

The Way of the Righteous and the Wicked

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Psalm 1:1-6

This psalm describes a contrast between two individuals – “the righteous” and “the wicked.” These two individuals have very different approaches to life. Because of this, they also have very different outcomes in the end. Let’s consider this contrast and see how we measure up.

The Righteous Man

- He is blessed (v. 1) – many think you need to be “ruthless” to get ahead (Proverbs 11:16); this is often the case; however, the psalmist is looking past the temporary conditions of life; it is better to be righteous (Ecclesiastes 8:12)
- He is careful who he allows to influence him (v. 1) – “does not walk in the counsel of the wicked” and conform to their way of thinking; “does not...stand in the path of sinners” and put himself in a position to encounter them; “does not...sit in the seat of scoffers” and spend time with complainers and grumblers
- He delights in God’s law (v. 2) – recognizes that it was given for our good (Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:16-17); he meditates on it night and day (Psalm 119:48; cf. Philippians 4:8)
- He will be firmly planted – not easily shaken, despite whatever trials may come; he receives needed nourishment (1 Peter 2:2) and is fruitful (Luke 8:15); he prospers in whatever he does in that he is blessed as he follows God’s word

The Wicked Man

- The wicked are not like the righteous (v. 4) – they follow the instructions of others who are wicked and get progressively worse (cf. 2 Timothy 3:13); they do not try to avoid temptation, “lacking sense” (Proverbs 7:6-10); they join in with the negativity and anger around them (Proverbs 22:24-25); they do not delight in God’s law (2 Thessalonians 2:10)
- They are like the chaff (v. 4) – what is separated from the wheat (cf. Matthew 3:12); they are of no value; they are driven away by the wind (cf. Ephesians 4:14)
- They will not stand in judgment (v. 5) – they will not be among the righteous

Which One Are We?

- This is not just about two individuals (one righteous, one wicked) – we are one of these individuals; which one we are depends on our choices/priorities
- Will we choose the way of God or the way of the world?
- Will we delight in His word or in man’s word?
- Will we do what is good or what is sinful?

Conclusion

- Whichever choice we make, God will deal with us appropriately (v. 6) – if we do what is right, God will reward us; if we fail to do this, we will ultimately perish
- Let's make sure we are like the tree firmly planted by the water – steadfast, fruitful, faithful, and righteous