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**Teaching: Carlon Tschetter**  
**Series: Summer in the Psalms**  
**Message: The Blessed Life**

**Transcribed Message**  
**June 11, 2023**  
**Psalm 1**

Tertullian was a church father of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, a man who was both a theologian and apologist. On one occasion it was said that a friend of his, a businessman, was accused of cutting corners and in practicing poor business standards. Tertullian came to him and challenged him about that. The man said in response, "But a man has to live." Tertullian was supposed to have responded and said back to him, "why?" You see, he was elevating the character of the man, the integrity of a woman above everything else. Above earthly success. above the making of a living of making money. Even of life itself. Tertullian's perspective I think was very much in line with the psalmist and especially this first psalm that we come to this morning. This matter of being a worshiper of God. That's truly what is happening in the Psalter. This is an invitation to step into God's call to worship, God's standard of worship, God's guidebook in worship. He gives that to us in the psalms and he invites us to be a part of that. What it requires of us is a commitment to live life in a certain way as a follower of Christ.

Let's look at this first psalm this morning in our Summer in the Psalms series and see that it is really truly only a life that is built and lived and centered on God and in obedience to His word that we'll experience true happiness. Let me just make some introductory comments before we look at the first verse of this psalm. I thought this was kind of a fascinating thing so I wanted to pass it along. Martin Luther. Martin Luther came to understand the glory of the gospel and a call to live a bold life for Christ by being impacted from two specific books in the Bible. What do you suppose those two books are? One of them starts with a P and one of them starts with an R. I would venture to guess that you would know the first one which starts with the P is the Psalms. The R book is Romans. The just shall live by faith. The very point of the whole Reformation. Four years before he nailed the 95 theses to the church of the door in

Wittenberg, Luther was teaching out of the Psalter. He wasn't even that confident in his faith yet at that point God was using and stirring. It was really the Psalms that when he faced the turbulence of the great Reformation and all the opposition that came against him, it was really the Psalms that he said would often lift him out of long periods of depression because he was under such intense persecution.

The second thing I want you to see is Psalm 1 and 2 act as kind of a doorway into the book of Psalms. It's like two doorposts. It is like this is the entry point into this large sprawling mansion of 148 rooms. There's a mansion with 148 rooms and the first two psalms are like the gateway into this mansion. They're like the wraparound porch if you will and you can't really get into enjoying the 148 rooms until you walk into and through Psalm 1 and 2. That's the beauty of what we're going to see in these opening studies in the Psalter about the opening two chapters.

You notice neither of the opening two chapters have superscription. You look in your Bible you see as we noted that there's a superscription in almost all of the other of the Psalms. But here Psalm 1 and 2 don't have that and it sets them apart. It says these are introductory psalms. These are the psalms that are going to introduce you to the rest of the Psalter.

The third thing we need to do is to point out the difference between the titles and the superscriptions. The titles of the Psalms are not a part of the inspired word of God. My Bible has a title for every one of the Psalms. Those are added of course by editors later, but the superscriptions are very much a part of the inspired text. In fact, there isn't any ancient Hebrew manuscript that we have that does not include all of the superscriptions. Almost without fail they are part of the first verse. The NET Bible, the New English Translation, actually incorporates them into the opening verse of the psalm.

Let's look at the steps to happiness this morning. The steps to happiness. When I was in seminary I took a course in the context of counseling. The professor had just written a book called *Happiness is a Choice*. You can see all kinds of possible ways that that book title could take. But in essence it is saying the choices that we make day-to-day and throughout the day impact our capacity, our ability to experience happiness. In effect, I think that's kind of where we find ourselves in Psalm 1. What I'd like to do is I'd

like to begin with just looking at a flyover at about 40,000 feet of this first verse and look at the structure of this verse and see the progression that is a part.

Go back again with me to verse 1: "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked nor stands in the way of sinners." Now you remember we said that in this understanding of Hebrew parallelism, Hebrew poetry is largely a structure of parallelism. In English poetry we often, not always but we often, have rhymes like roses are red, violets are blue, I enjoy studying the Psalms, I bet you do too. I got 10 more verses to go on that so you come back next week and hear the rest of it. That's when we think of English poetry. Hebrew poetry is built on ideas and parallelism of ideas. So literally what you have in verse 1 is you have three different sets of parallel ideas. There is something of a progression here. The progression, as you're going to quickly see, is a downward progression.

In every case 3 degrees of commitment. You see that in the three verbs. Walk. Stand. Sit. The interesting thing in each of those cases those verbs are all written in such a way that they speak of a completed action. Think about that. Why would the Holy Spirit have what many believe is David write this first of the Psalms and as he states this to say these verbs in such a way that it sounds like they are completed almost as if this person isn't alive anymore? This is what he did. I think it's because he wants to understand that this person has made a commitment. This has become a habit of their life. that's what he is underscoring for us here. A habit has been formed. A commitment has been made. This is what it looks like to get on the slippery slope. There is a walking, standing, and then a sitting. This is what it looks like. This is what it looks like to walk, to sit, and to stand in step with the world. It begins in this first group of ideas with this downward progression.

Secondly, there are 3 degrees of evil. Wicked, sinners, and scoffers. The word, the very first one, "wicked" is a word used often in the Old Testament. It is just a very general word for sinners or for those who are wicked. Then you move to sinners and scoffers, and again there's a progression. You get to the scoffers. The scoffers are those who mock God. The scoffers are literally those who hate God's truth. The scoffers of Psalm 14. The fool has said in his heart there is no God. That is a scoffer. That is one who looks at the word of God, who looks at the church of Jesus Christ, he looks at you

and he looks at me, and says what are you people doing with your lives, living the way that you do. They scoff at the truth.

The psalmist you notice is not afraid to call out sin, is he? He said there are those who are to be described as wicked, as those who are sinners, as those who are scoffers. In other words, there's a right and there's a wrong. There are those who are righteous and those who are unrighteous. Today this shocks our modern sensibilities. We don't talk about things like that. We don't reference people that way. We don't think of people as being wicked. We don't think of people as being sinners. We don't think of people as being unrighteous. We don't even think of people largely as being scoffers. After all, to put people in categories is mean-spirited, hateful, and very unkind. To characterize people in such dogmatic ways and in such strong terms isn't nice. The psalmist didn't share in that.

Notice also that there are two ways. There are the ways of the righteous and the ways of the unrighteous. There isn't a third way. There are just two ways. There are just two choices. You are walking in righteousness and walking in truth, or you're walking in unrighteous. We very much live in a world that would love to have 3, 4, or 5 ways or however many ways anybody could think of. That is why we often say at the end of the day take all of the worldviews, take all the different religions of the world, take every philosophy that there is known to mankind and you can put them into two buckets. A bucket that says you're going to do all that you can, the best you can to get wherever you think the end of life is. Then there's one bucket over here. It's the bucket of those who walk in righteousness and truth and who understand that they are justified by faith alone in Christ alone. That's basically what he is saying to us here. There isn't a third way. Here's the point that I want you to see. The righteous are the ones who are invited to step through the doorway, to step through the gateway, to move from the porch into the rest of the mansion. It's for the righteous. It is not for the unrighteous. The unrighteous isn't going to find a place in the psalms because this is the worship book for the righteous, and that's who he is calling out to here.

Now notice the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree of openness. There's 3 degrees of openness. There's counsel. There's the way, and there's the seat. As you look again at this progression, you see that the counsel that we might think of it is kind of hidden. It is a hidden

counsel. It's hidden advice. Somebody's telling you how you should think about something. That oftentimes might be in the context of something hidden, something one-to-one. But then there's the way a little more public. Now we're moving from thinking and advice and counsel and now we're looking at behavior. We're looking at joining in with maybe the crowd a little bit more if you will. Then the last one is to actually sit in the seat of the scoffers. This is an assembly. This is a place of consensus. This is the idea now not just thinking, not just behaving, but of belonging. Now you're adopting. Now you're adapting. Now you're a part of, you're identifying with the world. The psalmist wants us to see the downward spiral, the progression of sin, and the hardening of one's heart to truth to the things of God and to the people of God.

That departure I would suggest to you away from God's path and conformity to the world always takes a certain and very distinctive path. It looks very similar in every person's life who at some point decides that they really don't want to engage in the way of the righteous, that the world offers more of an appeal, that the world has more to offer. I would suggest to you that every believer who finds this progression going on in their life and finds their heart becoming less and less in tune with God's word, and less and less warm towards the truth of God's word, and less and less drawn to the gathering of God's people, I would suggest to you that there is a very clear and distinctive pattern to all of their lives and all of their choices. It is reflected right here. After all, who wants to gather on a Sunday morning in a context like this and lift up voices of praise to a holy and righteous God who makes certain demands of His people to live their lives in certain specific ways? Who wants to come and be in a conversation with somebody that can become uncomfortable or a little bit difficult because of where you are and how you're living out your life or how you're living out a lack of your faith? Who wants to come and sit under the teaching of the word of God and be reminded of the fact that happiness is a choice, and the choices that you're making might bring you some temporary transitional joy or happiness but they're not deeply fulfilling? Who wants to come and be reminded of stuff like that? Here is I believe the opening warning that the psalmist would give to us of this structure of verse one that shows this downward progression.

Now let's look at the theme of this opening psalm and the theme really is tied into that very first word. Blessed is the man. Understand the word "man" here is the word for person. It's a Hebrew word that is not gender specific, so it's just speaking of mankind in that sense. Blessed is the man. Blessed is the woman. That is the key word to the whole psalm, understanding what it means to be blessed. And what does that mean? Well, this word is literally used 26 more times in the Psalms. Here we have this idea of happiness. Sometimes it's even been translated that way. Jesus, remember in the Beatitudes and in Matthew 5, went through this same thought. Some translations the word "blessed" is actually translated "happy". Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst. Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed are the peacemakers. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness's sake. You look at stuff and you go this doesn't sound like happiness-is-a-choice stuff. It doesn't look like the things that the world lifts up as an avenue or a basis for happiness. Yet, that's the way Jesus framed it.

Back here in the Psalms we have this idea of being blessed. In the Psalms and in the rest of the Old Testament, a person who is blessed is one who has come into God's favor. Let me just give you a little understanding of this word from Deuteronomy chapter 33 and verse 29. Here's what it says: Happy are you, O Israel. Blessed are you, O Israel. Who is like you of people saved by the Lord? They have found the favor of God. Listen to a statement made by the Queen of Sheba to Solomon in 1 Kings chapter 10 and verse 8. She says, Happy are your men, happy are your servants who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom. Blessed be the Lord your God who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel. There you see the word in a little different context, but it speaks of someone who is blessed, someone who is happy, someone who is experiencing the very favor of God.

Now here's the other very interesting thing. Psalm 1. The very first word of Psalm 1 verse 1. This word "blessed" is in the plural. When we look at this, the idea of the plural at this point is it's intensifying the intensity of this word. It's intensifying it. So we probably would have to translate it as blessednesses. Blessednesses. It doesn't make good English, but it speaks of fullness. It speaks of completeness. It speaks of the

happiness of this man and this woman who have found the sweet spot of life. they have found what is truly meaningful, what truly brings them joy, what truly brings them happiness in the right sense of that word. What a profound declaration the psalmist makes right at the beginning of the Psalter, to say that there is a place of blessing. There is a place of the favor of God on your life. Don't you want to live with the favor of God on your life? don't you want to live it in the context in which God sees and blesses you with His favor? That is the path of the righteous. That is what God offers to us. It's something that's to be sought because it can be found. That's the point.

Let's look at this description. Let me read again verses 1 and 2: "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." Note what I just read. Happiness is found when you seek happiness. Happiness is found when you pursue happiness. Happiness is found when you put yourself first. Is that what he's saying to us here? Is he saying happiness comes to those who seek happiness? No. He doesn't say that at all. In fact, he says something just almost the opposite of that. You notice that he doesn't mind starting off with a negative. He doesn't say to us here the way to happiness is to seek happiness with all your heart. Go for it. You make sure that you're in your sweet spot, in your best place because that's really what life is all about. It's all about you. that's what the world is telling us every day of our life, in every way that they can message that to us. They're telling us that message. The psalmist starts off decidedly different.

In fact, you notice the psalmist tells us first of all what not to do. A happy person does not do these things. He begins unashamedly with a negative statement. We live again in a world where everything is supposed to be positive. Everything is supposed to be happy. Everything is supposed to be upbeat. We don't ever want to bring bad news. Well, he tells us here there are things first of all that we need to understand that a righteous person, that a happy person does not do.

The first thing he says we are to reject the counsel of the wicked. The happy person doesn't walk in the counsel of the wicked. As a believer I don't go to the world for advice on how to live a moral and spiritual life. I don't go to the world for counsel for how to live my life in the way that is going to result in happiness as defined by God. They

don't have that capacity to answer that, to tell me that. If my car is making a clunking noise, then I need to go find the best mechanic irrespective of his spiritual outlook on life to fix my car. To fix my plumbing, to fix my electrical problem, whatever it might be, just find the most qualified person. But when you want counsel about how to live your life, when you want counsel about your marriage, don't go to the person in the cubicle next to you who doesn't maybe even have an understanding of spiritual truth. Don't ask them what they think you should do. That would be foolish. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:14 the natural man doesn't understand the things of God, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. When you need counsel about how to live life, how to parent well, how to respond to your parents better, how to make choices that honor and glorify God, how to walk through a difficult time in your marriage or in some relationship, how to relate better to your boss at work, find somebody who is going to bring you righteous godly counsel based on the truth of God's word. He says don't go to the counsel of the wicked to inform how it is that you need to live your spiritual life. They're operating on a totally different worldview.

Notice secondly, he doesn't stand in the way of sinners. What does that mean? Does it mean you're blocking the path of sinners? Every time you see a sinner you get in front of them and block their path? No, it's not talking about that at all. It's more of a figurative idea. He doesn't stand in the way of sinners. The word "way" could be understood literally as a physical way. It does at times but more often than not it's figurative. It's a lifestyle. He doesn't stand in the lifestyle. He rejects the thinking of the world. He rejects the lifestyle of the world. She makes choices that reflect where her values are and she's not following after the world.

Then thirdly, it doesn't sit in the seat of scoffers. It doesn't sit in the seat of scoffers. All of this is pointing to your mind. That's why the writer of Proverbs does tell us guard your heart, guard your mind with all diligence for out of it flow the issues of life. That is why we understand that as a man, as a woman thinks in her heart, as a man, as a woman thinks in her mind, so is she. The focus of all the psalmist is telling us here comes right back to our mind. What we're allowing into our mind will allow it to influence our thinking and how it is that we see life. It is never easy, my friends, to walk out of



step with the world. It's never easy to walk out of step with the world. That's what he's calling you to do. He's calling you to walk out of step with the world.

Anthony Bass has learned that lesson a very hard way. If you haven't been following, he's a major league pitcher for the Toronto Blue Jays. A week or so ago he made the mistake of putting on his twitter account some positive statement or some positive direction towards what's happening with Bud Light and Target. That's all he did. He just pointed to another source to see a different view on this. The man's life has basically been turned upside down. He came out, unfortunately in my view, the next day and he apologized and said he didn't mean that. That's not who he is. He's going to some re-education classes with LBGTQ folks of Toronto. They were even going to let him catch the ceremonial first pitch this week from an LBGTQ person who is going to throw out the pitch on Friday night. Anthony Bass, a devoted follower of Christ as far as I can tell, was going to catch that first ceremonial pitch. The Toronto Blue Jays organization decided he is not that good of a pitcher anymore and we really don't need him anymore and he's no longer with the club. Now that's the reality of life for the righteous person today. This is a counting of the cost. This is about commitment. This is about decisions that you make that, as Tertullian said to his friend, you need to live deciding what's more important – your integrity or your life. that's what the calling is on our life. Better to be the three OU softball players right who gave a clear statement with regard to the gospel. It almost made me want to say boomer, but I couldn't do it. I had a check in my spirit. I did praise the Lord with them for their clear expression of the gospel. So that's what you don't do. He starts right off and says there's a negative to this. Don't do this.

Then what should we do? What are the choices that the happy person does? The happy man does according to that second verse “But he delights in the law of the Lord and on His law he meditates day and night.” What does the very first word of verse 2 tell you? It tells you that there's some big change coming. It's the adversative word “but”. This is the way of the world but that's not who you are. You're living differently. You're making choices that are different than that.

He does two things in specific. The happy woman, the blessed woman, the righteous woman, the righteous man does specifically two things. One, they delight.

They delight in the law of the Lord. They delight in the law of the Lord. The word “delight” implies giving attention to or longing for something. In Isaiah 42:21 it's translated in that verse pleased. They are pleased with. there's a couple of places in the Old Testament where this same Hebrew word speaks of a man's delight in a woman. Just think in terms of the context of a man delighting in a woman and a woman delighting in a man. Let me ask you. When a man delights in a woman, and a woman delights in a man, what does it look like when you're observing their life? I can tell you what it looks like. They want to be together. They want to give attention to each other. That's the word. The happy person, the righteous person delights in the law of the Lord. The happy person is one who is going to prioritize their lives as a man delights in a woman and she delights in him. They're going to prioritize their life in ways that they never did before so that they can spend time together, so they can be together. They're going to clear out things that might distract them from that opportunity to be together. You understand all of that imagery is there before us. They pursue each other because they delight in that, not because it's a duty. They delight in it not because it's a duty. They want to do it. They're not being forced to do it. So happy, the psalter says, is the man, is the woman who delights in the law of the Lord.

The law of the Lord in the narrow sense for at least this time period would probably be a reference to Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It's the Torah. It's the law. But for us and for the greater expression of the body of Christ we delight in the word of God. We're reading the word of God. We're studying the word of God. It's a delight and not a duty. It's like the psalmist says in Psalm 119 verse 103: “How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.” What would we see in our life if the word of God was as sweet to us as honey? What would you see in very practical ways? What would you see in your life?

Would you believe that God in His providence had me read a blog yesterday morning while I was studying and it was 8 ways that the word of God would be evident in your life if it was as sweet as honey. I was like thank You, Lord. Here they are. The guy said we would read the word more. Of course. We would hunger for it. We could never get enough of it. We would miss it when we didn't read it. We would no longer be enamored by what the world offers to us for taste. We would delight more in the

teaching of the word. Others would take note of our passion. Our churches would be stronger. That, my friends, is what he is talking about. Blessed is the man, blessed is the woman who delights, who is pleased with, who prioritizes their life in such a way that they're bringing the word of God into their life.

Why did God give us His word? In its simplest, He gave His word to us to bless us. To say to us here's how to live life well. How do you know how to live life well if you don't know what He said? How do you know how to live life well if you're just taking what somebody else has to say about it? Delight in the word. Let it be like honey to your soul. It reminds me of an assignment that you've got for the whole summer, doesn't it? Read through the Psalms once a month. When you open your Bible and you read your psalm, maybe out of your app on your phone, every time you open that book you say to your Father, let me delight in what You have to say to me. Let me hear through the psalter how it is that I can be an even better worshiper of You. That's what He wants. That's what he longs for – that this would be a delight to us, not simply a duty, that we would be in His word on a daily basis.

You might say to me, but that's not where I am, that's not how I feel. I wish it were true, but it's not. What do you say to that person? I say two things, maybe three. I say repent because that's not where we want to be. It's always good to repent. I say pray. Pray and ask God to give you that heart. It doesn't mean that He's going to just zap you and you've got it and it's now yours. No, it may take time to rekindle your appetite, but pray that prayer. Pray that prayer daily. And then open His word and read it. I think the Psalms are so very vital to a person who finds himself in that spot, because they speak to so many of the issues of life in such a beautiful way.

Now notice secondly, he meditates on this word. He thinks about it. He ponders it. He reviews it. It can also mean to declare it, to speak it. It's the conviction of the heart and lived out in the life day and night. It's continuous. Here's the other part of your summer challenge. You're memorizing three psalms so that even when you don't have your Bible in front of you and you're lying in bed at night and you can't sleep you're remembering that psalm that you memorized. Then the word comes alive.

Look at the picture of the happy man. Three descriptions in verse 3: "He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not

wither, and all that he does he prospers.” I see three words to describe this man. I see stability. You see stability in a tree, don’t you? what is it that gives a tree stability? The roots. Look at how he says that. “But his delight is in the law of the Lord and on His law meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water.” He is planted by streams which is speaking of its location near the water source. Can you imagine the delight of the tree that is planted on top of a water source? The water source for us is the word of God. We’re planted like a tree on top of this word. The roots of our life are going down to the truth of the word. It’s life-giving in its source to us. It’s intentional. It’s purposeful. It takes commitment. It takes discipline. it takes a desire to be the happy man, happy woman that God has called us to be.

I see productivity, don’t you? Productivity. There’s fruit bearing. He’s fruitful. There’s consistency in this. He is not a flash in the pan. It’s not one-and-done. No, there is a commitment. The long view is what we see here. There’s productivity. And then he prospers. Not the prosperity of the world. Not the prosperity of health, wealth, and all of the false gospel that is out there today. That is not the prosperity that he is promising us. He’s promising us a much better prosperity. A success and prosperity in the eyes of God. Sometimes that may include suffering. Sometimes that may include hardship. That’s why I went to Matthew 5 when Jesus talked about the happy man, the happy woman. He talked about a description that the world doesn’t even recognize how those two could even go together. But there it is. The ultimate goal being Christ likeness.

Notice lastly, there isn’t as much detail as you look at the ruin of the wicked. “For 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.” Two words. The wicked are shallow. The wicked are shallow. They have no deep root system in to truth. They’re being swept away by every wind of doctrine, every philosophy of man of the day. The wicked have none of the things that he just described about the godly man and the godly woman, the righteous man and the righteous woman. They’re like chaff. Chaff is rootless. It’s weightless. It’s light.

When June comes in Oklahoma, those men and women who are farmers and who have wheat fields are breaking out those combines. Those combines are going out in those fields and they’re harvesting that wheat. He’s describing something for us here

from way back in his period of time when they would literally take the wheat that had been harvested. They'd go to the highest hill and beat it and throw it up into the wind and let the wind blow the chaff away. The combine does that for farmers today but it's the same principle. Blow the lightweight, worthless, useless stuff out the back of the combine and keep the grain dropping into the bucket and preserving that which is of value. That's what he says here. What a sad description of a life. what a sad description of a life – to be described as chaff that the wind blows away. You don't want life that looks like chaff, that is worthless, that's weightless, that's rootless. Maybe some of you look back on a period of time in your life and you say that was me. That was a good description of my life. maybe there's somebody here right now this morning or somebody listening and they're saying that is me. That is my life. that is the way I feel. I feel like my life is like chaff – weightless, worthless, rootless, without meaning. There's an answer we'll see to that.

The second thing is the wicked are separated. They're shallow and they're separated. He does not stand in judgment. What does that mean? He does not stand in judgment. At the day of judgment, he has no standing. We might say in our vernacular he doesn't have a leg to stand on. That's what he's talking about here. Paul talked about it in Romans chapter 3 verse 19 when he said that every mouth is going to be stopped. People have this silly idea that they're going to stand one day before a holy righteous God and they're going to dialogue with God, they're going to argue with God about their life, the value of their life, and all the good that they've done. Let me tell you, my friend, when you stand before a holy righteous God and you're not clothed in the righteousness of Christ, you won't be standing for long. You'll be on your face flat. You will be prostrate before the God of righteousness and holiness. Paul is exactly right. There will be no word spoken. There's no defense to be marshalled if you don't have the attorney Himself, our advocate Jesus Christ the righteous.

Look at verse 6: "For the Lord knows the way of the righteous but the way of the wicked will perish." Very personal word "know". A personal interest in. The Lord delights in the righteous. It is a place of favor. Note the contrast. chapter 1. Psalm 1 verse 1 begins with the word "blessed". Look at the last word of the last verse of the first psalm. Perish. Perish. Blessed or perish. If you want to experience anything close to the

happiness that God intends for us, it's only found when you build your life on God and His word and obedience to it.

What do we take away? The psalmist has narrowed our options to two. The choice is clear. Which way will you live? God's way? Or the way of the world? There are two paths and there are two destinies. My prayer is this morning that you will choose the destiny of the righteous. The choosing of the destiny of the righteous simply means that you will enjoy the favor of God because of what Jesus has done for you and what He has done for me. Your life does not have to be shallow. It does not have to be separated from God. It's never God's intent. God's heart and desire is that you be in a personal relationship with Him. A personal relationship with Him through the Lord Jesus Christ who is the perfection of Psalm 1. Jesus came to this earth. He died on the cross. He did so for my sin and for yours. He paid the penalty that I deserve and He bore my sin. God doesn't ask me to try to be the best I can be. He doesn't ask me to try to live my life by some man-made moral standard. What he asks me to do is simply believe that what Jesus did is enough. It's so simple and yet sometimes so hard because we want to offer God something. But the problem is we have nothing to give. For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. The wage of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let's pray. Gracious Father, we pray in these closing moments that You would open a heart to this glorious gospel, to this way of happiness. Father, to walk in Your favor, to know what it means to have a heavenly Father who loves us and cares for us and cares about us and cares about our lives and everything going on in our lives every day. Holy Spirit of God, open hearts to Your word, to Your truth, to Your gospel. Call someone to believe even this morning we pray. Lord, call all of us who have believed to a greater degree of commitment and righteousness in our walk with You as we delight in Your word. We pray in Jesus's name, amen.