

Psalm 1

How to Be Happy and Blessed in Life, Psalm 1:1-6

What Do You Do When You Come to a Fork in the Road? (The Blessed Person Is the Righteous Person)

Psalm 1:1-6 NKJV

The Way of the Righteous and the End of the Ungodly

¹ Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

² But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.

³ He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

⁴ The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

⁶ For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalm 1:1-6 AMP

The Righteous and the Wicked Contrasted.

¹ Blessed [fortunate, prosperous, and favored by God] is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked [following their advice and example], Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit [down to rest] in the seat of scoffers (ridiculers).

² But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And on His law [His precepts and teachings] he [habitually] meditates day and night.

³ And he will be like a tree *firmly* planted [and fed] by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season; Its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers [and comes to maturity].

⁴ The wicked [those who live in disobedience to God's law] are not so, But they are like the chaff [worthless and without substance] which the wind blows away.

⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand [unpunished] in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶ For the Lord knows *and* fully approves the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked shall perish.

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We come before You today in a world filled with countless voices and distractions. Yet we gather here because we long to hear Your voice above all others. As we open Psalm 1, it reminds us that true blessing is found not in the counsel of the world but in the counsel of Your Word. Plant us like trees by streams of living water, so that our roots would grow deep and our lives would bear fruit that lasts. Help us to delight in Your law, to meditate on it day and night, and to find joy and strength in Your presence. Quiet the noise around us, Lord, and tune our hearts to the melody of Your truth. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Psalm 1 calls us to examine where our roots are. **Are we deeply grounded in God's Word, drawing life from His presence? Or are we swayed by the shallow winds of ungodly counsel?** The psalm reminds us of a sobering reality: the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly will perish. In other words, the paths we walk and the roots we cultivate determine not only our present stability but also our eternal destiny.

Five Modern Illustrations

1. The Noise-Canceling Headphones

Imagine someone on a busy subway surrounded by **loud, competing noises—conversations, announcements, screeching brakes, and ringing phones**. Without headphones, all the voices **compete for attention, creating stress and distraction**. But when they put on noise-canceling headphones and play a calming song, **the chaos fades, and clarity returns**. In life, ungodly counsel is the noise of the world, while **God's Word is the noise-canceling truth**. To meditate on His law is to tune out the chaos and focus on the melody of His will.

2. The Planted Tree vs. the Potted Plant

A tree planted by streams of water digs roots deep into the soil, constantly nourished by a steady source. No matter the season, it can withstand storms and still produce fruit. But a potted plant, though beautiful for a time, depends on temporary conditions—it can **be moved, neglected, or dry out quickly**. Many today live like potted plants—rooted in **convenience, popularity, or temporary** success. But those rooted in God's Word are like planted trees—**anchored, immovable, and fruitful** even in hard times.

3. The Fitness Plan

Consider a person who is determined to get healthy. They buy gym shoes, join a fitness program, and post about it online. But after a week, they quit. Another person, less flashy, builds a consistent habit—daily runs, balanced meals, discipline.

After months, their life transforms. The first resembles the ungodly—temporary excitement with no endurance. The second reflects the righteous—steady delight and meditation in God's Word that yields lasting fruit. **The difference is consistency and depth.**

4. The Empty Calories

Fast food is everywhere—**cheap, quick, and satisfying** for a moment. But it cannot nourish the body long-term. In contrast, a home-cooked meal with fresh ingredients sustains strength and health. Ungodly counsel is like spiritual fast food: it promises quick satisfaction but leaves the soul empty. God's Word is the nourishing meal—it may take time and effort to prepare, but it gives lasting strength, wisdom, and joy.

5. The Weather App

Before traveling, people check the weather app. If the forecast warns of storms, the wise prepare accordingly—**packing umbrellas, rescheduling plans, or seeking shelter**. But if someone ignores the warning, they are caught unprepared, facing the consequences. **Psalm 1** is like God's forecast. It warns us: the ungodly will be swept away, but the righteous will stand firm. To ignore this is to risk our eternal future; to heed it is to live in safety under God's watchful care.

Closing Thought

Psalm 1 is not just poetry; it is a compass. It challenges us to **choose our path**, to **consider our roots**, and to **reflect on our influences**. The blessed life does not come by accident but by intention—delighting in the law of the Lord and letting His Word shape who we are.

Bible teacher and commentator Warren Wiersbe explains: The psalm presents two ways—the way of blessing and the way of judgment—which was the choice Israel had to make (**Deut. 30:15, 19**).

Deuteronomy 30:15 NKJV

¹⁵ See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil.

Deuteronomy 30:19 NKJV

¹⁹ I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both you and your descendants may live.

Jesus used a similar image (**Mt. 7:13-14**).

Matthew 7:13-14 NKJV

The Narrow Way

¹³ Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.

¹⁴ Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Bible history seems to be built around the concept of “**two men**”: the “**first Adam**” and the “**last Adam**” (**Ro. 5:12-14; 1 Cor. 15:45**)—Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, David and Saul—and Bible history culminates in Christ and Antichrist.

Romans 5:12-14 NKJV

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

¹³ (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

1 Corinthians 15:45 NKJV

⁴⁵ And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.

Two men, two ways, two destinies.

This contrast is fully explained in the book of **Proverbs**. **Proverbs** thoroughly discuss the two ways, the two men, and the eternal importance of living by the instruction of God’s Word. Many terms that are frequently discussed in **Proverbs** appear in this psalm. A word search and study of these words in **Proverbs** provides us with a deeper understanding of this psalm. These words include **walk**, **counsel**, **way**, **scorner**, **law**, and **righteous**.

Psalm 1 is the major passageway into the rest of the psalms. Outstanding commentator **Derek Kidner** declares that “**it stands here as a faithful doorkeeper, confronting those who would be in ‘the congregation of the righteous’ (v. 5) with the basic choice that alone gives reality to worship.**”

At the very beginning of **Psalms**, the Jewish hymnal, a vital truth is proclaimed: ***we can only truly worship God if we have chosen to walk in His way and in the light of His Word.*** The Holy Scripture is central to all worship. God has revealed Himself, His glorious plan of salvation, and His will for every one of us in His inspired Word. Only if we delight in His Holy Word (**law**) can we truly enter His presence. Only if we have chosen the path of righteousness can we have an audience with Him. Only if we meditate on His Word can we fully understand the ways of God and worship Him in truth.

Anyone can be inspired and comforted by reading the psalms, but we can only experience an intimate relationship with Him if we love Him and obey His life-giving instruction (**Jn. 14:21; 15:10, 14**). Such a relationship gives us the liberty to pour out our hearts to God.

John 14:21 NKJV

²¹ **He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.**

John 15:10 NKJV

¹⁰ **If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.**

John 15:14 NKJV

¹⁴ **You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.**

Before entering fully into the psalms, we must stop at the door of **Psalm 1** and make a decision to...

- walk in the Lord’s way
- delight in His Word
- meditate on His Word

Closing Prayer **Gracious God,**

We thank You for the clarity of Your Word in **Psalm 1**. Today You have set before us two paths—the way of the righteous that leads to life and the way of the ungodly that perishes. Lord, give us wisdom to choose the narrow way, courage to reject ungodly counsel, and strength to walk faithfully in Your truth.

May we not be like chaff blown by the wind, but like trees firmly planted, drawing life from You each day. As we leave this place, let Your Word continue to shape our thoughts, guide our steps, and nourish our souls. And may our lives point others to the blessed life that is found only in Christ. In His mighty name we pray. **Amen.**