

Psalm 1 ¹

"The Two Ways: The Way of the Righteous and the Way of the Wicked"

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A1 THE BLESSED WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS ² MAN 1:1-3

B1 His Non-Associations: How blessed is the man who 1:1

C1 His Non-Walk: does not walk ³ in the counsel of the wicked,

C2 His Non-Stance: Nor stand in the path of sinners,

C3 His Non-Seat: Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! ⁴

B2 His Delightful Meditation 1:2

C1 His Delight: But his delight is in the Law of the LORD,

C2 His Constant Meditation: And in His Law he meditates day and night.

B3 His Success: He will be like a tree 1:3

C1 His Ideal, Well-Watered Situation: *firmly* planted by streams of water,⁵

C2 His Timely Fruitfulness: Which yields its fruit in its season ⁶

¹ Psalm 1. An anonymous wisdom psalm. Charles Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible*. This psalm is seen as a fitting introduction to the whole psalter.

² 1:1-3 Title - Righteous: This man is called "blessed," and is finally identified as one of the righteous in verses 5 and 6. Interestingly, this blessed, righteous man is singled out as an individual whose way Yahweh knows personally (1:6), while the wicked are only a class of people not known by Yahweh.

³ 1:1 - walk, stand, sit: There is an obvious progression of becoming ever more enamored with and ensnared in the way of wicked sinners. The blessed man refuses this progression.

⁴ 1:1 - scoffers: Obviously, those who scoff at God, goodness and holiness.

⁵ 1:3 - planted: Well watered, he will not experience dryness in his life. There will always be meaning and productivity.

⁶ 1:3 - fruit: Productive, fruitful life, accomplishing things of eternal value.

C3 His Stability: And its leaf does not wither;⁷

C4 His Productiveness: And in whatever he does, he prospers.⁸

A2 THE WAY OF THE WICKED MEN 1:4-6

B1 The Unproductiveness of the Wicked 1:4

C1 Their Denial: The wicked are not so,⁹

C2 Their Instability: But they are like chaff¹⁰ which the wind drives away.

⁷ 1:3 - wither: There never comes a time of spiritual dryness in his life. He does not stray away from the Lord because he stays away from evil practices and meditates constantly on God's life-changing Word!

⁸ 1:3 - prospers: His life is a success from God's point of view. He makes wise decisions financially, domestically, business-wise, spiritually.

⁹ 1:4 - not so: I.e., the wicked do walk in the advice of other wicked people; they do stand in the path of sinners, violators of God's standards; they do scoff at morality, justice, holiness, goodness, and God. They do not delight in God's Word; they will not touch it, much less read and embrace it. And thus, they are not like a deeply rooted, productive tree. They are dry socially, morally, emotionally, spiritually. They are bankrupt before God, and they do not even know it!

¹⁰ 1:4 - chaff: Rather than being a producer of worthwhile fruit from a deep reservoir of stability and goodness, the wicked have nothing of value to offer. Instead of being active, they are passive, driven about by circumstances beyond their control. Instead of being a life-giving tree, they are dead stubble--straw not even fit to be used for bedding for cattle--just a pile of wind-driven cellulose with no food value!

B2 The Unworthiness of the Wicked 1:5

- C1 Their Inability to Survive the Judgment: Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,¹¹
- C2 Their Inability to Tolerate the Saints in Heaven: Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.¹²

B3 The Opposite Outcomes of the Two Ways 1:6

- C1 Yahweh's Superintendence of the Way of the Righteous: For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
- C2 The Disaster of the Way of the Wicked: But the way of the wicked will perish.

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 1
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¹¹ 1:5 - judgment: The wicked are defenseless in the day of judgment before God. They have, by their lives, denied that they ever will be judged by Him. Thus they have made no preparations to be evaluated by Him. When they stand in judgment before Him, they have nothing to say. They have already mocked His standards, His people, His ways, and they blanch in terror before His piercing gaze that disrobes the very evil motives of their dry and stony hearts. It is safe to say that the wicked in their lives on earth and now in the after-life, did not and do not even want to be around God. They cannot stand Him as He cannot stand them. They are blinded by the holiness of God. They consider Him too harsh, too unbending, too perfect, too prudish, too straight, too unloving. They are terrorized at having to spend eternity with God. They cannot stand His presence. Anything will do as a substitute for being in the presence of a perfect, absolutely holy, all-powerful God.

¹² 1:5 - assembly of the righteous: Not only will sinners be unable to withstand God's scrutiny, they will be unable to tolerate God's holy people, for they will be holy even as God is holy! Like father, like son. As they hate to be in God's presence, they hate to be in the presence of the children of God. They think God's people to be narrow, bigoted, hateful, hypocritical, naive, foolish--people who have wasted their lives. So blinded are they, they cannot perceive that the Christians are none of the above and they are all of the above.