



WHAT YOU DELIGHT IN DETERMINES YOUR PATH – *How to succeed this year.*

If we want to succeed this year, we need to pay attention to King David's 1st Psalm where, in just six short verses, we learn the secret of the kind of life God blesses. As we study this Psalm, we will discover that this kind of happiness is not related to our circumstances but to the way we live and the choices we make, not only what we do, but also what we don't do. We must avoid certain things as well as certain people and certain situations.

Moreover, this kind of happiness is attainable by all: the poor and the unknown, as well as the rich and those who are glorified by fame.

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.” (Psalm 1:1-3)

This psalm surprises us because it begins with a negative. The blessing begins with what the righteous person does not do.

He does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, of the ungodly. With all the advice that comes to us, from so many different sources, the righteous man knows how to *discern* the counsel of the ungodly and he takes the time to consider, “Is this godly or ungodly counsel?”

Nor stand in the way of sinners: Sinners have made lifestyle choices, they follow a certain direction in their life, and the righteous man is not traveling in the same direction. For him, God's Word is always the best counsellor: “*Your testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors.*” (Psalm 119:24) He knows this less-travelled road leads to blessings and happiness.

The righteous can have the confidence of Psalm 16:11: “*You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*”

Nor sit in the seat of the scornful: he is not in close fellowship with those who openly reject the Lord and mock the things of God. He will not sit with them, he is not interested in their conversations and way of life!

Now we come to the positive side: What the righteous man does.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. Everyone “delights” in something. Some people delight in food. Others delight in a job or a hobby. Many people delight in money or the things money can buy. And some delight in evil pleasures and wrong desires. But the righteous man finds his delight in the Word of God and in communion with Him. He hungers for those times. Mark this well: your “delight” determines your direction.

The righteous man *ponders* the Word of God. He is serious about it. He does not just hear it and forget it; he digests it thoroughly, he applies it to his everyday life, he lives it. He has God's Word on his mind day and night.

How the righteous man is blessed. *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.*

That blessedness is marked by stability and fruitfulness. The righteous man's life is portrayed as a mighty tree whose deep roots sink far down into the soil. Located near a river, it benefits from a continuous source of water and never withers away. It is strong and stable, and bears fruit.

And whatever he does shall prosper: It isn't that the righteous man has a magic wand and everything he does "turns to gold" and makes him rich and comfortable. Don't jump to the conclusion that prosperity refers only or mainly to material success (though that is not excluded).

But through his intimate relationship with God, he is equipped to face trials and difficult circumstances, and he produces good fruit on all occasions.

What about you?