

13. An interesting aside is how faith in Christ was described as “The Way” (eg. Acts 9.2, 19.9, 24.22). Why do you think they used that expression? What does the expression imply to you about the nature of the Christian faith?

14. One answer to the previous question is that the word “way” implies progress on a journey. How do you see yourself on the way; are you standing still, sliding backward, plodding on, striding confidently, or what?

Pray

Pray for determination to keep in the narrow path. Pray against those who would teach Christians to follow the counsel of the wicked etc., or that the way to life is broad.

Pray for the young people going for a weekend away at Netherside Hall at the end of the month, that they would have fun and grow in faith. Give thanks for Yorkshire Camps and God’s wonderful provision of the Hall. Pray particularly for Andy and Hannah Peace who run the enterprise.

Give thanks to God for the new lobby and toilets and for the provision of the gifts, loans and pledges to enable it to happen. Pray for the PCC in taking forward the possible families ministry, looking at the storage space and in due course how to provide more small group space.

*David Phillips,
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The Psalms

Psalm 1 : Two Ways to Live



Psalms 1 & 2 have been described as the gateposts of the Book of Psalms and though they are quite different they seem to go together. Psalm 1 begins with the blessing of righteousness, extols the Law of the Lord and ends with a curse on those who reject God’s way. Psalm 2 begins with the plots of the ungodly, contains a prophecy about Christ and ends with a blessing on all who take refuge in “the Son”.

Read Psalm 1

Keep in the Right Way

1. Verse 1 is typical of Hebrew poetry with three lines saying similar things. What three things are we told not to do and how does the mention of the three postures help drive home the point?
2. Suppose you were in a car with a friend, whether as driver or passenger, and ran into parked car but your friend wanted you to drive on quickly and not report what happened. How might this be seen as “the counsel of the wicked”? What would you say to the friend in response?
3. Can you think of other examples from your own experience where you have faced the “counsel of the wicked” and how did you respond?

4. How do 1 Kings 15.26 & 15.34 help us understand the idea of the “way of sinners”?

5. What situations might we encounter where we are tempted to stand in the way of sinners? (This doesn't mean blocking their way but standing on the path they follow.)

6. The word translated “scoffers” occurs 16 times in the Old Testament, 14 of those are in the Book of Proverbs. What do you think it means to “sit in the seat of scoffers”? How do Proverbs 13.1, 15.12 and 21.24 shed light on what it means for us in our own lives?

7. How does the progression of ideas from “counsel of the wicked” to “way of sinners” to “seat of scoffers” seem to build up in severity?

Learning the Right Way

8. The Psalm talks about delighting in God's law (v2) and Paul says something similar in Romans 7.22. Can you say that the Bible, and indeed the law of the Lord, is your delight? If so what do you mean by that and if not why are you different to Paul and the Psalmist?

9. **Read Joshua 1.8.** Obviously we are not going to read the Bible all day and all night so what do you think is meant by meditating on it day and night?

10. What promise is given both in the Psalm and in Joshua 1.8 to those who do meditate on, delight in and do the law?

Two Ways

11. What are the two ways described in this Psalm? What are we told is the outcome of each, whether in this life or in eternity?

You might wonder if the Old Testament is telling us that by obeying the law we can be righteous. The problem is that we fail to do so. But we are told that Old Testament believers lived by faith, trusting God's promises not their works. The New Testament makes it clear that it is through faith, in Christ, that we can be righteous not by works of the law. But the law drives us to Christ and is still a delight.

12. **Read Matthew 7.13-14.** How does Jesus describe the two ways to live? What are the two different destinations of these ways and how does that compare with what is said in the Psalm? Why do you think Jesus says that few find the right destination?