



November 27, 2016

Psalm 1

“God’s Recipe for a Blessed Life”

Pastor Gary Hamrick

There are two paths in life – one that is blessed by God and one that is not. One path leads to life, one path leads to death. Which one are you on? How do you get on a good path that is blessed by God? In today’s introduction to the book of Psalms, Pastor Gary teaches about how our choices impact receiving the Lord’s blessing.

Historical Background

1. The book of Psalms is the hymnbook of Israel.
 - a. In Hebrew, sefer tehillim, means, book of praises.
 - b. In Greek, psalmoi, means, songs sung to the harp.
 - c. The English translation of the Greek word is psalms.

2. There are 150 psalms, the majority of which were written by David (73).
 - a. Asaph, who was a musician in the Levitical order, wrote twelve psalms.
 - b. The sons of Korah (the same Korah who rebelled against Moses), of the tribe of Levi, wrote ten psalms.
 - c. Solomon, David’s son, wrote two psalms.
 - d. Heman, Ethan, and Moses each wrote one psalm.
 - e. There are 50 psalms written by anonymous writers.

3. The book of Psalms is primarily about God and his relationship to his creation.

4. The psalms demonstrate that God is both a powerful God and a tenderhearted father.

- a. He is revealed as a powerful God = King - Judge - Avenger - Creator - Healer
- b. He is shown to be a tenderhearted Father = Shepherd - Provider - Refuge - Protector - Redeemer

A Psalm Of Contrasts

5. The first word in **Psalm 1** is “*blessed*,” and the last word in the psalm is, “*perish*.”
6. This psalm is a contrast between the righteous/godly and the wicked/ungodly.
7. God only sees people as being righteous/godly or wicked/ungodly.
8. We must choose the path of the righteous so we might receive the blessing of God in our lives.

A Psalm Of Influence

9. We need to be careful about who or what is having an influence in our lives.
10. It's a true statement that we will become like the people we associate with.

A Psalm Of Blessing

11. It's important to first recognize that God is the sole source of blessing in our lives.
12. **James 1:17** - “*Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*”
13. “Oh, how happy/content is that man/woman who pursues God,” is the literal translation of **Psalm 1:1**.
14. It is true, however, that there are many people who don't follow after the Lord, who, in a worldly sense, lead what many would call a blessed life.
15. A major point of emphasis would be that these people are not necessarily happy or content, no matter how successful or wealthy they are.

16. Pastor Gary said: "If you don't understand this chapter, you're never going to understand why it is that some people can have everything, and yet feel like they have nothing [or] why they can accomplish so much and yet be so empty."
17. **Psalm 1** is a recipe, so to speak, for us to follow, which will lead to receiving the blessing, contentment, joy, and happiness from the Lord.

If You Want A Blessed Life:
Do Not Walk In the Counsel Of The Wicked (Ungodly)

18. **Psalm 1:1** - *"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked..."*
19. Pastor Gary said: "We should never allow our lives to be directed, fashioned, [or] influenced by ungodly people - those who have no relationship with God. We will dialogue with them. We will work side-by-side with them in our offices. We will socialize with them from time to time. We will love them. We will go to school with them... And, we will hopefully witness to them. But, we must not make them our advisors! [Because] they don't have the counsel and wisdom of God; they have an earthly wisdom."
20. **Psalm 16:7** - *"I will praise the Lord, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me."*
21. **Psalm 119:24** - *"Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors."*
22. **John 14:16-17a** - *"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth."*

If You Want A Blessed Life:
Do Not Stand In The Way Of Sinners

23. **Psalm 1:1** - *"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way [path] of sinners..."*
24. We must avoid the path of the sinner!
25. Pastor Gary said: "If you want to live a blessed life, you should never be afraid to be on the road less traveled. There is a popular path that a lot of people are on [and these people] don't know the Lord and don't care to know the Lord. [If]

you want a blessed life and if you want to live for the glory of God, take the road less traveled. [On] the road less traveled there's blessing, happiness, contentment, and ultimately, eternal life."

26. [Matthew 7:13-14](#) - *"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."*
27. [Psalm 16:11](#) - *"You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."*
28. We must choose our friends and our companions wisely!
29. [1 Corinthians 15:33](#) - *"Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character.' "*
30. Pastor Gary said: "We must never jeopardize our future or forfeit our blessings because we are unwilling to take the road less traveled."

If You Want A Blessed Life:
Do Not Sit In The Seat Of Mockers

31. [Psalm 1:1](#) - *"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers."*
32. This verse speaks about a progression: don't walk, don't stand, and don't sit.
33. Pastor Gary gave an overview of Lot's life and how he started out living in the plain of Sodom, only to move into Sodom, and finally, he was so comfortable in Sodom that he became a leader!
34. We must never be comfortable living with or being closely associated with those who mock God.
35. We must either leave or defend the honor of the Lord when people mock the Lord, not because the Lord needs us to defend him, but because we need to do this as a demonstration of our love for the Lord.

If You Want A Blessed Life:
Delight And Meditate On God's Word (The Bible)

36. **Psalm 1:2** - *"But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night."*
37. The Word of God is his revelation and his "love letter" to us.
38. To delight in God's Word means that we must make reading the Bible a habitual part of our lives.
39. Pastor Gary used **Psalm 145:13b** as an example of the ways we would be blessed if we would allow Scripture to refresh and encourage us throughout the day.
 - a. **Psalm 145:13b** - *"The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made."*

The Lord's Promised Blessing Received

40. **Psalm 1:3** - *"He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."*
41. If we apply these principles in our lives, the Lord will cause us to flourish, be fruitful, resilient, and prosperous.
42. The "health, wealth, and prosperity gospel" is bad theology!
43. The Hebrew word for prosperity is salach, which means, to have a successful venture.
 - a. Pastor Gary said, "This basically means that God is going to help us do well in life."
 - b. This doesn't mean that we are never going to have troubles, etc.; it just means that God's favor will be upon us.

Life Without The Lord's Blessing

44. **Psalm 1:4** - *"Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away."*

45. Pastor Gary said: “You can’t lay claim to these wonderful promises if you are on the wrong path. These don’t apply to you. If you want to live your life in rebellion [toward] God and decide that you know best, and you [decide you] want to live life the way you jolly well want, you are free to do so. But do not think that you will experience the happiness and contentment that comes only through a personal relationship with Jesus.”

Choose Life Today!

46. In [John 3:16](#), the Lord helps us see that he has made a way for us to have life today, in addition to eternal life, and not perish with the wicked!
- [John 3:16](#) - *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [Psalm 1](#) to provide the foundation for this study.
3. What are some of the ways you’ve been willing to do what it takes to live a blessed life?
4. Who or what have you allowed to be your advisor/counselor, and how has your life been influenced?
5. Read and discuss [James 1:17](#), and focus on the ways the Lord has been the giver of many wonderful blessings.
6. How would you describe your life in terms of contentment and happiness?
7. Read and discuss Pastor Gary’s comments about not walking in the counsel of the wicked. (See #19 above)
8. What are some of the ways the Scriptures counsel you?
9. Read and discuss [Matthew 7:13-14](#) and [Psalm 16:11](#).

10. Have there been times in your life when you followed the path of Lot? (See #31 through #33 above)
11. How do you delight and meditate on the Word of God?
12. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments about those who won't receive the blessing of the Lord. (See #45 above)
13. Allow the people in your group to share their experience about the moment they came to personally know the Lord.
14. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).