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Sunday Worship 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM

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Blessings For The New Year

The preface to God's hymnal which is the book of Psalms is Psalm One. It begins with a word we use so often that, if it was taken out of our vocabulary praying would be very difficult. It is the word blessed. Blessed is the man, the woman, the teenager or the child. God blesses people. He blessed Abraham that Abraham might be a blessing; and that's why He blesses you and me. He blesses us that we might bless others.

This Psalm confronts those who would be in the congregation of the righteous with the basic choice that alone gives reality to worship; with the divine truth that must inform worship and with the ultimate judgment that looms up at the end of the way. The righteous person does not walk in the council of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. Notice the downward progression. The godly do not model their conduct on the advice of bad people. Further, the godly do not linger in the company of persistent evildoers; still less remain among the cynical who openly scoff at God.

Instead, the godly delight in the law of God. They make the law of God their rule. (v. 2) This is an indication of the new birth; for "The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so." (Romans 8:7) The thing you delight in is the thing that runs your life. What delights you will eventually direct you. So, you had better be careful what you enjoy. The blessed person delights in the law of the Lord. He delights in the word of God and thinks about it constantly: He meditates on God's word. Meditation is to your soul what digestion is to your body. It means to assimilate the word of God.

Then the psalmist uses a picture of a tree. The tree has roots. The most important part of our life is its root system. We must not be like the ungodly who are like chaff. The chaff has no roots. It is blown about by every wind that comes along. God wants us to have roots because the root system determines our nourishment. It determines our stability and our strength. This becomes evident when the storms of life come.

People can't see our root system but God can. This system is produced and strengthened by time in prayer, meditation on God's word and building a strong relationship with God and His people.

In strong contrast with a blessed person (v. 1) is an ungodly person. (v. 4) The ungodly live according to their passions. The righteous are those who are related by covenant with the Lord, who live by His word and thus produce that which has eternal value.

The Psalm concludes by distinguishing between the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked. We are told that the Lord watches over the way of the righteous; whereas the way of the wicked will perish.