

**PSALMS**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Psalm 97 as we continue our study through the Word of God. This Psalm speaks of rejoicing in the Lord and the reason we are rejoicing is that the LORD reigns! We long for that day when righteousness will fill this land but until that day comes the Lord wants us to hate evil. Today we call that a “hate crime” because we are standing up for what is good and coming against that which is evil. May we not let this world mold us into its image but be transformed by the renewing of our minds and live as God has called us to live!

Remember what Paul said in Romans 12:1-2, **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”**

And Peter tells us in II Peter chapter 3, **“Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness . . . Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless.”** II Peter 3:11, 14. With that said, let’s begin reading in Psalm 97, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

**PSALM 97****VERSE 1**

1. This is obviously speaking of the Kingdom Age, the time when the Lord rules and reigns on this earth from the throne of David in Jerusalem. That will truly be a time of celebration! But I also think that this Psalm encompasses even more. You see, right now, as a believer, the Lord is ruling and reigning from the throne of your heart and thus, we should rejoice in that fact. We should let others see the joy we have in the Lord and that because He is on the throne of our lives, it affects how we live out our faith!

**VERSES 2-6**

1. Here is a picture of the King's arrival and when He reigns, "**Righteousness and justice**" will be the foundation of His throne! It is the perfect, the ideal government. There will be no unrighteousness spoken from His government, no miscarriages of justice, no perversions of the truth. With elections coming up, we long for that day. Just listen to the commercials of all those that are running for office and are they speaking forth right things, is their justice coming from what they are saying? I can't see how it can be. You listen to all those commercials and everyone running for office sounds bad, at least that is what their opponents are saying and they are probably right.

2. When He returns there will be a fire of judgment that will destroy those who have rejected Him. Now some may feel that this is not fair, but again, the foundation of His throne will be “**Righteousness and justice.**” And when the people see Him in His second coming, when He returns to set up His Kingdom on this earth, they will see His glory. They will see that He is righteous in all that He has done!

#### VERSES 7-9

1. All those who serve other gods, worship idols, will be put to shame. You see, when they stand before a holy and righteous God, they will stand alone, and their life will be open before the Lord. The Bible tells us that their righteousness will be like filthy rags before Him, and their fate will be sealed. The foolishness of idols, of other gods, when the Lord is *FAR ABOVE* all gods! When He returns, those that have rejected Him and worshiped false god’s, that which is nothing will be put to shame for their foolishness and they will enter eternity apart from Him!

2. Now in verse 7 when it says, “**Worship Him, all you gods**” the Hebrew word is ELOHIM. The Septuagint puts this verse like this, “Let all God’s angels worship him.” And that is the way that Paul quotes this verse in Hebrews 1:6, “**But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: ‘Let all the angels of God worship Him.’**” So I believe that the Psalmist is speaking of the angels of heaven worshiping the Lord when He returns.

VERSES 10-12

1. That should be the desire of our hearts, to hate evil. But it seems that today we have become more tolerant of it. But if our hearts desire is to do what is right, God will light our path, He will direct us. If we chose not to do what is right, we will walk in darkness. And I am amazed how people, even some Christians can embrace evil when not only does God hate evil, but look at the destruction it brings to people's lives. That is why God hates it, it is a destroyer, it brings about death. Let us love the Lord and hate evil!

2. We see this Psalm conclude with us rejoicing in the Lord for His holy name. That is what the righteous people of God should do! Now think about this for a minute. There are none who are righteous, not even one! God is holy and we are not! So how can we rejoice in His holiness? Because of what Christ has done for us. Through His shed blood we have received the redemption from our sins. Thus, the righteousness of Christ has been placed in our lives as He paid for our sins on the cross of Calvary! In other words, remember what God has done in your life and His precious promises that He has made to you through His Word, and rejoice in that!

**PSALM 98**

This Psalm speaks of us declaring Gods glory and is looking forward to His coming Kingdom and if you remember our study in Psalm 96, this Psalm parallels what Psalm 96 is saying.

VERSES 1-3

1. Here we see a new song being sung, why? It is because the Lord has returned! You see, as the Lord returns in His Second Coming and sets up His Kingdom on this earth, the nations will see that what He has promised to Israel, He is fulfilling. And this is spoken as if it already happened, why? Because it is a done deal, He is coming back and He will rule and reign on the throne of David as He promised the Jewish people!

And that salvation He has brought to the Gentiles is received by the Jewish people. That salvation is only found in Him as Peter reminds us, **“This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”** Acts 4:11-12. If you have not done so may you receive that salvation that is only found in Jesus today!

VERSES 4-6

1. What happens when the Lord returns and sets up His Kingdom on this earth? Joy fills the land! Worship breaks forth! There is great rejoicing because this world that was decaying and falling apart has been restored! This world that was filled with evil, with unrighteousness, with death and destruction has been filled with the righteousness of Christ and thus, what else can you do but **“Shout joyfully before the LORD, the king.”**

VERSES 7-9

1. When the Lord comes back all of creation breaks forth with praise. Now the Psalmist is probably using poetic language in speaking of creation rejoicing as the Lord sits on the throne. But, just to throw this out to you, remember as Jesus made His triumphal entry and they praised Him saying, “**... ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!’**” Matthew 21:9.

The Pharisees rebuked Jesus and told Him to silence the crowd for calling Him the Messiah. And Jesus said, “**... ‘I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.’**” Luke 19:40. I get the impression that if the crowds were silent, then the stones would have sung out to praise Him. Maybe not poetic language after all! In fact, I have at home a stone from the Mount of Olives in Israel that could have cried out “**... ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!’**” if the crowds were silent!

2. Think about this for a minute. Why wouldn't the people of this world rejoice, why wouldn't this earth rejoice for the King who is ruling and reigning in righteousness? That would be foolish not to. People are in love with darkness rather than with the light. They want to continue on doing what they are doing. But make no mistake about it, this world is sick, it is evil and the Lord is coming back to restore it. And when the Lord is on the throne of David He will rule in righteousness, fairness. If you are not happy about that you are a fool!

**PSALM 99**

This is a Psalm of praise unto God for His holiness, His grace, His mercy, and His great love towards us as seen in the way He answers our prayers. As we will see, this Psalm is to our King, to Jesus who is holy. His Holiness is mentioned three times in this Psalm. Also, His throne is a throne of grace and mercy. So let's see what the Lord has for us in this Psalm!

**VERSES 1-3**

1. The Bible tells us that God dwells between the Cherubim, above the Mercy Seat. You see, that is where we meet God. If we met Him in the Ark of the Covenant, where the Law was kept, we would find no mercy only the revelation of our sinful condition and the judgment for that. But the Mercy Seat speaks of God extending His mercy to us through His Son Jesus Christ.

Paul, in Hebrews chapter 9 speaks of the Temple and all that was in the Temple, the sacrifices that were made. And he tells us that this was all a picture of what Christ would do and has done for us. You see, all those sacrifices could never take away your sin; you were still guilty before God. The Law condemned you.

And in Hebrews 9:11-15 Paul tells us, **“But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”**

Please understand that the Old Testament sacrifices were not without purpose, they were more of a ceremonial cleansing but they could never take away a person’s sins as I have said. That is where Jesus comes in and His sacrifice was not only an external cleansing for us, but He cleanses us inwardly and that inward cleansing is then manifested in our lives, in our actions, outwardly! He is the Lamb of God who has come to ***TAKE AWAY*** the sins of the world!

We are not cleaned up old creatures, but we are a new creation in Christ and thus, we are to walk accordingly, don’t walk in the old ways but walk in Christ, in the new life He has given to us! Paul tells us in II Corinthians 5:17, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”** You see, the real problem is on the inside and only God can deal with that. It is through His shed blood that we are cleansed!



2. Let me also say this in regards to Cherubim. They were one of the highest forms of angelic hosts, for the angelic hosts are in ranks. The highest ranking Cherub was Lucifer; he was the top guy before he fell. We are told that Michael is an archangel, and- so-on. (Colossians 1:16). Also, these Cherubim, four of them surround the throne of God and praise Him night and day and they seem to vindicate God's holiness!

3. Now in speaking of what these Cherubim do, of all the attributes of God, what is the one that describes His character the most? Make no mistake about it, it is His holiness. In Isaiah 6:3 we read of the Cherubim surrounding the throne of God crying out, “**... ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!’**” You see, God is pure, He is holy, and in Him is no darkness at all. Even though He is a God of love, it is His holiness that stands out the most! But you truly can't separate the attributes of God, they all flow together!

#### VERSES 4-5

1. As much as people want to speak of God's love today, they forget that He is a righteous judge and will deal with the iniquity that is in the heart of man. Remember what Psalm 97:2 said, “**Clouds and darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.**” You see, not only a God of love, but a righteous judge! Those who reject Him will not get more than they deserve because God's judgment is totally fair, it is right because He is holy!

VERSES 6-7

1. The cloudy pillar speaks of the *SHEKINAH GLORY*, the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day that lead the children of Israel during their wilderness wanderings. And remember that it was the glory of God, the *SHEKINAH GLORY* that filled the Temple that Solomon built. Even though the word *SHEKINAH* is not found in the Scriptures, the Jews used it to describe the visible, divine presence of God.

2. Now the Psalmist lifts up three men, Moses, Aaron, and Samuel. And the reason that they are singled out is because they are examples of men who called out to God and were heard by Him. The fact that Scripture records not only the faults and flaws of each of these giants of faith, but that the Lord forgave them should serve as an encouragement for us, flawed as we are, to humbly follow in their footsteps of prayer. As we will see as we conclude this Psalm, our God is a God who forgives and that forgiveness is found in our Savior Jesus Christ who cleanses us from all our sins!

VERSES 8-9

1. We serve a God who loves sinners and hates sin. Thus, He produced a way for sinners to come to Him, through His son Jesus Christ. We read in I Timothy 2:4-6 in speaking of God, **“who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”** If we refuse to come to Him by the way He has established, you won’t be forgiven but judged. It is up to you!

You see, if God overlooked our sin, ignored our sin, He would not be a righteous God, a fair God, a good God, a holy God. God never ignores our sins but also understand He has provided the atonement for our sin and that atonement is found in the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary! You see, even in the Old Testament the sacrifices of bulls and goats did not take away their sin. That is why the priests work was never done; he never sat down because his work was never finished. The sacrifices had to be made.

So for the Jews of the Old Testament, they were not saved by these animal sacrifices but in faith of the coming Messiah! Paul tells us in Romans 4:2-3 regarding the salvation of Abraham and what that was based on, **“For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’”**

The Jewish rabbis believed that “Abraham was perfect in all his deeds with the Lord.” And “We find that Abraham our father had performed the whole Law before it was given.” Now that is interesting to me for the Scriptures tell us that when God called Abraham from the Ur of the Chaldeans into the land of Canaan, he partly obeyed God for he stayed in Haran for 15 years until his father Terah died.

During a time of famine in Canaan, Abraham went down to Egypt with his wife, lied to Pharaoh, telling him that Sarah was his sister not his wife because he was afraid that Pharaoh might kill him to take his wife. Instead, he just gave her to him! Thus, he lied before Pharaoh. Also, he committed adultery with Hagar, Sarah’s maid to help God out, to get a son since the womb of Sarah was barren.

Obviously he wasn't perfect, he did not keep the Law before it was given to Moses, he fell far short of keeping the Law, not trusting in the promises of God, but he did always return to the Lord.

Now if Abraham was not justified by works, then how was he justified? Paul tells us by faith in God, he believed and that was accounted to him for righteousness. That word "**accounted**" is LOGIZOMAI (log-id'-zom'-ahee) in the Greek and it is a legal term speaking of crediting something into someone's account.

Here we see God credit into the account of Abraham righteousness that is based upon faith and not works. In other words, Abraham was declared righteous by God before the Law was established; it was still some 430 years down the road!

How could that be that Abraham was saved by faith and not by works? First of all, here in Romans chapter 4 verse 3 Paul quotes out of Genesis 15:6, so the Scriptures testify that it is of faith and not of works, it is not a New Testament idea.

But what did Abraham believe in? The promises of God he believed in and even more specifically, the coming of the Messiah, the coming of Jesus. How do I know that? Again, let's look at the Word of God. In Genesis 22:18 the Lord said to Abraham, "**In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.**"

Now we may miss the point but Paul doesn't, for in Galatians 3:16-18 he tells us, **“Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ. And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.”**

It was not the “seeds” of Abraham but the “seed” of Abraham. It was not the nation of Israel, but one who was to come, the Messiah! Do you see that, Abraham believed in the coming Messiah and that was accounted to him for righteousness! It is as Jesus said in John 8:56, **“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.”** God has never provided any means of justification except by grace through faith in Him!

2. This Psalm concludes by saying once again that God is holy and thus He deserves our praise, our worship. No one else compares to Him. May we not forget that!

**PSALM 100**

We see the Psalmist call for us to worship the Lord and this is not just for the Jewish people. This is to be done by all the people of the land and thus, I believe this is looking ahead to the Kingdom Age. But make no mistake about it; we are to worship the Lord now. We are to serve the Lord with gladness forever because He is the Creator! Barnes put it like this in regards to all the earth worshiping God. He wrote,

The idea is that praise did not pertain to one nation only; that it was not appropriate for one people merely; that it should not be confined to the Hebrew people; but that there was a proper ground of praise for all, there was that in which all nations, of all languages and conditions could unite. The ground of that was the fact that they had one Creator.

- Albert Barnes, Notes on the Old Testament, Psalms, 3 Vol., p.III:56

And I hope you glean from this that worship is simple. Don't make it a production. Don't make it complicated. Just come and bow down before your Lord, your God, Your Maker!

VERSES 1-3

1. Notice what the Psalmist is saying. “Serve the Lord with gloominess!” No, he did not say that! We are to serve the Lord with gladness. Now here’s the thing. If you can’t serve the Lord with gladness then don’t serve Him. Think about it. How would your spouse feel if they asked you to do something and you did it but you were mumbling and grumbling all the way through? They wouldn’t feel too good about asking you to do this. I hate to admit this but a few weeks back I was really tired and Julie and I went to bed. She had lost the connection to her Kindle and needed the code to hook up to the wireless Internet.

So that godly man that I am went down to get it. And there was mumbling and grumbling and it was not pretty! And when I say that there was mumbling and grumbling, there was mumbling and grumbling! And yes I got the code and it took care of the problem, but she was not blessed in how I did it and the Lord feels the same way! If we are serving Him mumbling and grumbling as we do, it does not bring glory to Him but people look at us and don’t want anything to do with the God we serve!

If anyone that is involved in a ministry here that is not joyful in serving God in that capacity, see me and step down. You are not doing yourself any good. You are not helping those you are ministering to. And God is not pleased. Serve Him with Gladness or don’t serve Him at all. Paul makes that very point in Colossians 3:23 as he said, “**And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.**”

2. Notice in verse 3 that we did not come about by random chance happenings, but God made us. Nothing happens by chance. And when you study evolution you see it is a dead theory. There are no transitional forms, only a hopeful monster theory where a reptile laid and egg and a bird came out. It is not science, it is faith. The Bible says that God created us, we did not evolve ourselves.

One of my relatives put this thought on her Facebook page and just listen to how evolution works. This is from an evolutionist named Charles Panati.

“The origin of death is due to . . . sex! An amoeba separates asexually from one cell to two new cells – no corpse left behind. Not until later in the earth’s history did nature want to shake up the gene pool creating a “mother” and “father.” After reproduction – production of offspring to enhance the species – was ma and pa no longer needed. Sexual reproduction (and death) was not launched until 1.3 billion years ago – after viruses and bacteria already had their asexual fun.”

That is hilarious but I think they are serious. I don’t have to guess when death was started, the Bible clearly tells us. In Romans 5:12 Paul tells us, **“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”** Because of sin we see death in this world. There was no death prior to the fall. When God created the heavens and the earth everything was very good!

As I have said, God created the heavens and the earth, and thus, we know that He is God and we are His people. He is our Shepherd and we are his sheep. What comfort that should bring to our lives. And the end result of that kind of relationship is the worship of the One who created us, ***GOD!***



VERSES 4-5

1. How does God want us to enter into His presence? We don't have to guess for the Psalmist tells us that we are to, **“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.”** Coming to worship the Lord should be a celebration not a funeral! The best way to enter into the Lord's presence is by thanking Him for what He has done and praising Him for who He is.

J. Vernon McGee sums it up like this for us. He wrote,

Someone told me the other day that he attended the services of one of the great churches of the past and had never witnessed a place that was so dead. Do you know what the problem was? People were not coming to church with praise in their hearts. They did not come to the service with thankfulness in their hearts to God. They did not enter His gates with thanksgiving. If you go to church on Sunday to worship, make *sure* you go with thanksgiving and praise in your heart. If you fail to do that, you are not going to be very helpful to your church.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible, Vol. II, pp. 822-823

2. As the Psalmist closes he speaks of God's mercy being everlasting. I am thankful for that. But not only is His mercy everlasting but His truth endures to all generations. That means what God has said in the Bible is for us today just as it was for the people when it was written.

We live in a day when the world believes there are no absolute truths, it is all subjective. What may be true for you is not for me. And now we are reaping the consequences of those lies. In the July 1997 issue of U. S. News and World Report, there appeared a very disturbing report based on two articles from the publication “The Chronicle Of Higher Education.”

The educators who wrote these articles were expressing shock at the moral relativism being expressed by their students.

Robert L. Simon (a professor of philosophy at Hamilton College) related his students’ reaction to the Holocaust. He stated: “Although groups denying the reality of the Holocaust have raised controversies . . . I have recently seen an increasing number of students who, although well-meaning, hold almost as troubling views.”

“They accept the reality of the Holocaust, but they believe themselves unable morally to condemn it, or indeed to make any moral judgments whatsoever. Such students typically comment that they themselves deplore the Holocaust and other great evils, but then they wind up by suspending moral judgment. . . . In an increasingly multicultural society, it is not surprising that many students believe that criticizing the codes of conduct of other groups and cultures is either unwise or prohibited. They equate such criticism with intolerance and the coercive imposition of a powerful culture’s norms on the less powerful.” He calls this “***ABSOLUTOPHOBIA.***”

In another article in the same issue of *The Chronicle*, Kay Haugaard (an instructor of creative writing at Pasadena City College) was dismayed with her students who had read a story about human sacrifice (where people are ritually stoned to death believing their crops will then grow well). Haugaard couldn't believe the responses from her students when asked their views on human sacrifice. She stated: "No one in the whole class of more than 20 ostensibly intelligent individuals would go out on a limb and take a stand against human sacrifice."

The author of the U. S. News and World report article commented on what these educators are saying: "Postmodern theory on campuses denies the existence of any objective personal preferences. . . . The search is on for a teachable consensus rooted in simple decency and respect. . . . As a spur to reshaping it, we might discuss a culture so morally confused that students are showing up at colleges reluctant to say anything negative about mass slaughter."

And I see the church following right along, afraid to say anything that might hurt someone, even if what they are doing is wrong, or the doctrines they are teaching are in error! And keep in mind that this was from 1997. We are now in the latter stages of 2012, some 15 years down the road and it is not better. In fact, it is worse. We have lost a sense of what morality really is and we have let society shape what is moral and what is not instead of what God has said! It is as the new television show tells us, this is "The New Normal!"

But I really don't care what this world calls "normal" only what God says. Notice what the Psalmist said here, that God's truth endures to all generations. You see, when Jesus said, "I am the way" it flies in the face of pluralism or that all roads lead to God. There is only one way and that is through Jesus! All roads do not lead to God!

When Jesus said "I am the truth" it flies in the face of relativism. Relativism is the concept that points of view have no absolute truth or validity. They only have a relative, subjective value according to differences in perception and consideration. And yet, truth is absolute according to what God has said and that absolute truth is found in the Word of God!

And when Jesus said "I am the life" it flies in the face of hedonism, that pleasure is the way to life. Jesus said it is not pleasure but it is through Him, that is where you find true life! May we come before the Lord our God our Maker with joy as we worship Him!

### **PSALM 101**

Some feel that David wrote this Psalm for his coronation as King. He was coming before God and his people pledging to lead the people, to do his best and to do what is right in the eyes of God. He was pledging to be the best King he could be. And we can see his personal plan in verses 1 through 4 and his political platform in verses 5 through 8. Now this is also looking ahead to another King, Jesus Christ. So let's dig in and see what we can glean in this Psalm!

VERSES 1-4

1. Notice that the Psalmist, probably David, is speaking of God's mercy and justice and he is not singing "for" mercy and justice, but "of" God's mercy and justice. Is that a big deal? I think it is. You see, David experienced the mercy and justice of God and therefore he could sing of it. And think of this in your own life. All the mercy and justice that God has shown you and you too should want to sing about it to let others know that God is merciful and just in all that He does!

2. Now if this is the King's manifesto, David's manifesto or policies for his Kingdom, how does that relate to us? We are all leaders in a sense. You see, someone is looking up to us as parents, teachers, at work or whatever.

Thus, you have to make sure your heart is right with God. That you are doing what is right before God. That means you are to set an example to others no matter what others may do to you. And that means not only in public when you change into your spiritual clothes. That also means in private. As Psalm 97:10 says, "**You who love the LORD, hate evil! . . .**" Set an example for others!

3. Now keep in mind that these first four verses deal with David's personal walk, what he was going to do. Now here's the thing. We can do good in public, but what are you putting before your eyes in private. We are living in a day when we can enter our homes and turn on the TV, go to the computer, drop in a DVD, and fill ourselves with all kinds of evil that no one will know about, except you and God! Don't put anything wicked, anything worthless before your eyes. That is a slippery slope to go down and many have crashed and burned because they didn't listen!

4. In the last part of verse 3 we see David speaking of the conduct of others, what he is seeing them do. The point for us is this. When you go out in public wearing your Christian tee-shirts, having those Christian hats, or whatever, how is your conduct? David was upset with those that talked the talk, but did not have the walk. Their life did not match up to what they were saying. If you are going to do something that will dishonor God, take off anything that would speak of your faith, for you will only dishonor God before man. Better yet, just don't do it!

To help illustrate my point, listen to this story and you will see how we can cloud up the picture of what people are suppose to see in us. We are told,

An honest man is being tailgated by a stressed-out woman on a busy boulevard. Suddenly, the light turns yellow, just in front of him. He does the honest thing, and stops at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman hits the roof, and the horn, reaming in frustration as she misses her chance to get through the intersection with him. As she is still in mid-rant, she hears a tap on her window and looks up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer orders her to exit her car with her hands up. He takes her to the police station where she is searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a cell. After a couple of hours, a policeman approaches the cell and opens the door. She is escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer is waiting with her personal effects.

He says, "I'm very sorry for this mistake." You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping the guy off in front of you, and cussing a blue streak at him."

"I noticed the 'Choose Life' license plate holder, the 'What Would Jesus Do' bumper sticker, the 'Follow Me to Sunday School' bumper sticker, and the chrome plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk. Naturally I assumed you had stolen the car."

Ouch, that hurts! But how often do we respond in a non-Christian way as we are displaying all of our Christian signs, stickers and-so-on? Think about it, we do these things without even giving it a second thought, and yet, when we see this illustrated for us, it is ugly, it is so bad, it makes us sick, and yet, again, when we do it we don't think twice about it! I think this is important for us to understand, that we are ambassadors for Christ and we represent Him in this fallen world so that they may see Jesus and come to His light!

5. Another key point is found in verse 4 where David is speaking of keeping his heart far from evil for he did not want to dishonor God. Sin will start in the heart and it will grow until it fills your life. Cut it out before it has a chance to grow and control your life. Don't put perverse things or people before you because they will bring you down!

You see, you are to be a witness to them. In Psalm 1 we see what we are not to do and what we are to do. Notice what Psalm 1 says starting in verse 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; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 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 ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.”** Psalm 1:1-6.

Now as you look at this you see a gradual progression of this person who is sinking deeper into this pattern of sin. Notice that at first they are walking with the ungodly. He is just kind of being with them, starting out as a casual relationship. But then he is not only walking with them, he is standing with them, they are hanging out together. No longer is it a casual influence upon his life. And finally he is sitting with them, in fellowship with them, agreeing in their sin and mocking the things of God! How many people travel down this road that leads to destruction as Solomon reminds us in Proverbs 14:12, **“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”** It is a wake up call for people to not go down that path that leads to death!



How many Christians are looking for the blessings of God and yet they are unwilling to follow the path that God has for them? It is as Psalm 16:11 tells us, “**You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**” So if you want that blessedness that God has for you, then don’t walk with the ungodly, don’t stand with them and don’t sit down with them!

Now I am not saying we avoid them, but we don’t follow them, that is the key. We are to be a light to them of Christ and yet how many times do we let their darkness affect our lives! Be careful and walk as God has called you to walk. It is as Clarke reminds us, “The great lesson to be learned from the whole is, sin is *progressive*; one evil propensity or act leads to another. He who acts by *bad counsel* may soon do *evil deeds*; and he who abandons himself to *evil doings* may end his life in *total apostasy* from God.” May we not forget that!

#### VERSE 5

1. Now here’s the thing. You will find that in a family, in an administration, in a church congregation, there will be those who want to slander others. If you’re wise, like David, you’ll cut it off. When someone comes with a negative word about another, give no ear to it. And in regards to being part of a church leadership, they should be removed because they are sowing discord with their words. They are to be building up and not tearing down people! Now David did take sin seriously? I think he did, according to what he is saying here. Now he did not put them to death for slander, but he did remove them from his administration, from serving in the Kingdom! Sin is serious and it must be dealt with accordingly! That was David’s desire, but he did fall short in dealing with sin!

VERSES 6-8

1. As you read this I hope that you see that this is a good lesson to apply to our lives. Surround yourself with those who are walking with God, for if you surround yourself with evil, bad company corrupts good habits! (I Corinthians 15:33). Who are you keeping company with?

2. David had good intentions, the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. David did not deal with the evil in his own house; he did not discipline his children. Thus, he saw incest, murder, rebellion with his own children. That is why Solomon, David's son, spoke so much in the book of Proverbs about discipline and raising children, because he saw first hand the destruction that can happen without it.

But David was a good man, he was the standard that God used to judge all the future Kings in Israel by. David's desire was to serve God, and even though he was not perfect, it was his desire. Without that desire to hate evil and love God, we need to repent and get right with God! If evil is not dealt with, it will not only permeate the land, but it will affect our own lives.

3. Now as much as we have read in these verses, all these things were not fulfilled by David. But they will be fulfilled by another King, Jesus! Wickedness will be removed from the land. Those who are faithful, those who have put their trust in Him, will dwell with Him! Righteousness will fill this land because the Prince of Peace has come and He will rule this world in His righteousness! We long for that day but remember what we read in Psalm 98:1-4, **“Oh, sing to the Lord a new song! For He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory. The Lord has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations. He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises.”** May we shout joyfully for all the Lord has done, is doing and will do in our lives! May we give to Him the glory that His due His holy name!