

## Take a Psalm moment

Here we are already in March. I thought it would be good to take some time to honestly assess how we are travelling spiritually. **PSALM 1** can help us in this process with some good diagnostic questions to ask ourselves as we look at how we are growing in the grace and knowledge of God.

Psalm 1 can be broken into two easy sections: the godly person (v1-3), and the ungodly person (v4-6). The life of the godly person has a number of key markers in terms of his/her daily walk.

**The person who receives a blessing** (v1-3). I think it would be reasonable to assume that everyone wants to be blessed, but the way the Word of God uses this word, and how we use it, is quite different.

### **PRAISE** the Lord for:

- ★ The continued unity we have as a team here at Challenge. Everyone from production to the general staff and Board members continue to work well together
- ★ The initial schedule plan in place for Impact Africa Mission trip this July
- ★ The latest edition which arrived on time from printers
- ★ The quick visit from the Trezona family (December) and their safe return to the USA

The word blessed means to know joy overflowing, joy many times over. It is God's desire that our lives are marked by joy.

Sadly, some Christians put more importance on the counsel of the world than the counsel of the Word of God. Notice how there is a progression of spiritual decline when we go to the world for counsel. We start with a walk with the ungodly and regress to standing in the path of sinners and regress further to sitting in the seat of the scornful. Taking the world's advice can be very costly indeed and do irreparable damage to our walk with God.

*But notice how the godly person grows in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.*

**Directed by the Word of God.** By implication the person who experiences joy overflowing from God is the person who is directed by the Word of God. This person places confidence in the Word of God and comes with an attitude of humility. This person is yielded and surrendered to whatever God's will is for his/her life.

**Delights in the Word of God.** This tells us that the reading and study of God's Word is not a chore but a delight. I have often been surprised to hear Christians say they don't enjoy reading the Word of God or it is boring. I realise there are some sections of the Bible that are not exactly riveting reading. One helpful way to gain some benefit from such passages is to read devotionally on the particular section. This is a good way

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to help us meditate on what we have read. The idea of meditation here is not what the world considers it, which consists of emptying one's mind and then filling it with some mumbo-jumbo that makes no sense. When the psalmist talks about meditating on the scriptures it is all about filling our minds with the Word of God so it impacts the way we think. This is why Paul exhorts us in Romans 12v2, *And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God.* The idea of meditating on the Word of God also has the idea of memorising scripture. As David says in Psalm 119v11, *Your Word I have hidden in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

**Developed by the Word of God.** So the Christian directed by the Word of God, and who delights in the Word of God, is then developed by the Word of God in terms of his character and fruitfulness. He/she is like a tree planted by a river. This tree is strong, upright, stable, because

its roots are deep into the life-giving underground water flow. Such a tree bears fruit in season. This sort of Christian bears fruit at just the right time. The root development is illustrated by the fact that this tree does not have withered leaves. No matter what the weather conditions this sort of tree can handle them.

This tells us that the Christian that has his/her roots deep into the life-giving Word of God will be marked by fruit bearing at just the right time, and will not be easily disturbed when difficult times come along. This sort of Christian is not marked by impatience or irritability. The outworking of this is that whatever we do God is pleased to prosper it.

As a result of being directed by God's Word and delighting in it, and then being development by it, God is pleased to prosper us. The word "does" in v3 literally means no matter what walk of life you come from, or whatever occupation you have God is pleased to prosper you in it.

Maybe as you read these thoughts you have realised your life is not in tune with God the way it should be. Why not take stock and ask God to do a new work in your life right now. The Devil is the great procrastinator and would love you to put it off to some other convenient time. Don't let him dissuade you from what God wants you to be. Make your life count for God and bear fruit, much fruit, fruit that remains. May God prosper you in whatever you do throughout 2019.

**PRAYER** needed for:

- ★ Another couple of people to join our Impact Africa team. A few people have had to withdraw due to health issues
- ★ Current edition of Challenge as it is sent out far and wide. Pray that each paper will be a blessing to readers
- ★ Carl's annual visit to USA and Canada (17 March – 1 May) to assist Andrew Trezona with promotion and development work. Pray for new contacts. Carl will speak at several churches while away
- ★ Editions sent this month include: Australia; USA main, prison and Spanish; Africa main, prison, Military, Malawi and Zimbabwe

{ CARL CARMODY  
EDITOR CHALLENGE }



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