

PSALMS 1

Text: Psalms 1:1-6

The first psalm is one of my very favorites because it speaks in such an illustrative way on the importance of the word of God in a person's life. The first verse describes the blessing of not being influenced by the lost world. It's a progression: Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly – *counsel is advice or instruction given for directing the conduct or judgment of another* **Don't get your instructions from the ungodly** – because the ungodly are cut off from God and this is how they think **Ephesians 4:17-18** This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: There is a progression in this verse that shows conformity: nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful – ***the progression goes from walking to standing to sitting***. Standing in the way of sinners means that you are going the same way they are. **Ephesians 2:2-3** Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Finally sitting in the seat of the scornful refers to a fixed place among the worst of the lost. The scornful are full of pride and they have a contemptuous and disdainful attitude towards others and especially God. They mock and ridicule, resist any correction, reject any wisdom or instruction. They love to influence others to evil.

Verse 2 and 3 - Psalm 1:2-3 But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. **Blessed is the man that takes delight in the word of God!** The Bible here says law because in this dispensation of time that's all that they had. We're blessed beyond measure to have access to the entire canon of scripture. We have the law, the history, the poetic and wisdom books, the prophets, the gospels, the epistles and the revelation of Jesus Christ. This verse teaches illustratively what a healthy relationship with the word of God will do in your life. The key is not just that we read it, but that we meditate on it. To meditate means to dwell on, to contemplate, to revolve any subject in the mind. It is the mental equivalent of digesting food. When we eat food, the digestive system of our bodies

takes over to break it down into nutrients that the body can use for energy, growth, and cell repair. For the word of God to really be our life, strength, instruction and influence it must be digested through meditation. Meditation on the word of God pulls out the spirit and life contained in it and it strengthens your inner man, renews your mind and guides your behavior. The verse says you'll be three things:

- **Fixed** – a tree planted by rivers of water, meaning you'll be grounded and rooted so that you won't be moved. **Ephesians 4:14-15** That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: If you are grounded in the word of God you can't be blown around by every wind of false doctrine!
- **Fruitful** – bringeth forth his fruit in his season, meaning that the word of God won't just be something that we can quote...but it's how we live. Bringing forth fruit in scripture refers to our attitudes and actions reflecting the character of God and advancing his kingdom on the earth. Jesus emphasized that we bear fruit by remaining connected to him - **John 15:4-5** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.
- **Flourishing** – his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper meaning that if you make the word of God your life source and remain in it...you won't dry up and wither away. You will last and be productive all your life.

This psalm has a sister passage of scripture in the New Testament that teaches the same thing - **Romans 12:1-2** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind*, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. *This verse teaches that even though there is an initial change when we are born again, to totally transform into a new creature we need your mind renewed.* That means how we think needs to be realigned by God's word. The steps to a renewed mind are:

- **Daily taking it in** – make reading the word of God part of your day. Some people read the newspaper every day and they've done it for so long that their day doesn't feel right without it. Make the word of God such a part of your life that when you don't read it, something feels missing.

- **Understand what you've read** – the psalmist said the man was blessed that meditated on the word of God meaning that you're going to mentally digest it. Come to grasp and understand what you have read. Many people ask me how to get a better understanding of what I'm reading, and that's a great question. The best way to gain understanding of the Bible is by getting a good devotional. Here's why, a Bible devotional has a portion of scripture to read every day but then it also has an explanation of what you just read. I highly recommend Bible Recap. It can be found nearly anywhere and it's free on the Bible app.
- **Applying what you have learned - James 1:22-25** But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. *It's not enough to read the word and even understand it unless we do it. The scriptures teach us to do things that are contrary to our natural feelings and emotions. If we still respond to life based on what's right in our minds or how we feel in the moment instead of what the word of God says, we're no different than the ungodly because that's what they do. If we know the word of God but don't apply it – we are self deceived!*