

Ungodly counsel VS Godly counsel

If you describe a particular activity as a way of life for someone, you mean that it has become a very important and regular thing in their life, rather than something they do or experience occasionally. What I'm talking about is essentially the way that someone chooses to live his or her life. For example Basketball can be a way of life for someone. They play it all the time, they know every team, and its just constantly on their mind, unless you're a Cav's fan..... If they're an outdoor-sy kind of person, their way of life is focused on being outside, whether it's hiking, climbing, or camping, its apart of their way of life.

Now, how we choose to live our lives, can also be influenced by outside sources. It could be people in our lives that influence us to change for the better. It can be a personal hero, or experience that can influence us to do great things. But ultimately, We can be influenced by anything in this world, but the truth is, that not every influence is a good one. Every influence we allow into our lives will eventually lead us somewhere

As we will see in our text today God makes it very clear that, ever since the beginning of time, there have two main influences in mankind. **The counsel of the ungodly and The counsel of Gods word.** Both of these have great power to influence our lives towards something positive, or something negative.

- In Psalms 1, the Psalmist writes about these two great influences and describes them in 3 ways
 - What advice they give
 - What they produce in our lives
 - The End result of each path

The way that the psalmist does this is by comparing the two influences to show us how it will influence our way of life.

- I believe that this message is important because, how we live our lives and what we allow to influence them will either lead us to where we want to be in life or where we don't want to go

Now lets look at Psalms 1

Lets first examine the advice that comes from The counsel of the ungodly

V1

Right off the bat the writer of Psalms 1, kind of gives it away, he says blessed is the man/ woman who walks not in the way of the ungodly.

- The word blessed in Hebrew is “Esher”, which means happiness or contentment. The writer of this Psalm is basically telling us that if you want to live a blessed life don’t follow the counsel of the ungodly
- **But who are the ungodly?** – In Hebrew the word for ungodly is “Rasha”, which means wicked or hostile towards God. Essentially, it’s speaking of people who orient their lives around the worlds values
- **Why is their way ungodly?** - Romans 8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.*
 - Essentially, its talking about those who live according to the flesh or this world. Meaning, that they understand what the world accepts or considers a good thing. Those that do this cannot please God because they are spiritually blind to what would please Him.
- 2 Corinthians 4:4 “In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” (ESV)
 - The blindness that Paul is talking about here is a refusal to hear the voice of God. They willingly surprising the knowledge of God, and advocate that there is no need for religion, for repenting, or a relationship with Jesus. In fact they live by the idea, that all they need to do is be a good person, and they don’t need to trouble themselves with the things of God.
 - Going back to verse 1 the Psalmist says “Blessed is the person who doesn’t follow this advice. **Why is that?**
- The reason this advice is considered ungodly is because it discounts what God has done.
 - He is the one who created this life, and does want us to be good, but being good doesn’t address the need of the human heart. That’s why even good people can lose hope, become unfulfilled, and destitute, as we saw this weekend with the suicide of Chef and CNN host Anthony Boudain.
 - Nor does being good make us right with God, which is mans greatest need.

- The idea that I can just be a good person, discounts what Jesus did on the cross. If we think that all I need to do is be good, were saying that what Jesus suffered through for our sins wasn't necessary because I can provide my own salvation by being good.
 - **Is 64:6 says that our good deeds are seen as filthy rags by God,** because we are all sinful, meaning that my good works, although good in nature, earn me nothing. **God set one way for salvation or righteousness and its through His son Jesus**

Now that we know what ungodly counsel is and why it's ungodly how can we avoid it?

Before we answer this question we need to understand that the world **can** offer good advice, but we need to be discerning with what advice we follow. We cant just follow any random theory about a problem, or we will find yourself possibly agreeing with ungodly counsel.

- When it comes to discerning what is godly advice, and what isn't can only be done by the Holy Spirit through Gods word. **Psalm 119:24** says -**Your testimonies also are my delight And my counselors.**

As we continue to look at verse 1 the Psalmist transitions to the path of sinners

The Psalmist is also expressing a progression here.

Those who take the Advice of the ungodly will eventually travel down the path of sinners

- What is the path of sinners? – It's basically to live your life either morally, or directionally in disobedience to Gods word.
 - Now let me just say that, all of us were on this path, until Jesus showed us a new one, so there is no judgment in this.
 - Its not a better than situation, but if anything, when we come in contact with people who are walking on the path of sinners it should give us a compassion for them because we've been there. We know how draining it is, and how it promises joy but delivers guilt and shame.
 - Even if you've been rescued from this path, there is still a temptation to go back to it. Just because you get saved, it doesn't mean you stop

struggling with sin. That's why discerning what's ungodly counsel, is so important, because following it brings us back to that path inch by inch.

- Now the bible says that you can go back to this path if you want to, but you won't enjoy it, because God's spirit is in you, and because the Spirit is in you, He will help you see how lifeless it is and draw you back to God's path for you
- **How do we avoid the path of sinners?** - **Proverbs 5:8-9** gives us a clue by showing us how to deal with temptation, it says, **Remove your way far from her, And do not go near the door of her house, Lest you give your honor to others, And your years to the cruel one.**
 - Now am I saying to avoid sinners, or those that don't believe what you believe, no! Jesus said we are in the world but were not of it. The gospel isn't going anywhere if we avoid people that need it, but I am saying that the way we live our lives needs to look different from the way people in the world live life.

The psalmist gives us the second level of this progression.

Those that follow the advice of the ungodly will not only stand in the path of sinner but they will sit in the seat of the scornful

What does it mean to be scornful? - Scorn literally means to regard with contempt or disdain. In other words it means, someone that acts like their wiser than everyone else, a self just person who isn't willing to be taught or listen, but demands that others hear them and be like them. Mockers of religion or anyone that pursues a relationship with Jesus

- **Proverbs 14:6** – says - **A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not find it, But knowledge is easy to him who understands**
 - Because of pride, the scoffer, lives life thinking they know all there is to know about life, and anyone who isn't on their level of knowledge is inferior. In reality this attitude cuts you off from allowing God to show you what wisdom and knowledge actually is.

Now we'll look at the opposite of ungodly wisdom, by looking at the counsel of God's word

Delight in the Law of the Lord

What does it mean to delight in Gods word?

- To delight in the Law of the Lord is to take joy in it and satisfaction. [Psalm 119:103 Says how sweet are you words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!](#)
- How do we actually experience this delight? – **You delight in something that you experience delight in.** This isn't unattainable religion. God wouldn't say delight in my word, if there were no way to actually delight in it.
 - Delight has to be developed, its not something that happens over night, but it takes time, and as you experience it for yourself it becomes a delight. Her are two ways that we can do this.....
 - **First**, just ask for it - I love the way John Piper put it when answering the question, "how do we delight in Gods word"? He said "ask God for new taste buds on the tongue of your heart, because naturally as sinful beings we don't want to delight in Gods word"
 - This is amazing because when we look at psalm 119 the same psalmist who wrote Psalms 119:103, also wrote in Psalms 119:18 ["Open my eyes that I may see wondrous things in your law.](#)
 - **Second**, we need to meditate on His word
 - What is meditation? – Sometimes in the church when we think about meditation, we think of something weird, but meditation is simply something that you ponder, think about or, examine deeply
 - How do we meditate? - Fill your mind with the word of God by taking a verse that speaks to you, and think about every word, phrase and sentence, then apply it to your self
 - Spurgeon once said "Meditation chews the cud and gets the sweetness and nutritional value of the word into the heart and life". **If you wan to know the depth of Gods word, begin meditating on it.**
 - Day and Night
 - The reason Day and night is here is because its talking about developing a routine, which will help you to remember it and apply it to your life.
 - [Joshua 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do](#)

according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success

- When we make it a habit of meditating on Gods law we are taking advantage of the promises of Gods word. As a result we produce good things in our lives

QUICK RECAP – What we've seen so far what we compare ungodly counsel VS Godly counsel. Is that Ungodly counsel is a steady progression to a hardened heart and life, but the counsel of the godly leads to knowledge of Gods law and our delight in them

Now that we know what following the two types of counsel that are influencing mankind, lets look at what each will produce in our lives if we choose either one to follow.

This time we will start with the person who chooses Godly counsel

V3

He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water

- This is the result of the person who meditates on Gods word day and night, they become like a tree planted by the rivers of water. This means that, like a tree there is stability, and fruit produced in their lives
 - In [John 15:5](#) Jesus talks about how we can bear this fruit, he said, "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."
 - When we meditate on Gods word this is what we are doing we are not only abiding in Jesus but we are allowing Him to abide in us, and as a result, fruit is produced in our lives. This fruit can be spiritual fruit, but it can also be character.

Another benefit of the one who chooses godly counsel, is that their leaf shall not wither

- When we think about a tree, for us its natural for the leafs to wilt and fall off because the seasons are changing, but the Psalmist is saying that no matter the season you enter into, your leaves wont wilt.
 - Why? Because they are planted in the streams of Gods word, and as long their connected there will be stability, peace, and fruit in their lives.

- This is essentially what will make us prosperous, because we lack nothing spiritually, as were plugged into the source of Gods word.

This is the benefit of those who take Gods counsel and meditate on it, and now lets look at the benefits of those who chose to follow ungodly counsel

V4

- In ancient times and still today, before you harvest grain, you have to remove this light outer shell called a husk. Its super light so what people would do in ancient times when they would harvest grain is toss the grain up in the air. When they would do this, the grain, which is heavier, would fall to the ground, but the husk would blow away, and this husk is called chaff.
 - Just like in verse 3, those who meditate on Gods word, will **be like a tree**, but in the same way those who follow the counsel of the ungodly will **be like chaff**.
 - Now when we compare the two there is no comparison, but the truth is, when we look at the world, we see so many people prospering from this kind of counsel. Those who are rich, influential, and powerful are many times people who live according to the counsel of the ungodly not the counsel of Gods word. So how do we handle this?
 - Psalm 73:16-18 When I thought *how to understand this, It was too painful for me Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end. Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction.*
 - We work through this by having a heavenly perspective on life. The Chaff may live good now, but the trees stand for eternity.

Quick Recap: Those that follow Godly counsel are like a tree planted by water that bring for good things, and lacks nothing spiritually, but those who follow ungodly counsel have no foundation, and yield nothing.

Now lets look at the end result of following these two ways of counsel. Lets start by looking at the end result of those who choose to follow ungodly counsel first.

V5

- What is the judgment and why wont the ungodly stand in it?
 - Revelation 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was

found no place for them. **12** And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before [a]God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. **13** The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. **14** Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second [b]death. **15** And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

- I know this sounds intense but here's the truth in it. Each and everyone one of us is going to die at some point, and have to face God, no one can help that, but what you can help is how you face Him.
 - 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.
 - God desires that all people come to know them, but its their choice, God isn't going to force us to follow Him, but He must judge sin, that's why Jesus was sent, but if we reject Him, we have no defense, so we will face Gods judgment for our sin
 - The ungodly wont stand in the judgment because they rejected the counsel of God, which is for mankind to be reconciled to God through the sacrifice of Jesus for the sins of the world.
- What does it mean that sinners wont stand in the congregation of the righteous?
 - Its not saying that people who sin are excluded from coming to church, but what it is saying is that, all of us have an eternal destination, and we can choose where we go by the counsel that we choose to follow.

Unfortunately, This is the end result of those who follow ungodly counsel, it ends in judgment, and separation from God for eternity.

Now lets examine the end of those who walk according to Godly counsel

V6

The end result of those who follow counsel from Gods word.

- Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.
 - The path of the righteous is something that God directs
- 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.
 - The path of the Lord is one of pleasure, joy, and fullness
 - Its not to say that life is perfect, but when we are allowing the counsel of Gods to lead our lives we experience a fullness that cant be found in the world.
- Ultimately, as we follow the counsel from Gods word the end result will be this.....
 - Revelation 21:4-5 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said [a]to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

Quick Recap: We just looked at the end result of those that follow the counsel of the ungodly that leads to judgment, but the end of those who follow the counsel of Gods word, will end in blessing.

In conclusion:

To start we walked through psalms 1 looking at the two primary ways that mankind is influenced, either by the counsel of the ungodly or the counsel of Gods word.

- Both can give advice on how to live our lives
 - The advice of the ungodly leads to a steady progression downward
 - The advice of the Godly lead to delight
- Both yield benefits
 - The Godly experience stability like a tree
 - The ungodly have no foundation
- Both have an end result
 - Those who followed ungodly counsel face Gods judgment in the end
 - Those who followed Godly counsel face Gods blessing for eternity

You might be thinking what did I just sit through?! Btu I wanted to lay these things out to give each of us a clear idea of how important it is that we know whats influencing our lives, because the end result is eternity

- If you fell like you've been on the wrong path and want to turn back you can now.
 - If you're a believer and you feel like you've been following some ungodly advice, God has so much grace for you, jump back into His word and let that lead you.