

Choosing The Right Path

Psalm 1

MEMORY VERSE

PSALM 1:6

“For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Bibles, several sheets of paper, and markers.

Black and white construction paper, scissors, glue sticks and tongue depressors.

ATTENTION GETTER!

Who Am I?

It is important in our lives to choose the right path. As we will learn today, **God wants to bless our lives.** When we follow Him and choose His ways, our lives will be very blessed.

Before class think of three characters from the Bible who lived their lives for the Lord and were blessed. Think of three others who chose the wrong path and their lives ended in destruction (examples: Daniel and Judas). Think of some questions to ask the children that will help to describe the individual. Start with harder questions and move to easier ones if they can't guess. For example, for Daniel you might say, “I pray three times per day,” “I eat only vegetables,” etc. Save the “I was in the lion's den” clue for the last one. Split the class into two teams. Start by giving one clue to team A and if they can't guess, give the next clue to team B and see if they can guess. Continue giving clues until the person is guessed. Keep score as to which team get the most points.

After all six names (you can do more if you wish) have been guessed use the descriptions as an introduction to today's lesson of choosing the right path. Ask the children, “What happens when we

choose a path that honors God?” and “What happens when we choose a path that goes against God’s word?”

LESSON TIME!

The Psalmist wrote, “Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105). In our lesson today, we are going to see how God’s Word lights our way through this dark and evil world we live in. The Bible can be our light to show us the way ahead so we won’t stumble as we walk through each day.

God wants us to know that there are two kinds of people in this world. And there are two paths that we can choose to walk on. We will learn that **God wants to bless our lives**. Those who desire to live by faith in God’s Word, seeking His righteousness, will have a blessed life. But in contrast, the wicked will not prosper and like a dried leaf, they will one day perish. Do you know what group you are in? Let’s look at our Bible reading for this week and ask the Lord what He wants to do in our lives as we consider the truth of His Word.

PSALM 1:1

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

As we read through Psalm 1, we see that there are two roads in life. We can choose to either take the road of a faithful person or the road of a faithless person. The psalmist begins to describe the joys of being a godly person. One who obeys God and refuses to listen to those who would scoff or laugh at the things of God, with a desire to do evil.

God wants us to be set apart from those who desire to cause trouble. He wants us to be different so that we can experience the joy of His blessings. The person who desires to please God will

enjoy the spiritual peace and joy that results from that relationship.

Sometimes our friends can have a strong influence on us, and often in ways that we don't always notice. If we choose to have friendships with those who laugh at what God considers important, we may be drawn into sin and become indifferent to God's will for our life. Do your friends build up your faith or do they tear it down? A true friend will draw you close to God and support you to be a faithful witness to others.

It is also interesting that the person described in verse one is at first walking, then standing, and then sitting with sinners. We need to be careful in our walks with the Lord. We can be walking with Him and then be drawn into something or be curious about something of the world around us. If we begin to receive counsel (get advice) from those who don't know Jesus then we are getting bad advice. If we stand in the way of sinners then their sin will rub off on us. If we are sitting with those who mock God and His ways, it will rub off on us. We need to reach out to those who don't know Jesus, but not participate in the things that they do.

PSALM 1:2

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.

Not only will a faithful follower of God avoid bad company; they will also delight in doing everything God wants them to do. The desire to spend time with God in His Word will bring about joy to our hearts. If you want problems in your life, spend time with scoffing sinners, but if you want real joy, you will find it only in the presence of God and His Word.

Following God is learned by meditating on His laws. Meditating means that we spend time reading and thinking about God's Word to see how He wants us to live. As we learn His Word, we can apply

it to our lives, so we can experience the joys of a fruitful life. **God wants to bless our lives.** His word is a light unto our path, giving us the guidance we need to follow Him closely.

PSALM 1:3

He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.

The psalmist paints a beautiful picture of a strong tree by a riverbank producing luscious fruit each season without fail. The harsh winds may come, and the heat of trials may beat down on the tree, but it remains strong, green, and fruitful by the water (see Jeremiah 17:5-8). The righteous who live by faith places their confidence in God so they flourish like trees planted by water. But does that mean that everything will go our way?

When God tells us that we will prosper, He doesn't mean that we will never have failure or difficulties in our lives. We are not even guaranteed health, wealth, and happiness. His word does tell us that when God's wisdom is applied to our lives the fruit it bears in us will be good, receiving His approval. He is going to bless our lives with things that you can't buy. Things like peace and joy, special relationships with others and His presence and leading in our lives. **God wants to bless our lives.**

As the fruitful tree soaks up the water and bears luscious fruit, we also are to soak up God's word, producing actions and attitudes that honor God. Like a well-watered tree, the fruitful servant of God can trust in the promises of God's Word to stand firm through life's trials, because He shows us how to get through them.

One Way Sign

In our study today we learned that there are two paths, but there's really only ONE WAY that we should choose and that is God's way. For our craft today we will make a "One Way" road sign to help us to remember to choose God's path. You will need black and white construction paper, scissors, glue sticks and tongue depressors.

Use a black sheet of construction paper as the background. Measure and cut two inches length wise to make a rectangle. The children will need to cut out letters from white construction paper to spell out ONE WAY. Judge the size to make sure the letters along with an arrow fits into the black rectangle. For the younger children you may need to help them with patterns. Once the letters are cut out, have the children cut out an arrow and a thin border to go around their sign also from the white construction paper (again judge the size to make sure it fits near the edge of the black rectangle). Glue the border onto the black rectangle. Next glue on the ONE WAY letters and the arrow (suggestion: have the arrow pointing up instead of left or right). Glue the tongue depressor onto the bottom middle of the sign so it can be held up.

PSALM 1:4

The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

Now the psalmist describes the fruitless life of a wicked person. In strong contrast with a blessed person we are given an image of an ungodly person. From a strong fruitful tree, the comparison of the wicked is like chaff from worthless husks of grain.

Chaff is the outer shell or husk of the grain that must be removed to get at the valuable kernels of grain inside. The people removed chaff by a process called threshing and winnowing. After the plants were cut they were crushed, then the pieces were thrown into the air. Since chaff is very light it was carried away by the

wind while the good grain fell back to the threshing floor. Simply put, chaff is a symbol of a faithless life that drifts along without direction. The blessed person is guided by God's word because He is actively faithful to keep His promises to bear fruit in our lives. Good grain is a beautiful symbol of a fruitful life that can be used by God. **God wants to bless our lives.**

Also there will one day be a judgment of those who don't know God and refuse to turn to Him. They will be crushed like the wheat and only the good grain will remain. Those lives which are not fruitful or given to Jesus will be blown away with the wind. Everything seems to come into perspective when you think of these images. Things that seem so important to people in this life suddenly won't matter at all. Only eternal things will matter. How we need to keep our lives focused on eternity.

PSALM 1:5

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

It seems at times that evil people may be getting away with things. It appears as though they continue in their wicked ways without any consequences for their actions. Do you ever wonder why God allows the wicked to carry on in life as they live life by their own rules? We know from the Bible that God is very patient and merciful. He gives people time and room to change from their ways and turn towards Him. But God assures us that a day is coming when their sins will be punished (Matthew 25:3-46). They will not be able to stand in His judgment, nor will they gather together with the righteous. This is one of the reasons why it is so important for us to share our faith with others.

The righteous are those who are walking with the Lord and have a relationship with Jesus Christ (Hebrews 13:20-21). Because Jesus lives in the hearts of those who know Him, we become equipped in

every good thing to do His will. In other words, He helps us to live the righteous (or “right on”) life that He wants us to live. All we need to do is ask for His help. We can be filled with His Spirit and have the fruit of the Spirit come out of our lives. We can also delight ourselves in His Word and live by His Word, which will produce things in our lives of eternal value.

PSALM 1:6

For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

As we look at our last verse, notice the contrast of the final outcome between the righteous and the wicked. The righteous will again prosper, but the wicked will perish. The Lord has watched over the way of the righteous and He knows them. Salvation in the Day of Judgment is based on a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The wicked have gone their own way and refuse to have anything to do with God. The worthless life of the ungodly will not endure.

How blessed is the person who seeks after the Lord, to do His will. His Word is truly our light to show us the way through this dark and evil world. May you desire a life of blessing, to prosper by the hand of God. **God wants to bless our lives.** Be faithful to Him and His Word and you will be blessed. Choose the road in life that will reap an eternal reward, and you will never be disappointed.

Memory Verse Relay

You will need Bibles, several sheets of paper, and markers. Before class write the reference for the memory verse at the top of a sheet of paper (Psalm 1:6 – write only the reference, do not write out the verse). Use one paper for each group of six students that you will have. Set up a table on the opposite end of the room that you will have the children. Clear the floor so they can run across the room.

On the table set out a Bible for each team, a marker and one the sheets with the reference on it.

During class divide the students into groups of six. Have them line up on the side of the room opposite from the papers. At your signal, have the first person in line run to the table and read the verse in the Bible in front of them and write down on the paper the FIRST WORD only of the verse. They should leave the Bible open and return to the tag the next person in line. Next, the second student will run to find and write the second word of the verse. Continue play until one team completes the entire verse.

When all teams have completed the relay read the verse together as a class.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to give their lives to God fully. To walk down the path that leads to life and blessing. To make that commit now while they are young and experience great joy for many years to come. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.