it is burned
- This pictures the futile, empty, worthless life of the godless and their future judgment
- Matthew 3:12 says: "His winnowing fork is in His hand and He will clear His threshing floor, gathering His wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

If only those who are running away from God could see this. But they cannot because they will not listen. Without the Holy Spirit they will not understand.

- I Corinthians 2:14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them..."

The world says the things of God are foolishness and they go on their merry way all the way to destruction.

In Eden the devil told Eve that if she disobeyed God by eating fruit of the forbidden tree, her eyes would be "opened" and she would be "like God knowing good and evil"

But she did not become like God; she became like Satan. And so did Adam.

- Their eyes were not opened except to evil
- They fell for the devil's trap
- They fell for the ways of the sinful world

Unbelievers will face God's judgment.

- Only those who have the robe of Christ's righteousness through faith in Jesus' blood and righteousness will be able to stand before God's throne.
- As a result God's judgment those without the righteousness of Christ will be excluded from the eternal blessings of God's presence.

V6 "For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."

This is the destiny of these 2 groups of people.

Proverbs 14:2 "There is a way that seems right to man, but in the end it leads to death."

- The way of the wicked (unbeliever) is death
- The way of the righteous (believer) is life

We all have heard of the hall of fame for sports personalities but did you know there are hall of fames for the following...

- Hall of fame for billiard players
- Hall of fame for chess competitors
- Barbed Wire Hall of Fame
- Kansas Oil and Gas Hall of Fame
- Military Intelligence Hall of Fame

But when life is over the only hall of fame that really matters in the Spiritual Hall of Fame and whoever believes in Jesus is in the Spiritual Hall of Fame.

"Enter through the narrow gate; for there is a gate that is wide and the way that is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life and there are few who find it." Matthew 7:13-14

The Marines' saying is The Few, the Proud and the Brave

God says about those who enter eternal life...He says they are:

The Few, the Humble and the Blessed and this is the...

- Way of righteousness in Jesus
- Way of walking with Jesus
- Way of living for Jesus