

Bible Study on Psalm 1 – Leader Notes

2. Each leads to the next. If we let sin walk into our lives, we will soon stand there firmly planted, and will eventually sit down and make it home with us. (LL)

wicked. – Getting loose from God and falling into evil. (Leupold)

sinners. – Those for whom evil is habitual, for whom wickedness is a way of life. (CSB)

mockers. Those who ridicule God and defiantly reject his law. (CSB)

Luther-ism...

– “Dear brother, you cannot prevent the birds from flying over your head, but you can certainly keep them from building a nest in your hair.”

Some pertinent Bible passages...

Genesis 39:9, “How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?”

1 Corinthians 6:18, “Flee from sexual immorality.”

2 Timothy 2:22, “Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

Proverbs 1:10, “My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them.”

3. To “not conform” is a present imperative, enjoining the ceasing of an activity currently in progress, and so one might paraphrase “stop looking like” or “stop letting the shape of your life be so visibly similar to” the shape of the life of this age. [Remember, we are by nature sinful and unclean – LSB]

“Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its mold.” (J.B. Phillips)

The verb tense and mood stress the continuing action necessary to avoid conformity. All the time we must be on our guard against those influences that would force their patterns upon us. (The Hilarity of Community – Marva Dawn)

To be “transformed” a process, not a single event. (CSB) This transformation therefore involves a perpetual renewal of the mind, making-new of the religious intellect for the life in the new age. In every case, as each case may arise, the child of God is called upon to “prove” the will of God, that is, to weigh and ponder and decide what the revealed will of his Father God is asking of him now. The child knows that will; it asks of him that what he says and does be “good,” that is be a kindly, gracious furthering of the welfare of the man whom God has set beside him as his neighbor. (Franzmann)

2 Timothy 3:16-17 speaks to the last part of Romans 12:2 when it says, “¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

1 John 4:1 “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

4. We need to be in Scripture...

It is a delight to a Christian and is not a troublesome and unwelcome fetter; it is not a set of hard restraints. (Leupold) It is “get to” not “have to.”

This is said of the man who has been declared “blessed.” Such a man has his delight, not in the vain ways and works of the ungodly, but rather in the Law of the Lord. (Stoeckhardt)

Matthew 15:19, “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.”

Luke 6:43-45. “⁴³ “No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. ⁴⁴ Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. ⁴⁵ The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.”

Christians cannot expect to resist the values of the unbelieving world if they devote one hour of the week to meditating on God’s word and the other 167 hours to providing for the needs of their bodies and enjoying worldly entertainment. We need regular Bible study with fellow Christians. We need to recognize the importance of regular family devotions and personal Bible study. We need to cultivate the habit of remembering and applying the truths of God’s word when we are confronted with temptations or faced with decisions in daily life. God’s children will find their greatest joy and satisfaction in studying his word and thinking about it day and night. (Psalms 1 of People’s Bible Commentary, Page 42)

5. To meditate means seeking guidance for life in God’s word rather than in the deliberations of the wicked. (CSB)

Some would call it Christian spiritual formation. Christian spiritual formation is the process of being conformed to the image of Christ. (Shaped by the Word – M. Robert Mulholland Jr. p. 27)

This is a half-aloud reading and rereading are really the process of musing or meditating as it may be practiced in the Orient. Obviously not an unwholesome absorption with the Scriptures, but a healthy interest in them and knowledge of their real content, which continually influence and affect the man so devoted to this holy treasure. (Leupold)

Brother Lawrence says, “The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the nose and clutter of my kitchen, while several person are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were upon my knees at the Blessed Sacrament. (The Practice of the Presence of God pp. 3-4)

Therefore you must never be proud, as if you were already full. (Luther, AE 11:434). Chemnitz: Each person, in whatever station or calling he has, may meditate on the law of the Lord and speak of His testimonies” (LTh 2:380). (TLSB)

Law refers to the whole word of God, both law and gospel. (The first five books of the Bible then – whole Scripture now) The Hebrew word here means “teaching” or “instruction.” Christians find their greatest joy in the gospel, which tells them of God’s forgiveness of their sins. But when Christians are motivated by the new spirit of faith which the Holy Spirit has created within them, they also delight in God’s law as it is summarized in the Ten Commandments and other passages of Scripture. Because they love their Savior, they want to obey His commands and do the things that will please God. They delight in all of God’s words from beginning to end. (PBC)

6. We live here on planet earth, but our true citizenship is in heaven. We do not belong to the world system. In our Baptism we have renounced the world’s wisdom and Satan’s values.

7. V. 3 *planted* – This is to say that it has roots. (Luther)

Planted, not self-sown, not dropped into its place by chance – planted by God’s own hand (James 1:18). (PC)

streams – Streams or canals of irrigation so common both in Egypt and in Babylonia, by which fruit trees were planted, as especially date-palms, which needed the vicinity of water. (PC)

fruit – When believers are motivated by the gospel and guided by God’s Word, they will produce the fruits of faith, that is, works pleasing to God. (PBC)

Produces something from which others benefit. (TLSB)

leaf – The green foliage is an emblem of faith, which converts the water of life of the divine word into sap and strength, and the fruit, an emblem of works, which gradually ripen and scatter their blessings around; a tree that has lost its leaves, does not bring its fruit to maturity. (KD)

prospers – Succeeds. This is meant absolutely only in so far as the devotion to the Word is absolute. But generally speaking, it will be obvious in such a life that God is crowning the man’s endeavors with success. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. Even negative things help the faith to grow. (Leupold)

1:6a “For the Lord watches over the plans and paths of godly men. (LB)

Not simply the behavior of these two types of people, but particular dispositions toward God and theologies. The righteous order their lives and view the world according to God’s Word and wisdom. (TLSB)

8. 1:4 *like chaff ... blows away*. A simile of the wretchedness of the wicked. Chaff is carried away by the lightest wind, and its removal brings about cleansing by extracting what is utterly useless. (CSB)

Chaff is used throughout Scripture as an emblem of what is weak and worthless. (PC)

The wicked shift back and forth with every change of public opinion. On the Last Day, they will be revealed for who they are – the enemies of God, sinners stained by rebellion and unwillingness to come to Him for His gift of righteousness and True Wisdom, our Lord Jesus. (LL)

1:5 *will not stand in the judgment*. Will not be able to withstand God's wrath when he judges (see 76:7; 130:3; Ezr 9:15; Mal 3:2; Mt 25:31–46; Rev 6:17). (CSB)

assembly. The worshiping assembly at God's sanctuary (CSB)

righteous. † One of several terms in the OT for God's people; it presents them as justified or declared righteous and hence living rightly. In every human relationship they faithfully fulfill the obligations that the relationship entails, remembering that power and authority (of whatever sort: domestic, social, political, economic, religious, intellectual) are to be used to bless, not to exploit. (CSB)