

1. THE SAINT'S HAPPINESS AND THE SINNER'S MISERY: Psalm 1

INTRODUCTION. Q. Do you want to be happy? How can I be happy? Psalm 1 answers that for us.

CONTEXT: The first word in Psalm 1 is *BLESSED* and the last word is *PERISH*. This is a song that contrasts both *the ways* of the righteous and the wicked as well as their *eternal state* after death.

READ **PSALM 1**.

DOCTRINE. The saints are afforded great happiness and the wicked are trapped in horrible misery.

OUTLINE.

- I. The saints are afforded great happiness.
- II. The wicked are trapped in horrible misery.
- III. Saints and sinners have vastly different outcomes.

I. THE SAINTS ARE AFFORDED GREAT HAPPINESS (Psalm 1:1-3).

- **THOMAS WATSON:** "This Psalm carries blessedness [on the cover]; it begins where we all hope to end: it may well be called A Christian's Guide, for it discovers the quicksands where the wicked sink down to perdition (v.1) and the firm ground on which saints tread to glory (v.2)."

I) If you want to be happy, do not walk in the *counsel* of the *wicked* (Psalm 1:1a).

Psalm 1:1a "Blessed (*plural*) is the man who *walks* not in the counsel of the *wicked*,"

- "Happy is the man who does give nor listen the counsel of the wicked." This has to do with advice or the counsel that is given.

- **BOYS AND GIRLS:** If you want to be happy, do not listen to the advice of people who do not love Jesus!

ALL, Who you take counsel from matters. Whose advice or suggestions or opinions you take to heart matters. Consider the outcome of their way of life. Are they holy in Christ and happy with Christ? Are those under their charge holy, happy, and flourishing? If so, listen to their counsel. If not, why even consider it?

USE FOR EXHORTATION

Seek counsel from those who, after considering the outcome of their way of life, you can see that they are holy, happy, and those under their charge are flourishing.

USE FOR EXAMINATION

- **Q.** Whose counsel do you listen to? Whose advice has directed your steps?

II) If you want to be happy, do not stand in the way of **sinners** (Psalm 1:1b).

Psalm 1:1b "nor stands in the way of sinners,"

- "Happy is the man who will not stand among those who will not stand in the judgement."
 - **WATSON:** "The godly man shakes off all intimacy with the wicked. He may traffic with them, not associate; he may be civil to them, as neighbors, but not twist into a cord of friendship. Diamonds and stones may lie together, but they will not solder and cement."

USE FOR EXAMINATION

- **Q.** Who's way do you stand in? Who do you have fellowship with?

III) Would you be happy? Then do not sit in the seat of **scoffers** (Psalm 1:1c).

Psalm 1:1c "nor sits in the seat of scoffers;"

Psalm 26:4 "I do not sit with men of falsehood, nor do I consort with hypocrites."

Those who mock God by scoffing at His person or His precepts or His providence may feel an instant delight, but they are like one who drinks wine laced with poison. It ends in sickness and death. And those who

surround themselves with scoffers get over-sprayed with their poisonous vomit!

USE FOR EXAMINATION

- Q1.** Do you sit in the seat of judgement and put God on trial?
- Q2.** Do you fellowship with those who do?

IV) If you want to be happy, get a *delight* in the Scriptures (Psalm 1:2a).

Psalm 1:2a "but his delight is in *the law of the LORD*,"

USE FOR EXHORTATION

Get a delight for daily reading in private, daily reading and listening in Family Worship, and get a delight for hearing the Word of God preached and applied to your body and soul.

- **PRAY THAT GOD WOULD GIVE YOU THE DESIRE OF JEREMIAH THE PROPHET.**

Jeremiah 15:16 "Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts."

BOYS AND GIRLS: If you want to be happy, learn to *LOVE* reading and being taught the Bible!

V) If you want to be happy, *meditate* on the Scriptures day and night (Psalm 1:2b).

Psalm 1:2b "and on *his law* he meditates day and night."

- **Moses writes,** "And Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening." (**Genesis 24:63**)
- **So Joshua says to God's people,** "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night." (Josh. 1:8)
- **And Paul exhorts you,** "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." (**Philippians 4:8**)

Eight times in Psalm 119 David says He "meditates" on the Word of God! He says it more in one chapter than many professed Christians have done in their entire life!

Psalm 119:97-99 "Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have

more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation."

Hearing and reading the Word of God is the tasting of the food, meditation is like the chewing and swallowing. Do you taste only?

Reading or Hearing the Word of God is the planting of seeds, meditation is watering. Do you plant only?

VI) Happy saints are like a healthy oak tree (Psalm 1:3).

Psalm 1:3 "He 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."

There are six particulars to take notice of here, beloved, and these should be great encouragements to your body and soul:

(i) You are more like a tree than a weed if you abide in Christ.

Psalm 1:3 "He is like a tree..."

Sanctification is like the growing of an oak tree, not the springing up of a weed. The Christian life is a marathon, not a sprint.

BOYS AND GIRLS

(ii) You are planted besides stream of water if you abide in Christ.

Psalm 1:3 "He is like a tree planted by streams of water..."

USE FOR EXHORTATION

Press on, one foot after another in your ordinary every day duties, giving diligent attention to the ordinary means of grace, and see how God will sanctify you!

(iii) You will yield fruit of love and good works if you abide in Christ.

Psalm 1:3 "He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season..."

- **1 Timothy 1:5** "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

(iv) You will not wither in the winter of affliction if you abide in Christ.

Psalm 1:3 "He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither..."

Isaiah 41:8-11

8 But you, Israel, my servant,
Jacob, whom I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham, my friend;
9 you whom I took from the ends of the earth,
and called from its farthest corners,
saying to you, "You are my servant,
I have chosen you and not cast you off";
10 fear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
11 Behold, all who are incensed against you
shall be put to shame and confounded;
those who strive against you
shall be as nothing and shall perish.

(v) You will prosper in the ways that matter most if you abide in Christ.

Psalm 1:3 "He 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."

Isaiah 3:10

"Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds."

Psalm 128

"1 Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord,
who walks in his ways!
2 You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands;
you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you.

II. THE WICKED ARE TRAPPED IN HORRIBLE MISERY (Psalm 1:4-5).

I) The wicked are like chaff that the wind drives away (Psalm 1:4).

Psalm 1:4 "The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away."

- **John the Baptist says in Matthew 3:12** "[Christ's] **winnowing fork** is in

his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

II) Those who stand in the way of sinners will not stand in the judgement (Psalm 1:5a).

Psalm 1:5a "Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,"

- **Matthew 7:21-23** "21 Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

III) Those who walk in the counsel of the wicked will not be in the congregation of the righteous in heaven (Psalm 1:5b).

Psalm 1:5b "nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;"

- **WILLIAM PLUMER:** "In this life the holy and the unholy are often found together... The tares and wheat grow together until the harvest. The sheep and goats herd together till the Chief Shepherd shall appear. . . Then shall be made an eternal separation between God's friends and God's foes."

III. SAINTS AND SINNERS HAVE VASTLY DIFFERENT OUTCOMES (Psalm 1:6).

Psalm 1:6 "for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."

I) The Lord Jesus loves the ways of the righteous, so they will continue for ever (Psalm 1:6a).

Psalm 1:6a "for the Lord knows the way of the righteous..."

Revelation 5:10 "You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

Revelation 22:5 "The Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever."

II) The Lord Jesus hates the ways of the wicked, so they will perish (Psalm 1:6a).

Psalm 1:6b "but the way of the wicked will perish."

- **1 John 2:16-17** "16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever."

CONCLUSION.

Q. How can any of us stand in the judgement and not be driven away to the burning like chaff? Have we not all at many times walked in the counsel of the wicked, stood in the way of sinners, and sat in the seat of scoffers? Have we not all many times neglected God's Word and filled our thoughts with evil?

Q. What do we deserve then?! Do you see that we all are the chaff in and of ourselves!

Q. I ASK AGAIN, How can any of us stand in the judgement and not be driven away to the burning like chaff?

A. Only through the Lord Jesus Christ who is the ONLY MAN TO EVER PERFECTLY OBEY PSALM 1!

- **I)** Christ is the true happy man who never once walked in the counsel of the wicked!
- **II)** Jesus did not ever stand in the way of sinners!
- **III)** Though Christ suffered greatly in His life He not once sat in the seat of scoffers!
- **IV)** The Son of God's delight was in the Law of the LORD and on His Law He meditated day and night!
- **He is that Tree of trees, planted by streams of water! And if we trust in and submit to Him, we get grafted in and connected to His eternal life!**
- **Christ not only obeyed the Law of God perfectly so that we may be counted righteous; He WILLINGLY BECAME LIKE THE CHAFF AND WAS BLOWN AWAY INTO THE FIRES OF JUDGEMENT FOR OUR FORGIVENESS!**

THINK!

The God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ—the only that has ever deserved to be that tree planted by the streams of water and prosper in all He does—He was willingly chopped down and burned for our sin!

The only One who could ever truly stand in the judgement bowed His head and let the sword of justice cut Him to pieces, in the stead or ruined sinners!

I) Look at His sinless life and trust in Him, that He lived perfectly righteous so that it would count for you!

II) Look at Jesus' death on the cross and trust in Him, that He died horribly yet willingly so that you could be forgiven!

III) Look at Jesus' resurrection from the dead and trust in Him, that He arose to break the power of sin and death!

IV) Look at Jesus' ascension from the earth back to heaven and trust in Him, that He ascended to be your Advocate with God and is now conquering the nations through the preaching of the gospel!

V) Look at Jesus' promise to return one day to judge the wicked and glorify His saints—fix your eyes, beloved, on the second coming of Jesus and the grace that will be brought to you then!

Look to Christ in faith, abiding in Him daily, and you will be the happy saint rather than the miserable sinner.

READ **PSALM 1**.

PURITAN QUOTES

On the Blessed Man and True Happiness (Ps. 1:1–3)

1. "The blessed man is he who, being justified by faith, walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; he delights in the law of God after the inward man."

Thomas Watson, *The Beatitudes: An Exposition of Matthew 5:1–12* (London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1660), 45. (Watson ties blessedness to delight in God's law.)

2. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly... This is the character of a truly pious man; he is one that makes the word of God his rule, and the glory of God his end."

Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 3 (London: Printed for Joseph Ogle Robinson, 1831), 1–2. (On Ps. 1:1–2; Henry emphasizes the blessed man's separation and delight.)

3. "The blessed man is described by his negative and positive character: negatively, he avoids the society of the ungodly; positively, his delight is in the law of the Lord."

David Dickson, *A Brief Explication of the First Fifty Psalms* (Edinburgh: Printed by George Mosman, 1653), 1. (Dickson on Ps. 1:1–2.)

On Avoiding the Counsel/Way/Seat of the Wicked/Sinners/Scoffers (Ps. 1:1)

4. "The godly man shakes off all intimacy with the wicked. He may traffic with them, but not associate. He may be civil to them as neighbours, but not twist into a cord of friendship. Diamonds and stones may lie together, but they will not solder and cement."

Thomas Watson, *The Saint's Spiritual Delight* (1660; repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1995), chap. 1. (Directly on avoiding wicked fellowship for blessedness.)

5. "To walk in the counsel of the ungodly is to take their principles and maxims for the rule of our actions; this is the first step to ruin, for their counsel is enmity against God."

Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 3 (London: Printed for Joseph Ogle Robinson, 1831), 1. (On Ps. 1:1.)

On Delight and Meditation in the Law of the Lord (Ps. 1:2)

6. "The law of the Lord is his delight; he finds more sweetness in it than in honey, more profit than in gold. To delight in God's Word is the mark of a true saint."

Thomas Watson, *The Saint's Spiritual Delight* (1660; repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1995), chap. on Ps. 1:2. (Watson on delight as sweetness/profit.)

7. "His delight is in the law of the Lord—not a burdensome duty, but a joyful privilege. The godly find their chief pleasure in meditating on God's precepts."

Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 3 (London: Printed for Joseph Ogle Robinson, 1831), 1–2. (On Ps. 1:2.)

8. "Meditation is the chewing of the cud; it turns truth into nourishment. The blessed man meditates day and night, applying Scripture to every circumstance for comfort, direction, and exhortation."

Thomas Manton, *A Practical Exposition of the One Hundred and Nineteenth Psalm* (London: Printed for Jonathan Robinson, 1681), 2. (Manton on meditation as "chewing.")

On the Tree Metaphor (Ps. 1:3 – Planted by Streams, Fruitful, Not Withering, Prosperous)

9. "The righteous are like a tree planted by streams of water—rooted deeply

in grace, drawing constant supply from God's ordinances, yielding fruit in season, evergreen in affliction, and prospering in all that concerns eternity."

Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 3 (London: Printed for Joseph Ogle Robinson, 1831), 2. (On Ps. 1:3.)

10. "The blessed man is like a tree by the rivers—ever supplied, ever fruitful, ever prosperous in God's sight, while the wicked are rootless chaff."

David Dickson, *A Brief Explication of the First Fifty Psalms* (Edinburgh: Printed by George Mosman, 1653), 2. (Dickson on Ps. 1:3.)

On the Wicked as Chaff (Ps. 1:4 – Driven Away, Unstable, Worthless)

11. "The wicked are light and unsubstantial as chaff, ready to be hurled by the storms of infinite wrath into the depths of hell."

Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity* (London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1692), 456. (Watson on the wicked as chaff in judgment.)

12. "The wicked are like chaff—light, useless, without root or substance, driven away by every wind of judgment; they cannot stand before God."

Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 3 (London: Printed for Joseph Ogle Robinson, 1831), 2. (On Ps. 1:4.)

On Different Outcomes / Eternal Contrast (Ps. 1:6 – Lord Knows/ Loves the Righteous; Wicked Perish)

13. "God knows (loves intimately) the way of the righteous, so it endures forever; but the way of the ungodly shall perish, like chaff consumed."

Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 3 (London: Printed for Joseph Ogle Robinson, 1831), 3. (On Ps. 1:6.)

STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Introduction to Psalm 1: The Pursuit of Happiness

1. The sermon opens with the question, "Do you want to be happy?" How does the preacher define true happiness (or "blessedness") based on Psalm 1? How is this different from worldly ideas of happiness?
2. What is the key contrast in Psalm 1, according to the sermon (first word vs. last word)? How does this set up the entire psalm as a choice between happiness and misery?

3. The sermon explains that "blessed" in verse 1 means "happiness belongs to the man" or "blessedness belongs to the man." Why does the preacher prefer this translation, and how does it change how we read the psalm?
4. How does the sermon distinguish the "wicked" in Psalm 1 from those in Psalm 139? Who are the "righteous" and "wicked" here—Christians vs. non-Christians, or something else?

The Main Doctrine

5. What is the central doctrine the sermon draws from Psalm 1? ("The saints are afforded great happiness, and the wicked are trapped in horrible misery.") How does this summarize the psalm's message?

The Three Main Headings / Truths

6. The sermon identifies three overarching truths from Psalm 1. What are they, and how do they serve as "headings" for studying the psalm?

Point 1: The Saints Are Afforded Great Happiness (Verses 1–3)

Negative Commands (What to Avoid)

7. **Verse 1 – Do not walk in the counsel of the wicked.** What does "walk" symbolize in Scripture, according to the sermon? Why does taking counsel (advice) from those who do not love Jesus lead to misery? How should we evaluate whose counsel we follow (e.g., outcome of their life)?
8. The sermon warns against taking counsel even from professing Christians who may be immature or warped by sin. How can we apply this practically when seeking advice from others?
9. **Do not stand in the way of sinners.** What does this metaphor mean (not blocking sin, but fellowshiping with/imitating sinners)? How does the story of Micah Doo illustrate a common misunderstanding? Why does close fellowship with unbelievers lead to misery?
10. The sermon quotes Thomas Watson on avoiding intimacy with the wicked. How does this relate to "bosom buddies" being unbelievers? What about the objection, "Jesus ate with sinners"?
11. **Do not sit in the seat of scoffers.** Who are "scoffers," and why should believers avoid fellowship with them? How can scoffing "overspray" us with "poisonous vomit"?

Positive Commands (What to Pursue)

12. **Verse 2 – Delight in the law of the Lord.** What does it mean to "delight" in God's Word? If someone's delight is lacking (feeling dry), what should they do, according to the sermon (confess as sin, pray for change)?
13. How does the sermon use Jeremiah 15:16 to describe delighting in

Scripture? What role do family worship, private reading, and hearing preaching play in cultivating this delight?

14. **Meditate on his law day and night.** What is Christian meditation (not Eastern/pagan, but thinking deeply and applying Scripture)? How is it like "chewing and swallowing" food compared to just "tasting" (reading/hearing)?
15. The sermon references Psalm 119, the Puritans, and examples like William Gurnall. How can meditating on even one verse or truth lead to deep application? Why does the preacher encourage reading the Puritans for this skill?

The Metaphor of the Tree (Verse 3)

16. What are the five particulars the sermon draws from verse 3's tree imagery? (e.g., like a tree vs. weed, planted by streams, yields fruit in season, leaf does not wither, prospers in all he does.)
17. Why is the righteous person compared to a tree (slow growth, durable) rather than a weed (fast but shallow)? How does this relate to sanctification being a "marathon, not a sprint"?
18. What are the "streams of water" in the believer's life? How do ordinary means of grace (Bible, prayer, church, Lord's Supper) provide sustenance?
19. How does the tree yield fruit "in its season"? Why should we focus on the "streams" rather than forcing fruit?
20. The leaf "does not wither" in affliction. How does focusing on Christ (vs. affliction) prevent withering? How does Isaiah 41:8–11 encourage believers in suffering?
21. "In all that he does, he prospers." What does this mean (not worldly success, but prospering in what matters most)? How do Isaiah 3:10 and Psalm 128 support this?

Point 2: The Wicked Are Trapped in Horrible Misery (Verses 4–5)

22. How does the sermon contrast the tree (righteous) with chaff (wicked)? What happens to chaff in winnowing, and what does this imply about the wicked's end?
23. Why is perishing worse than dying (suffering under God's judgment)? How does John 3:16 and Matthew 3:12 connect to this?
24. "The wicked will not stand in the judgment" and "nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." What does this mean for false professors (Matthew 7:21–23)? Why does the sermon emphasize possessing faith, not just professing it?

Point 3: Saints and Sinners Have Vastly Different Outcomes (Verse 6)

25. What does "the Lord knows the way of the righteous" mean (loves/knows intimately)? How does this contrast with the wicked perishing? How do Revelation 5:10 and 22:5 show the righteous' eternal outcome?

Gospel Application and Christ as the True Blessed Man

26. The sermon notes no one (except Christ) perfectly fulfills verses 1–2. How is Jesus the true "blessed man" who delighted in God's law, meditated perfectly, and prospered as the tree?
27. Because we fall short, we deserve to be like chaff. How did Christ take our place (treated as chaff, burned in wrath)? How does union with Christ make Psalm 1's promises true for believers?
28. Psalm 1 is both about us (instruction) and about Jesus (fulfillment). Why must we hold both? How does this encourage weak believers?

Personal / Group Application

29. Whose counsel do you most listen to? What fellowship do you have with unbelievers/scoffers? How can you cultivate greater delight and meditation in God's Word this week?
30. In what ways do you see yourself as a "tree" (rooted, fruitful) or tempted toward "chaff" (unstable, perishing)? How can focusing on Christ and ordinary means of grace help you thrive?

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, friends, visitors, I have one question. Do you want to be happy?

Do you want to be happy? Well, then Psalm 1 is for you. That is what this psalm is about. The first word in Psalm 1, look at it in your own Bible. What is the very first word? Blessed. Blessed. That is the Hebrew word that means we would translate it happy. It does not mean blessed in some strictly monetary sense or something like that. It means happy. And it is actually in the voice that means blessedness belongs to the man, and so on. And so even our psalter that we have, that we sing the psalms from—and we are going to sing Psalm 1 right after this sermon—it says that man has perfect blessedness, and that is actually a better translation of the Hebrew than the English Standard Version and other versions because the word

means blessedness belongs to the man, happiness belongs to the man, and so on. So this is a psalm like, if you want to be happy, we need to pay diligent attention to this psalm. But it is also a psalm of contrast. It contrasts the happiness of the saints, those who have been saved by and belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. It contrasts that—or them—with the wicked. And by the wicked is not meant in this psalm those who are extremely, adamantly opposed to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is saint-and-sinner language. The righteous and the wicked meaning a Christian and a non-Christian. Someone who has been forgiven and counted righteous through faith in Jesus Christ alone, and someone who still remains in their sin because of Adam and because of themselves. So the wicked in this psalm are not like the wicked are in Psalm 139. In Psalm 139, it is those extremely, adamantly opposed to the Lord Jesus Christ, fighting against Christians. It is not that. Psalm 1 is just whether you are a Christian or not. The Christian is the righteous, and the wicked is the unbeliever. The very first word in this psalm: blessed. There we go with the contrast of the saints of the Christian, and what is the very last word in this psalm? Perish. That is the contrast of Psalm 1: happiness and misery, happiness and misery, blessedness and perishing. Perish. Boys and girls, look up here at me. Perishing. That word perish. Perishing is even worse than the word dying or being killed. Perishing, when you read that word in the scriptures, it has to do with not just dying or being put to death. It has to do with suffering under the judgment of God that we deserve for our sin. So it is dying plus suffering under God's judgment. Perishing is way worse than dying. And that is why John 3:16, boys and girls, John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son"—who is that? Who is God's only Son? Jesus. Jesus. "So that whoever believes in him"—or all who believe—"will not what? Perish." Does Jesus promise you and I are never going to physically die if we trust in him for salvation? No, he does not promise that. But do you know what he does promise? You will never perish. There is a difference between simply dying and perishing. Perishing is way worse. It has to do with suffering under the judgment of God that we deserve for our own sins. So the very first word, children, Psalm 1 is a psalm to learn how to be happy. The very first word is blessed, which means happiness, and the very last word is perish, which means suffering under the judgment of God—the horrible judgment of God that you and I deserve. So if we want to be happy, we need to pay attention to this psalm. It highlights the ways of the righteous and the ways of the wicked, and also the end of the righteous and the end of the wicked. The final destination of the righteous and the final destination of the wicked. Read it again with me because you can never read Psalm 1 too many times.

"Blessed is the man—or blessedness belongs to 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; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He 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. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will

not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knows—or loves—the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.”

The doctrine you and I should learn from this psalm is simply this: The saints are afforded great happiness, and the wicked are trapped in horrible misery. That is Psalm 1. The saints are afforded great happiness, and the wicked are trapped in horrible misery. Now, as we look and study this psalm and we labor to both understand it and apply it to our lives, there are three big kind of truths—almost like headings of the psalm—that you should learn. Three big ones and a lot of little truths under each of these three main truths. But the three main things are these. The saints are afforded great happiness. That is a big overarching first point. The second is the wicked are trapped in horrible misery. And then the psalm ends with showing this third truth: Saints and sinners have vastly different outcomes. So those are the three kind of main truths that can operate as headings as you look at this psalm with me in your own Bible and we study it.

So let us start with that first one and look at verses 1 through 3 and see that the saints are afforded great happiness. The point of David writing this psalm, in smaller truths that we should grab under this big truth—boys and girls, listen to me—in these first three verses, all this is is: if you want to be happy, then do this or do not do this. If you want to be happy—do you want to be happy, children? I want to be happy, and I want you to be happy in Christ. So here we go. If you want to be happy, do not walk in the counsel of the wicked. If you want to be happy, do not walk in the counsel of the wicked. Look at the first half of verse one: “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked.” Walk means the way that you live your life. That is the most frequent metaphor in the scriptures for the way you live. It is walking. That is the metaphor because your whole life is one foot after another. We do not jump 100 feet at a time in our life as a lot of people like to think about. It is like big things are really what matters. Big things are what matters—like no, every single step actually matters. That is what your life is made up of: small steps every minute of every day. So that is why walking is the metaphor in the scripture—to remind us it is one foot after another. So he is talking about living according to the counsel of the wicked—of those who do not trust in and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ. Happiness belongs to the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked. Boys and girls, look up here. If you want to be happy, do not listen to or take advice from people who do not love Jesus. If you take advice and counsel for how you should live your life from people who do not love Jesus, you will be miserable. That is the simple point of Psalm 1. You want to be happy? Do not listen to the wicked. They do not know how to be holy. They do not know how to be happy. They do not know how to guide you in the way that you should live your life. There is the simple truth: Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked. And you need to make sure that you are clear here. We are not talking about just people who profess to be believers in some sense. There are

many people who profess to be Christians and flat out are not. There are many people who maybe have faith in Christ and they really are saved, but they are so warped by their indwelling sin or they are so immature in their faith that you do not want to take their counsel. This is what he starts with in Psalm 1. If you want to be happy, do not take the counsel of the wicked. All of you, who you take counsel from matters. Whose advice or suggestions or opinions you take to heart matters. Consider the outcome of their way of life. Are they holy in Christ and happy in Christ? Are those under their charge holy, happy, and flourishing? If so, go to them for counsel. Listen to their counsel. If not, why even consider it? I do not care what the person professes with their mouth. And usually the people that make the biggest professions and always say they have got wisdom and people need to come to me for counsel—those are the guys you need to run from because they are like blowfish. They are little. There is nothing going on, and they puff themselves up to look a certain way. But it is the guys that you see the outcome of their way of life and you are like, “Uh, wife is happy, children are happy, holy, flourishing—I would like to get counsel from that guy.” Vice versa or the same with women with other people. Consider the outcome of their way of life. Are they holy? Are they happy? Are those under their charge flourishing? Then that is somebody you should go to for counsel. Do not listen to the counsel of the wicked. Seek counsel from those who, after considering the outcome of their way of life, you can see very clearly they are holy for Christ, happy in Christ, and those under their care are flourishing for the glory of Christ. So I just ask you to examine yourself based on this truth in the first part of verse one. Whose counsel do you listen to? Whose counsel do you listen to? Whose advice do you actually take to heart?

I think some of you take counsel from people who are closer to wicked than righteous. You need to examine yourself. You want to be miserable? Keep taking counsel from people whose outcome of their way of life is not something you should want to imitate. And I think some of you do not take to heart counsel from the godly, from the righteous. And you should.

When the godly give you advice, when they give you counsel, if you are wise in your own eyes, you will listen to it. You will thank them for it, and then you will keep doing whatever you want to do. But what is implied here is do not listen to the counsel of the wicked, but take to heart the counsel of the righteous. There it is. Happiness or misery before you. You want to be happy? Do not take counsel from the wicked, but take counsel from the righteous. You want to be miserable? Do not listen to the righteous. Keep going your own way and take counsel from the wicked.

But the second thing that he says is in the next part of verse one. He says, “Nor”—so hold on. This blessedness belongs to the man—or blessed is the man—flows into all of these. So you could say blessedness belongs to the man who does not stand in the way of sinners. That is how you should understand it. That is why that

word "nor" is there—because it is all flowing from blessedness belongs to the man: number one, who walks not in the counsel of the wicked; number two, he does not stand in the way of sinners; number three, he does not sit in the seat of scoffers; number four—blessedness belongs to the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, who meditates on his law, all that. So the blessedness part in verse one is like a "dot dot dot" before every one of these truths that we learn in verses one through three—or one through two rather—and then three starts explaining what we are like if we are the righteous. But the second truth—now that I hope we understand the grammatical part there and how blessedness is connected to all these—the second truth: nor stands in the way of sinners. So if you want to be happy, do not stand in the way of sinners. What does he mean? Micah Doo, one of our deacons, could tell you a great story about when he was publicly evangelizing, and I cannot remember if he was at an abortion clinic or if it was somewhere else, but he is publicly evangelizing and a guy who professes to be a Christian pulls up right next to him and stops and says, "Hey, Psalm 1 says what you are doing is wrong." And Micah says something like, "Uh, what?" like how so—explain that to me. He said, "Well, this is where sinners go and you are standing in their way trying to block them because it says, you know, you do not want to stand in the way of sinners—like stand in their way—like I am going to stand in your way." Like, yeah, that—you need a pastor, whoever you are, guy. Hopefully you are not a pastor, but you need a pastor to preach and teach the word. That is not what it means. You do not want to ever block people from sinning. It is like, no, that is not what he is saying. "Stands in the way of sinners" is going the way that sinners go, standing with them, fellowshiping with them. That is the whole point. All of it is metaphorical language. He has talked about walking, and now the metaphor is standing in the way of sinners—being where sinners are, doing what sinners do, imitating sinners. I am going to go and be with them. Where they dwell, I will dwell. That is what he means. So if you want to be happy, do not stand in the way of sinners. Happiness belongs to the man who will not stand among those who will not eventually stand in the judgment. Happiness belongs to the man who will not have fellowship with the wicked. My best friends are not going to be unbelievers. And how many Christians fall so shockingly short of that that they make their bosom buddies unbelievers? It is like you are literally standing in the way of sinners. That is a path to misery. So that is what he is saying. Watson points out, "The godly man shakes off all intimacy with the wicked. He may traffic with them, but not associate. He may be civil to them as neighbors, but not twist into a cord of friendship. Diamonds and stones may lie together, but they will not solder and cement." This has to do with fellowshiping with sinners, with those who do not love Jesus. If your close friends are those who do not love Jesus, you are sunk. You are on the path for misery. And if you say to me, "Well, Jesus ate with sinners and tax collectors," as I have said to you before, I will remind you again: you do not understand who you are in that story. If you think you are Jesus in that story, you have got it backwards. The whole point of Jesus eating with sinners and tax collectors is that you and I are the sinners and tax collectors that Christ comes to

dine with, to call us to repent and save us—not an example of you make your best friends unbelievers and try to do friendship evangelism. You are setting up for ultimate failure. So whose way do you stand in? Who do you have fellowship with? For what reason do you have fellowship with them? I think some professed Christians like to stand in the way of sinners because when they hang out with the righteous, it makes them feel guilty because they do not love Jesus and want to obey Jesus and try to take every thought captive for Christ and have their life structured in such a way that we are living for the glory of God. Professed Christians do not like to hang out with other Christians because it makes them feel bad. They are like, “These people actually take Jesus seriously. I do not.” And then some, I think, make the mistake of having constant fellowship with unbelievers in that friend-intimacy type level because they are convinced through the last, I do not know, 40 or 50 years in this ridiculous thing called friendship evangelism.

If you want to be happy, do not stand in the way of sinners. Thirdly, look what he says in the next part of verse one. He says, “Nor sits in the seat of scoffers.” So we have got the wicked, sinners, and scoffers. These can all just be synonyms for those who are outside of Christ, do not love Christ, do not live for the glory of Christ. And so the third smaller truth that we should learn here is: if you want to be happy, do not sit in the seat of scoffers. Again, do not fellowship with scoffers—those who do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, those who talk about him in such a way that is flippant, those who will talk about Jesus like he is a good guy but not submit to him and recognize that he is the God-man, the only Savior, and the King of the universe. Those are scoffers.

You want to be happy? Do not sit in the seat of scoffers. Do not scoff yourself, and do not put up with any scoffing toward the Lord God, the Lord Jesus Christ. In Psalm 26, the psalmist says, “I do not sit with men of falsehood, nor do I consort with hypocrites.” And how I would say it in Muskogee, Oklahoma language is, “I ain’t hanging out with men of falsehood. I ain’t hanging out with hypocrites.” That is what he is saying. No—those who mock God by scoffing at his person or his precepts or his providence—they may feel an instant delight, but they are like one who drinks wine laced with poison. It ends in sickness and death. And if you hang out with them, if you surround yourself with scoffers—those who do not love the Lord, who talk flippantly about the Lord—if you surround yourself with those people, you are going to get over-sprayed with their poisonous vomit. You want to be happy? Do not sit in the seat of scoffers.

But now we turn positive. So we have got three of those negatives: not walking in the counsel of the wicked, not standing in the way of sinners, not sitting in the seat of scoffers. And then we have a “but.” But what does the man do? He not only stays away from these three things, but what does he give himself to? “But his delight is in the law of the Lord.” His delight is in the law of the Lord. So if you want to be happy, get a delight in the scriptures.

You want to be happy? Get a delight in the scriptures. Get a delight for daily reading in private, daily reading and listening in family worship. Get a delight for hearing the word of God preached and applied to your body and soul. And if you look at this first part of verse two in Psalm 1 and you say that is not my delight right now—maybe it has been your delight in the past, but you say, “I do not know. I just feel dry and feel like I do not want to read the word.” You need to confess that as sin. And you need to ask God to change your heart so that you would get this delight. Because, Lord, I want to glorify you. I want to enjoy you. I want to feast on your word. “Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” I know that is true. I want to feel like that is true and live like that is true. So if you know it is true but you do not feel like it or live like it, then confess that to the Lord. Ask for forgiveness and ask him, “Lord, give me that delight. Give me the delight of Jeremiah in Jeremiah 15:16: ‘Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts.’” So if you want to be happy, get a delight in the scriptures. Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord. Boys and girls, look up here at me. Do you want to be happy? Then learn how to delight in reading the scriptures and hearing them read and taught to you in family worship and hearing them preached to you like this on the Lord’s day. You want to be happy? Then learn how to love the Bible. Whether you are reading it yourself, your dad is reading and teaching it to you in family worship, or you are hearing it preached by one of your pastors—if you want to be sad, then ignore the Bible. Do not read the Bible. You want to be sad? Do not pay attention in family worship. You want to be sad? Do not ever listen to the preaching on Sundays. That is what he says. Blessed is the man—happiness belongs to the man—whose delight is in the law of the Lord, in what God says in his written word.

So adults, I mean, is anything in this psalm like, “Whoa, I never thought of that”? Like none of this is shocking, right? It is really basic and simple stuff. Yet how many professed believers do not walk in this? It is like, “Hey, man, uh, do not listen to the people who do not love Jesus.” And we all go, “Yeah, it is pretty simple.” It is like, but how many professed believers are always taking counsel or walking in the counsel of the wicked? It is like, it is very simple. Sometimes it is not easy because of our indwelling sin. But sticking to the ordinary means of grace and walking according to God’s commandments—it is not really that complicated. It is not so high that none of us can grab it. It is not a burden crushing the believer because we have been forgiven and counted righteous in Christ. It is not a “you better do this or I am sending you to hell.” It is a “here is how you live for my glory and enjoy me.” It is not a burden. It is not impossible. So I hope that just that thought can encourage you as a believer and be like, “It is pretty simple. It is not always easy because of our indwelling sin, but it is very simple. Thank you, Lord, that it is simple to follow Christ and to live for your glory.”

Now look at the next thing. Not only a delight in the scriptures—reading, hearing, studying—but if you want to be happy, meditate on the scriptures. Not only delight in them, read them, hear them, but meditate on them. He says, “And on his law he meditates day and night.” So blessedness belongs to the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord. Blessedness belongs to the man who meditates on God’s word day and night. His mind is always filled with God’s word. He is thinking about God’s word. He is figuring out how to apply God’s word, trusting God’s promises, submitting to his precepts, walking in his providence, trusting God directing his steps—meditating day and night. Meditation is not an Eastern pagan thing. Meditation is Christian, and meditation just simply means you read something in the scripture or you recall something to mind from the scripture that God has revealed in his special written revelation, and you think about it. Just sit and think about it. Think about how to apply it. Think about what it means. Truth. How can I use that truth for comfort? How can I use that truth for direction or exhortation? How can I use that truth for examination? This is true—so examine myself by it. How can I use it for encouragement? How can I use that truth for warning or awakening? Every truth you read in the Bible can be used. That is what application means: using a truth for direction, exhortation, encouragement, warning, comfort, instruction. Every truth you ever read in the Bible can be used for application. And that is what it looks like. And so meditation is you read something—maybe a verse or maybe one verse and what you read that day—and you just sit and think about it. How can I apply this? What does this tell me about God? How can I praise him for this?

Get a delight for meditation. Moses writes, “And Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening” (Genesis 24:63). Joshua says to God’s people, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night” (Joshua 1:8). And Paul exhorts you, “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (Philippians 4:8). Think about those things. That is Christian meditation. Eight times in Psalm 119, David says he meditates on the word of God. Psalm 119—longest psalm in the Bible—is about the Bible, about the written word of God. And eight times in that psalm, he says he meditates on the word of God—not just reads it, studies it, but thinks about it, just sits there and labors to apply it. He says it more in one psalm than many professed Christians have done in their entire life. Actually read and then just meditate on God’s word. Listen to Psalm 119:97–99: “Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation.” To thinking, filling your mind with the scriptures and just rolling it around and thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking. This is why the Puritans—why I encourage you to read the Puritans—because the Puritans could do this. They could take a word or a small truth from the Bible and write a whole book on it because they can

just meditate on it, think about it. How does this truth apply? And then you read some of the works of them—it is like they wrote a 300-page book on one verse, or William Gurnall writes an 1100-page double-column book on Ephesians 6:10–18 for the armor of God. It is like, how is that possible? It is like if you read it, you read his book, which is just a bunch of sermons, and like every angle, every aspect of every truth that is taught or implied in Ephesians 6, and you go, “These guys knew how to meditate.” They would read it and then think, think, think, think. How does this apply in every possible way for what we should learn and what we should do? That is why I encourage you to read the Puritans—because it will help you develop that kind of instinct to learn how to look at a truth and just think about it and apply it and learn everything you possibly can from it.

“Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.” You need to know that hearing the word of God preached or reading the word of God yourself is like the tasting of food. Reading or hearing is like the tasting. Meditation is like the chewing and the swallowing. The reason that many Christians do not profit from their personal Bible reading or from hearing the preached word is because they do not hear or they do not take what they have read or take what they have heard and then meditate on it, think about it, labor to apply it. It is like, well, yeah, if the only thing you ever do with food is you put it in and chew it up and then spit it out, it is like, well, I guess you got a little bit. I mean, you got some saliva that goes down and a little bit of flavor, but it is like, I am malnourished. Like, well, are you eating? It is like, yeah, I am eating this. I put it in my—well, walk me through that. How are you doing that? Well, I put it in my mouth. I chew it and taste it. It is great. And then I spit it out. Like, you do not swallow it? No. Like, I know why you are malnourished. Same thing with the scriptures. Our hearing and reading, that is the tasting, but the meditation, that is the chewing and the swallowing.

So happiness belongs to the man not only who delights in the law of the Lord, but who meditates on the law of the Lord, who meditates on God’s word. If you want to be happy, meditate on the scriptures day and night.

Now look in verse three. And he gives us a metaphor concerning what the saints are like—not what we should do, but what we are like. And verse three is a great source of encouragement for those of us who have a simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and King. Happy saints are like a healthy oak tree. Happy saints are like a healthy oak tree. “He is like a tree.” Verse three. He—who is the he? The man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, does not stand in the way of sinners, does not sit in the seat of scoffers, who delights in the Lord and meditates on his law. Not that complicated, right? Basic things. If that is you—trust in, submit to Christ, no counsel of the wicked, no standing in the way of sinners, no sitting in the seat of scoffers, delighting in the law, meditating on God’s word—what do you like? You, Christian, are 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. Verse three could be an entire book, but let me show you quickly these five particulars that verse three has. And I want you to know that when I am preaching and teaching and trying to apply the word of God to you, I am also modeling for you how to study the scriptures. And so I just read verse three to you and I said there are at least five particular truths to pull out of verse three. What I am doing is modeling for you how you can study the scriptures and then meditate on them—because you read verse three and we conclude it is like, oh yeah, like a tree. Yes. But look at all the particular things he says about the believer in Christ Jesus who is abiding in Christ.

First of all, what truth can we learn from verse three? He is like a tree. If you belong to—if you abide in Christ, if you belong to Christ Jesus through his simple faith and his life, death, and resurrection—you are like a tree. Why does he say that? Well, it is compared to you are not like a weed. You are like a tree. You are more like a tree than a weed. If you abide in Christ, you do not want to be like a weed. It grows much faster, does it not? Boys and girls, probably at your house right now, you have seen weeds shoot up really fast. Do you have any trees? Any small trees at your house? Small trees. Which grows faster, a tree or a weed? Weed. Weed shoots up and then we hack them down. A tree takes a lot longer to grow. Children, do you have any big trees at your house? Okay, big tree. What happens if dad takes the lawn mower and tries to mow down the tree? Does it work? Very, very durable. Very sturdy. Ain't going to happen. Dad has to hire someone probably to cut down a tree if it is one of the big ones. But weeds—does dad have to hire someone to cut down a weed? You can cut it down with scissors. You do not even need a weed eater. Christians are more like big trees than they are weeds. You know what that implies for all of us? You are going to grow a lot slower than you want to.

You want to grow really, really, really fast? Well, then go read the parable of the soils in Mark 4 and then come back to me and say, "I want to grow really, really, really fast." Like, okay, see what happens to the one who does that in Mark 4. Shoots up. There is no root. Done. It is all fake. It is not a sunflower. It is like a mighty oak tree planted with streams on each side. Plenty of sustenance. Sanctification. You need to know, believer, just by the fact that he says he is like a tree—sanctification is like the growing of an oak tree, not the springing up of a weed. So I remind you again: the Christian life is a marathon, not a sprint. Boys and girls, if I told you to sprint to the street right now, how many of you think you could do it? Run as fast as you can to the street. Could you do that? Come on, raise your hand. Every one of you could do that. What if I said, "Start right now and run 26 miles. Do not stop running until you reach 26 miles." How many of you think you could do that? One of you said yes. All right, we will test that out later. Okay, it is a lot harder, is it not? Sprinting is really easy. The marathon is a lot harder. You got to take your time. But remember the Christian life—it is a marathon. It is not a sprint. But you are more like a tree than a weed. If you are in Christ, then that is a

great thing. You are going to grow slower than you want, but you are going to last. And that is what matters.

Second, look—he says not only is he like a tree, but he is like a tree planted by streams—multiple streams of water. The picture is a mighty oak tree and there are streams on each side of it. So all the roots are going down both ways and pulling in what they need to grow this mighty oak. So if you are abiding in Christ, you are planted beside streams of water. This means you are going to last. You are going to have everything that you need for life and godliness. And remember the directions that we get in the first part of the psalm. There is the promise: you stick to these things—these basic ordinary means of grace—avoiding the quicksand of the wicked, standing on the firm ground of the righteous—you are like a tree planted by streams of water. So I say to you, press on one foot after the other in your ordinary everyday duties, giving diligent attention to the ordinary means of grace, and see how God will continue to preserve you, to provide for you, to sanctify you. If you abide in Christ, you are like a tree planted by streams of water. You have got everything you need for continued sustenance. And that is why you have got the ordinary means of grace. You have got a church family who loves you. You have got Bibles. You have got access to the throne of God through faith in Jesus Christ. You can meditate on the scriptures. You have Christians to fellowship with. You have got all these ordinary means. You have got the Lord's table. Pay diligent attention to the ordinary means of grace. Those are those streams of water, and you will last.

Look next—not only is the happy believer like a tree, not only like a tree planted by streams of water, but a tree that yields its fruit in its season. A fruitful tree. A fruitful tree. You will yield fruit of love and good works if you abide in Christ. You will yield your fruit in season. 1 Timothy 1:5 says, "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." If you want to produce fruit for God's glory and for others' good, the focus has to be more on the streams of water than on the growing of fruit. The streams of water are those ordinary means of grace: delighting in the law of the Lord, meditating on his law day and night. But if you are a tree and just grow fruit—like that is not how it grows. It grows from within and from without. Plug into the streams of water that you are planted near—the ordinary means of grace—and then you will see how you will yield fruit in its season.

Fourthly, look—not only a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and David in this psalm says, "And its leaf does not wither." Its leaf does not wither. You will not wither in the winter of affliction if you abide in Christ. This is a tree that is immune from a harsh winter. You do not have to worry that this tree is going to die, that its leaves are going to wither, that it is going to fade away. This is a strong tree that can survive the winter and be just fine. The picture of that is suffering and affliction. The point is if you abide in Christ, you will not wither in the

winter of affliction. Its leaf does not wither. So you who are suffering, you who are sick—look again at verses one and two. If you make that your focus through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be like a tree that will not wither. If your focus is mainly on your affliction and not on the Lord, then yeah, you might wither. Your focus is on the Lord Jesus Christ—you are as safe as you can be. You are like a tree whose leaf does not wither. Listen to this awesome promise in Isaiah 41:8–11: “But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend, you whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, ‘You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off’; fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Behold, all who are incensed against you shall be put to shame and confounded; those who strive against you shall be as nothing and shall perish.” Fear not, I am with you. Be not dismayed. I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand, believers. Stick with Christ and your leaf will not wither.

Now look lastly what he says in verse three. In all that he does, he prospers. So if you abide in Christ, you will prosper in all the ways that matter most. You will prosper in all the ways that matter most. If you stick to the ordinary means of grace, trust in, submit to the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation and as your King, you will prosper in all the ways that matter most. Isaiah 3:10: “Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds.” Tell the righteous, the Lord says to Isaiah, “Tell the righteous, it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds.” Psalm 128 says, “Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways! You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you.” If you abide in Christ, you will prosper in all the ways that matter most. There is the happiness of the saints. The happiness of the saints.

Now we could see the wicked. And in verses four and five, the wicked are highlighted. We will move through this more quickly, and they are just flat-out sobering. Boys and girls, what is a Christian compared to in Psalm 1? What does it say? A Christian is like a tree. Very good. Christian is like a tree—thick oak tree planted by streams of water. Boys and girls, if you have a Bible, look at verse four. What are the wicked compared to? The wicked are not so—meaning the wicked are not like a tree—but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Boys and girls, when you are harvesting wheat, you have a winnowing fork. You get the wheat off and you have a big pile, and then you put the winnowing fork—like a big pitchfork—down in this pile of wheat. You throw it up in the air, and all of the little pieces called chaff will fall off the wheat. All the useless stuff. Cannot eat it. It is not good for anything. You throw the wheat up in the air and all the chaff falls off. And if the wind is blowing hard enough, the wind just blows the chaff away. And so they get the winnowing fork, pick up a big scoop of wheat, throw it in the air—the wheat is

going to go up and fall back down, and the chaff blows away. The only thing the chaff is good for—it is not good for eating, it is not good for planting—it is good for burning. That is it. So in Psalm 1, David says, “The righteous—those who are trusting in and submitting to Christ—are like a strong tree. And the wicked are like those little light pieces that you have got to get off of the wheat and that are driven away by the wind.” That is what the wicked are like. And the implication, adults, is the only thing the chaff is good for is burning. The wicked are not so. They are not like a tree. They are like chaff that the wind drives away. John the Baptist says in Matthew 3:12, “His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” If you are not united to Christ Jesus through faith, you are chaff. Because of your sin, all you deserve is to be driven away by the wind. And all you are good for is to be burned. That is how detestable my sin and your sin is against our God. The wicked are like chaff the wind drives away. Not going to last. Not going to stand. What are they going to do with wind? Nothing. The wicked are like chaff the wind drives away.

And then he continues in the beginning of verse 5 and says, “Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment.” It means they are not going to be able to endure the final judgment of the Lord Jesus Christ. The righteous will be able to stand in the judgment—not because of ourselves, but because of who Christ is for us. And Christ has paid for our sins through his death on the cross. He has lived for our righteousness through his perfect life, obedient to the law of God. So we can stand in the judgment because we have forgiveness and the imputed righteousness of Christ. The wicked only has Adam’s sin and their own sins. He is saying they cannot stand in the judgment. The wicked will not stand in the judgment. Matthew 7:21–23: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’” Not all of the wicked who are like the chaff are outside of the visible church. Some are inside the visible church. I do not care that you profess faith in Christ. I care that you possess faith in Christ—that you personally and individually are embracing Christ Jesus, what he has done, who he is. You are trusting and resting in him alone for salvation. That is what we want for you. And if you are not resting, trusting in Christ alone for salvation, you are the chaff that the wind drives away. I do not care what you profess. If your life is just overwhelmingly marked with all the things that David is like, “Hey, as a Christian, you got to totally avoid this—you are going to be miserable.” But you are like, “I am actually the wicked, the sinner, the scoffer. I do not love the law of God. I do not think about the law of God. I do not love God’s word. I do not think about God’s word. All that.” It is like, well, then you are probably the chaff. You need to turn to Christ Jesus alone. You will not stand in the judgment. You have to have the righteousness of

Christ. You have to have the forgiveness that Christ purchased for his people. So trust in him alone. And no, by no means am I trying to frighten true believers. Rest in Christ with a simple faith. A simple and weak faith can lay hold of the mighty and strong Christ. But my goal is to awaken false professors so they would cling to Christ alone for salvation. Those who stand in the way of sinners will not stand in the judgment. The wicked will not stand in the judgment.

And then he says thirdly, "nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." The congregation of the righteous in this context is heaven—not a local congregation like we have now. But he is saying it is judgment and then the congregation of the righteous. That is the assembly of the saints in heaven. Sinners will not be in the congregation of the righteous. You have to be saved. You have to be redeemed by Christ. You have to be transformed from being a sinner to being a saint. It is not about activity. It is about your identity needs to be changed. Sinners will not be in the congregation of the righteous. And not like trees—they are like chaff. They will not stand in the judgment. They will not be in the congregation of the righteous.

And all this leads to verse six: saints and sinners have vastly different outcomes. "For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish." The Lord Jesus—by this word "knows" in verse six—another way you could say it is "loves." Like Adam knew his wife Eve and they conceived. The Lord knows the way of the righteous. It is not saying like he is mindful of it. He understands it. No—the Lord loves or knows the way of the righteous. So the implication is the righteous and their ways will continue forever. The Lord loves the way of the righteous. Revelation 5:10: "You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." Revelation 22:5: "The Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign forever and ever." The Lord Jesus loves the ways of the righteous, so they will continue forever. But then he says, "But the way of the wicked will perish." The Lord Jesus hates the ways of the wicked, so they will perish. There it is. Saints and sinners have vastly different outcomes.

So I appeal to you. Do you want to be happy? You have got to go to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith. You want to stay happy, Christians? Abide in Christ. "Blessed 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; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night." Have you done that perfectly? I have not, and I know you have not. But the wonderful thing is Christ has. He is the only man who is that truly happy man—who never walked in the counsel of the wicked, never stood in the way of sinners, never sat in the seat of scoffers. He always delighted in the law of the Lord. He meditated day and night. He is the one that is like that tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season. The Lord Jesus Christ is the tree who has leaves that will not wither. In everything he does, he prospers. So if you are united to Christ through faith, this is true for you too. And because we have not done what verses 1 and 2 implore us to do in and of

ourselves, we are the wicked. We deserve to be burned. We cannot stand in the judgment. And so Christ became a man and said, "I will be treated like the chaff for you. I will be burned for you. I will fall in the judgment for you. I will let my Father crush me in his wrath for you so that you can be with me." That is the wonderful news of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 1 cannot only be taken as this is about Jesus and it has no instruction for us. But you also cannot take Psalm 1 and say this is all about us and has nothing to do with Jesus. You got to do both. He is the only one who has done this. And because he has done it, through faith in him, we can do it too. Praise the Lord.

Let us pray.

Our Father in heaven, we thank you for Psalm 1. We lift it up to you now with our voices as we sing praises to you. We ask you to receive our songs, our prayers, the Lord's Supper, our offerings, our time of fellowship. Receive them all for Christ's sake. May they be sweet sounds in your ears, sweet smells to your nostrils, and may you be glorified as you continue to sanctify us. Make us like trees in Christ's name. Amen.