

- ***READ Psalm 1*** Throughout this year we have given much time towards the consideration of God's Word and how it can lead us to live lives that are guided by the wisdom of God. We have noted numerous times that a reality of this life is that we will be guided by wisdom in one way or the other. We will either allow the wisdom of this world to lead us, or we will allow God's wisdom from above to direct in the way in which we will go.
- We have looked at many different areas of life in which we ought to pursue the wisdom of God from understanding how God's wisdom is superior to the world's, to grasping the wisdom of God in the cross, to how we deal with sin, how we can parent with wisdom, how we can be wise spouses, to how we can wisely choose a spouse, to evangelizing and using our words with wisdom. Every single aspect of our lives, every thing that we do as disciples can be bettered by doing it according to the wisdom of God. Our lives are simply more blessed when we live them according to God's wisdom.
- Maybe no portion of Scripture captures these thoughts better than the first Psalm of the Psalter we have contained in our Bibles. Psalm 1, in just six short verses, details greatly the blessed life of wisdom, and how it is far superior to the life that is lived when we resort to allowing foolishness to guide us in this life.
- You might be looking at this Psalm and wondering, "but Nick, where does this Psalm mention anything about wisdom?" That's a fair question because wisdom isn't mentioned at all, but a solid understanding of what this Psalm is trying to communicate will help to show us that this Psalm is talking all about choosing wisdom and the blessings that come along with it. This Psalm is a simple explanation of two main ideas. Firstly, it is showing that there is a choice. We can choose to embrace the counsel of the wicked (foolishness) or we can choose to embrace the law of the Lord. Secondly, this Psalm puts forth the truth that our choice will come with either consequences or benefits. You'll notice that the one who delights in the law of the Lord (**v.2**) will be extremely blessed in different ways, and those blessings from this Psalm are what we want to consider this morning as we close out our year of studies pertaining to the idea of seeking God's wisdom from above. We have talked at lengths concerning why we ought to pursue God's wisdom and what that looks like, and this morning we will look at the benefits and blessings that come by doing so.

I. We avoid walking in the ways of the wicked. (v.1)

- A. Remember, this life only has two paths in which we can walk. We either walk the pathway of the wicked in their foolishness or we walk in the pathway of God and embrace His wisdom. It is one or the other. There is no middle ground in which we can walk.
- B. Therefore, our walking in the way of wisdom logically leads to the fact that we are not walking in the ways of the wicked. Specifically, we will *"not walk in the counsel of the wicked," "stand in the path of sinners,"* or *"sit in the seat of scoffers."* (**Psalm 1:1,2**)
- C. But what does this mean? How is it a blessing that we walk in wisdom and avoid these things? Let's begin with the fact that holding to God's wisdom means that we won't listen to the advice of the foolish. Secondly, we won't be hanging around the wrong crowd who are engaged in foolish activities. Lastly, we will be able to avoid being a part of the wrong culture. Our willingness to hold to the wisdom of God will only lead to blessings and this is the beginning of those blessings.

II. We will have our delight and focus in the Lord. (v.2)

- A. Additionally, our willingness to submit to the wisdom of God will allow us to lead a life in which we can truly be happy. That's really what we are talking about when we talk about being blessed. We're talking about how we can live a life in which we are highly favored by God and where we can find true happiness. When we choose God's wisdom, we are choosing to focus on those things that can bring us a true sense of happiness and favor in God's sight.

- B. We can find that true happiness because we are focused on those things that are good and beneficial for us. Think back to our study from earlier in the year from **Psalm 19**. We discussed the blessed nature of God's law and how it is truly good for us. From **Psalm 19:7-10**, we learn that God's law is perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, true, desirable, and sweet. These characteristics of God's law are what brings us delight and happiness.
- C. However, we must keep in mind that it is the wisdom of God that leads us to these things. Our own wisdom, which is actually foolishness, would lead us to a place wherein we only suffer and find heartache, but if we focus on God's wisdom and live according to it, then we can find the blessings of happiness and delight in focusing on the Lord and His will for us.

III. We will be firmly planted in our faith. (v.3)

- A. The Psalmist gives the picture of a tree who is firmly planted beside a stream of water that is a constant source of nutrition which leads to strength. In this analogy, we would be the tree and our roots of faith are firmly planted and continually obtaining nutrients from the streams of wisdom that come from God's Word.
- B. Continually meditating on God's Word and taking in and applying His wisdom will only strengthen us in our faiths and what a blessing that is! When we build our lives upon God's wisdom then we will be like the wise man who build his house upon the sand. (**Matthew 7:24-27**) The foundation of our faith with its deep roots will be firmly planted and the doubts and concerns that seem to plague so many will not be much trouble for us. What a blessing it is to know that when we live by God's wisdom that we will be able to firmly establish our roots and not be moved.

IV. We will be fruitful for the Lord. (v.3)

- A. But it isn't just that we will be firmly rooted in our faith so that nothing will cause us to stumble, but living according to God's wisdom will also allow us to be extremely fruitful in our lives as disciples. The Psalmist says, that the man who delights in the law of the Lord will yield, *"its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither, and in whatever he does, he prospers."* (**Psalm 1:3**)
- B. We will be blessed with great prosperity because living according to God's wisdom allows for us to do so. Those who live by God's wisdom will display great godly characteristics that will lead to this success...it isn't as if it just happens by accident. Go back to our main focus text of the year that we read earlier from **James 3:13-18**. In **vv.17,18**, we see James detailing that the wisdom of God is *"pure, peaceable, gentle reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy."* These characteristics are not just descriptive of God's wisdom, but they describe the type of people we will be if we live according to God's wisdom.
- C. I think it would be extremely difficult to argue against the notion that the person who displays these types of things in his or her life wouldn't prosper in everything that he or she did. In fact, notice that good fruits are actually specifically mentioned as being a part of God's wisdom. What a blessing it is to know that if we will submit to the wisdom of God then we will be blessed in whatever it is that we do according to God's will. It is surely worth it do do things God's way.

V. We will avoid the downfall of the foolish. (vv.4,5)

- A. We began our consideration of this Psalm by recognizing the blessing that following God's wisdom will help us to avoid walking in the ways of the foolish. Notice, however, that it isn't just the simple walking in their ways that we will avoid, but we will also avoid the result of their walking in foolishness. Those who listen to the advice of the foolish, who engage in foolish activities, and who are a part of the wrong culture will only find their end to be disappointing and full of heartache.
- B. The Psalmist refers to the life and end of the foolish as *"chaff which the wind drives away."* Where the wise will be strong like trees, the foolish will be blown whichever way the wind goes. Where the wise will be able stand before God in wisdom, the fools will fall before His holy judgment. Where the righteous will assemble around the thrown of God, the foolish and sinful will have no part. (**Psalm 1:4,5**)

- C. How sad it would be to look at life and only see disappointment and failure because of our constant refusal to submit to God's wisdom. How sad it will be for so many who get to the judgment seat of God and they recognize that their stubborn refusal to submit to the wisdom of God has led them to this place of condemnation. An absolute blessing of our willingness to live according to the wisdom of God is the fact that we don't have to live with a mindset of fear or worry of that day when we perish because we have rejected the wisdom of God. **(Psalm 1:6b)**

VI. We will know the love and care of God. (v.6)

- A. So if we are not having to live in fear of perishing because we have submitted to a life led by the wisdom of God, then we will instead be able to live a life of confidence and certainly that God is with us because we are walking in the way of righteousness. His love and care will cover us completely when we are willing to live life God's way.
- B. There are a lot of things in this life that can cause us great stress and concern because that's just how this life is. However, we are able to approach those points of stress and concern with a renewed sense of confidence because we are doing things God's way. I can't but think about the most reassuring words of **Proverbs 3:5,6**, *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."*
- C. These words should only feel us with confidence that God's love and care will always be with those who are willing to trust in and lean upon Him in all aspects of life. Many of the things we have talked about this year are not easy things to do. They take great effort and sacrifice on our part at times, but that effort and sacrifice is so well worth it when we consider that God sees us doing those things. He is a loving God who wants to bless his people, and we will most certainly experience those blessings if we are willing to live a life according to His wisdom.

The choice is laid before us and it can really be simplified to this. We can either choose foolishness and wickedness and suffer, or we can choose God's wisdom and righteousness and be immensely blessed. Simply looking at that way sure seems to make the choice pretty clear, but we know that the temptations set before us by Satan to be drawn towards the foolish way of living. May we be ever prayerful and constantly beg our God to help us to remember that the blessings do not come from the foolishness of this world, but they only come from submitting to the wisdom of God in all respects of our lives. May we live in wisdom, so that we might reap the blessings of God in this life and most especially in the next.

PRAYER *Our loving Father in heaven...as we draw this year of studies to a close...may You strengthen each of us to take our studies of wisdom throughout this year, and be made better by them. In every portion of our lives that we have discussed, help us to grow and be made more in the image of Your great Son who leaned upon You and the strength that you provide. Help us to desire your blessings above all else, and may we all live a life of wisdom which is according to Your mind and will for us. Father, as we move forward in our lives and faiths...may we all seek your will, and in the end receive the greatest blessing of all...which is an eternal home with you in heaven. Thank you Father for all that you do for us, and may our lives be lived to your glory. In Jesus most holy name we pray, amen.*