

Finding Ultimate Contentment in Christ – A Series in the Psalms – Week One

Finding Ultimate Satisfaction in I AM

Three Contrasts – Psalm 1:1-6

Main idea: The book of Psalms formed the songbook for corporate worship in ancient Israel (as well as the early church). The book also served as a worldview guide, showing us how to love God joyfully even in an evil fallen world. Psalm 1 introduces the tension in this worldview by exploring a question: Where does true satisfaction in life come from? Does it come from following the crowds? Or does it come from loving God? In this 1st Psalm, the Psalmist asks us to find our ultimate satisfaction in the infinite personal God, in light of our eternal destiny.

1. 1ST CONTRAST – There are two different ways of life. Psalm 1:1-2

- A. *The first way* – You follow the common pattern of the world. 1:1
1. Literature of vs.1: walk, stand, sit *then* counsel, way, seat *then* wicked, sinner, scoffer.
 2. Following the course of the world leads to progressive rejection of God.
 3. Following the course of the world leads to something opposite of blessedness.
 4. Application – Unchecked we will follow in this way.
- B. *The second way* – You build a life based on Torah. 1:2
1. What we feel – We delight in the law of the Lord. *Note: It's YHWH's law! Relationship!*
 2. How we think – We meditate on the law of the Lord (as a love letter).
 3. What we do – This implies that we do the Law out of relationship.
 4. Application – This way leads to fortune and reward. *Note the assonance (fig. sp)! Beauty! And blessed.*
- C. *Question* – This first contrast forces me to ask what I really want out of life.
1. The first three couplets remind us of the addicting properties of the world.
 2. Verse two reminds us of the empowering properties of God's word.

2. 2ND CONTRAST – There are two different kinds of strength Psalm 1:3-4

- A. The first picture – The strength of a tree.
1. Trees in the ancient world were pictures of vitality & health. This is a particular kind.
 2. This is a *transplanted* tree – We draw resources from God.
 3. There are *streams of water* – We experience times of refreshment.
 4. We yield *fruit* – We grow seasonally.
 5. Our *leaves* don't wither – We remain healthy.
 6. The overall effect – We prosper in everything. (See also Rom. 8:28).
- B. The second picture – A shocking bit of dust.
1. It's shocking – “Not so the wicked!” There is a big difference between chaff & tree.
 2. How chaff is produced.
 3. How chaff is driven away.
- C. Question – This second contrast forces me to ask what kind of strength I want.
1. In our present world, chaff strength looks pretty good.
 2. Tree strength is far better.

3. 3RD CONTRAST – There are two different kinds of destiny Psalm 1:5-6

- A. The destiny of sinners – They won't stand in the judgment. 1:5, 6b
1. Sinners were standing in verse 1 but now they're blown into oblivion in verse 6.
 2. God's evaluation reveals an insubstantial life now, followed by perishing later.
 3. This has primary application to non-believers, secondary application to believers.
- B. The destiny of the righteous – God is intimate with them now and later. 1:6a
1. The term Yada refers to personal knowledge. The name I AM refers to the personal God.
 2. So this tells us the personal God is intimately acquainted with our ways.
 3. Eternal life begins now. Live consistently with this life now.

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4. This may include suffering. (We don't teach preborn children how to eat with a fork.)