**PSALM 1**

***Living the Blessed Life***

Sunday School Lesson 1

*Exploring the Psalms*

10/6/2019

**Introduction:** For the next several months, we are going to turn our focus to the book of Psalms. While we are not going to study every psalm, we are going to explore a few that speak to us on a wide range of topics. The book of Psalms is filled with so many wonderful and helpful truths. The Lord used several different men to pen the Divine words of this book. King David wrote at least 73 of the 150 psalms. Each of the psalms in God’s Word have been routinely sung and recited by faithful Israelites from the days of the kings, and they are still sung today. This tells us just how much the Hebrew people value the instruction that is found in this book of the Bible. As Christians, we ought to treasure this book even more than the Hebrew people, because we understand how much it points us toward Jesus Christ. For our first lesson, we are going to start at the beginning: the first psalm. In this psalm, we are given some very wise insight when it comes to living our lives. The chapter compares the life of the righteous man versus the life of the ungodly. Needless to say, there is a significant contrast in the blessed life of the righteous and the painful life of the sinner.

1. WE MUST SHOW THEM HOW SUPERFICIAL THEIR CURRENT CONDITION REALLY IS.
2. **We must show them that their earthly possessions cannot give them the satisfaction and fulfillment that the world claims (Proverbs 13:7, 23:5; 1 Timothy 6:9; Revelation 3:17).** The Bible tells us the inherent dangers of relying upon our possessions. Proverbs 13 specifically tells us that a man can be rich and yet still have nothing. This shows us that wealth is no nearly as valuable as we often think it is. 1 Timothy speaks to the lustfulness that ensues for those who seek after wealth. It is a never-ending, never-satisfying endeavor to collect the riches of this world. Proverbs 23 speaks of wealth and how it has wings and takes flight. This is giving the idea that more riches are always just slightly out of reach from the person that is searching for them. In Revelation 3, Jesus warns people in the church that had been relying on their own possessions. He told them that their wealth was giving them a false sense of worth. The Lord saw people who were miserable and greatly lacking. This is the true condition of every person that does not know Jesus Christ. Money can buy lots of things, but the one thing that it cannot buy is the true joy that every believer has. As we are witnessing to people who do not think that they need salvation, we must help them see that there is no true joy in the things of this world.
3. **We must show them that the state of their current well-being is uncertain to continue in the future (Proverbs 27:1, 24; 1 Timothy 6:17; Luke 6:24-26; Job).** For the person who is doing well materially, they must understand that their current condition is not guaranteed to continue in the future. This is the great peril to relying upon wealth for happiness and satisfaction. What happens when they lose their job? What happens when they lose their health? What happens when the craving for materials leads them to a poor financial decision that causes them to be destitute? It is really not a surprise that a large number of Americans openly admit to dealing with ongoing depression. They ride the financial waves. We must help the lost person to understand that they are relying upon something that is uncertain. Any good investor knows that the wisest decision is to avoid reliance upon high risk outcomes. There is no risk of failure for the believer. Even if we are lacking materially during our lifetime, we have an eternal promise. We are staking our claim on that. Ask the lost person if they really want to put all of their trust in their own possessions or even in their own well-being. Surely, they must know how fragile wealth and life truly is!
4. WE MUST SHOW THEM THE REASON THAT THEY NEED JESUS AS THEIR SAVIOUR.
5. **We must show them that they are sinners who are in need of salvation (Romans 3:23, 5:18, 6:23; John 3:17-18; Matthew 13:22).** As mentioned in the introduction, part of the problem is that some people do not see any immediate need for salvation. Everything is going fine in their life. They aren’t doing anything terrible according to their own standards. Sadly, they aren’t particularly concerned with the future, and they see salvation as a future issue. They do not understand that they need salvation now because they are ALREADY condemned. We must plainly show them from the Word of God that they are just as much in need as any other person. Jesus spoke of those who hear the Word but are distracted by the deceitfulness of riches. Their possessions and cares of life have distracted them from recognizing the state that they are in. Many people in this world have developed a Stockholm syndrome with the Devil. They are in captivity, and they do not even really understand it. It is our job as believers to tell them that they are sinners. The payment for sin is death. The sentence has been announced for all of mankind. Only the blood of Jesus Christ can stay the final punishment.
6. **We must show them that their possessions or stature will have no bearing before the throne of God (Psalm 49:5-7; Proverbs 11:4, 28; Mark 10:23; Revelation 20:12; Romans 2:11).** It is important for the lost person to understand that there will be no special privileges given from God. No one will be able to barter their way into Heaven. This is a troubling revelation for some, as they may believe that anything is possible if you have enough wealth. Surely, in this world, money speaks, and men listen. Yet, all of that wealth is meaningless to God. It is corruptible, while the things of the Lord are incorruptible. Even if there was a monetary price that could be paid to enter into Heaven, how would man possibly be able to make that payment? After all, we cannot take the riches beyond the grave. Additionally, our fame or stature here on Earth will be of no value to the Lord. It is the epitome of pride and arrogance for a man to think that the Lord would succumb to man’s request as a result of that man’s fame or reputation.
7. WE MUST SHOW THEM THE SAD TESTIMONY OF A MAN WHO THOUGHT HE DIDN’T NEED SALVATION.
8. **We must show them the rich man’s realization of and response to the eternal life of judgment that he faced (Luke 16:19-31).** The story of the rich man and Lazarus is one of the most compelling stories in the Bible to share when presenting the Gospel to someone who does not think that they need to be saved. The rich man had everything that he could possibly want. Each day, he would see the condition of the poor beggar named Lazarus. He probably pitied Lazarus for his importunity. Yet, when his life had ended, the rich man opened his eyes in Hell. Upon realizing where he was, the rich man asked for just a drop of water to sooth his condition. There’s no doubt that he now understood how desperately he needed to be saved. He was even willing to have Lazarus be the one to give him just a drop of water. Unfortunately, there was no more opportunity for the rich man. Maybe he had planned on dealing with his eternal destination later in life, but the time just slipped away from him. Now, he was destined to spend forever in Hell. His final plea was for Lazarus to be sent to his family to help them to understand their need of salvation. The rich man was concerned that his family would make the same mistake that he had made. The rich man’s plea is recorded for all of mankind to hear today. When talking to the lost, you can tell them that you want to share a testimony from someone who is in Hell.
9. **We must show them the foolish rich man that wasted his life away trying to gain more and more personal wealth (Luke 12:16-23).** In a parable that Jesus gave, He spoke of the man who continued to build more and more barns. As the man was nearing the later days of his life, he finally decided that he was going to retire from all of his working and enjoy the fruits of his labor. He only needed to tear down his barns one more time and build them up again. After that, he would surely have enough materials stored up to enjoy the rest of his life. Unfortunately, the man did not know that he was going to die before the night had ended. The message that the Lord had for the rich man was a very harsh one. He called him a fool. After that, the Lord mocked the man for spending all of his time laboring for materials that he was not even going to be able to enjoy now. In conclusion, Jesus told His listeners: “The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.” This is a profound yet simple thought. Our lives are not defined by the material possessions that we are able to accumulate. To spend all of our time dwelling on these things is foolish.

**Conclusion:** The psalmist David understood his condition. In Psalm 70, David acknowledged that he was both poor and needy. Most Bible students believe that this psalm was written after David had already become king. Certainly, he was anything but poor and needy by the world’s standards. Yet, David saw beyond the wealth and fame of the palace. He saw a man who was severely lacking without God. Consequently, he called out to the Lord and asked Him to order His steps. Jesus said that they that are sick are the ones who need a physician. We must go and tell the world that they are sick and needy. If they are not willing to identify that they have a sickness, then they are never going to seek out someone to save them from the vial corruption of the flesh. Sometimes, we get frustrated with people who think that they are too good for the Gospel. We must remember that they have been deceived by Satan. We must show compassion upon them by helping them to see through the Devil’s lies.