**Growth of Ungodliness**

*Psalm 1:1*

**Introduction**

1. **Psalm 1** is a text which states a general rule of life – **(1)** This is the ***“blessed”*** man and how he benefits, **(2)** and this is the ***“ungodly”*** man, and his demise.
2. The primary focus is on the ***“blessed,”*** righteous man, with the description of the ***“ungodly”*** set as the antithesis of his way of life and its result.
3. We can consider what the ***“ungodly”*** man is based on what the ***“blessed”*** godly man is not.
4. **Verse 1** shows a growth of ungodliness – where does sinful behavior begin, and what does it lead to?
5. We would do well to take heed of the progression of sin and ungodliness to avoid it.
6. Walking in the Counsel of the Ungodly
7. ***“Walks not in the counsel of the ungodly”***
   1. **Walks** – manner of life; mode of thinking and conduct.
   2. **Counsel** – “counsel, as the faculty of forming plans, i.e. prudence, wisdom” (Gesenius)
   3. **Ungodly (“wicked”)** – *râshâ‛* – morally wrong. (STRONG)
      1. “the godless, whose moral condition is lax, devoid of stay, and as it were gone beyond the reasonable bounds of true unity (wanting in stability of character), so that they are like a tossed and stormy sea, Isa 57:20.” (Keil & Delitzsch)
      2. An adjective that is broader than the following, ***“sinners,”*** describing the character leading to specific activity of sin – **“The characteristics of a “wicked” person qualify him as a godless, impious man” (Nelson)**
      3. **Cf. Isaiah 57:20** – There is no consistent moral compass. There is an instability, because they have NO PIETY FOR GOD, THUS DO NOT CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH PLEASING HIM. (No standard of living.)
         1. **cf. James 1:6-8; 4:8** – double-minded, unstable in all ways – double-minded heart leads to hands stained with sin.
   4. **The folly lies within the source of the counsel sought. When one shapes his life according to the advice and plans of those who have rejected God, or even are simply indifferent toward Him, it will result in an instability of morality and truth that will inevitably produce sinful fruit.**
8. Do not seek counsel from the ungodly.
   1. **Proverbs 1:1-14** – True wisdom begins with the fear of God, not the ungodly.
      1. **(vv. 1-6)** – value of wisdom and knowledge – DESIRE FOR IT – The one who wishes to be wise, and ultimately live life the way its Designer intended it to be lived ***will search for such among the impious in vain.***
      2. **(v. 7)** – the source of TRUE WISDOM. (**cf. Psalm 111:10** – beginning of wisdom, parallel to His word, commandments.)
         1. Because purpose of life is found with God **– Ecclesiastes 12:13**
         2. When God is not in the picture – **cf. Romans 1:26-27** – what is wise about going against nature itself and receiving the penalty due?
      3. **(vv. 10-14)** – counsel of ungodly
      4. **There is little to nothing a man who is indifferent about God can offer.**
   2. ***“Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits’” (1 Corinthians 15:33).***
      1. **Psalm 1:1** not only considers the active seeking of counsel from those who do not fear God, **but the mere consistency of being in their presence.**
      2. *The more time spent with one who has no moral compass, the more your moral compass will diminish.*
9. Standing in the Path of Sinners
10. ***“Nor stands in the path of sinners”***
    1. **Stands** – deliberation; more fixed and decided.
    2. **Path** – mode of conduct; manner of life
    3. **Sinners** – *chaṭṭâ'* – a sinner; one who bears blame, one counted culpable (Gesenius)
       1. “sinners, ἁμαρτωλοί, who pass their lives in sin, especially coarse and manifest sin.” (Keil & Delitzsch)
       2. Here is the result of plans formed separate from the consideration of God and His will – the result is lawlessness, and guilty conduct.
       3. **This shows progression itself – there is plan and purpose lacking direction from God, and the result is sinful activity.** (**cf. Romans 13:14** – provision, then fulfillment)
    4. **The second progression is simple to understand but sobering to think about – the entertainment of advice and values which are not sourced in God and His will results in deliberate sinful activity.**
       1. **NOTE: *“STANDS”* – shows the settled nature of the practice, not simply a mistake, but a product of planning, and heart shaping.**
    5. ***It is a standing firm in the place know to be sin, or to inhabit sin in order to participate in it.***
11. Do not stand in the path of sinners.
    1. **Proverbs 1:15-19** – Such know that what they are doing is wrong (perhaps even in the mind of the ungodly without moral direction) **but deliberately participate in sin to pleasure themselves.**
       1. **(v. 15)** – Do not give in to the temptation! DO NOT PARTICIPATE!
       2. **(vv. 17-19)** – They do it ultimately to their own destruction. (NOT TRUE WISDOM – **Proverbs 12:1; 14:12** – it is stupid to ignore the warning of true wisdom)
          1. **(v. 17)** – surely you won’t go with them anymore than a bird who SEES the net spread.
          2. **(vv. 18-19)** – they do not know what lies ahead, but you do, SO DON’T LET THEM FOOL YOU.
    2. Do not think you are immune to the progressive nature of sin – **Romans 6:19**
    3. Do not think you are immune to the inevitable result of sin – **James 1:14-15; Romans 6:23; Isaiah 59:1-2; Matthew 7:22-23**
12. Sitting in the Seat of the Scornful
13. ***“Nor sits in the seat of the scornful”***
    1. **Sits** – further deliberation; making a home, a permanent dwelling.
    2. **Seat** – assembling; abode; presence of.
    3. **Scornful** – *lûts* – properly to make mouths at, that is, to scoff. (STRONG)
       1. “scoffers, who make that which is divine, holy, and true a subject of frivolous jesting.” (Keil & Delitzsch)
       2. Mockery.
       3. **Not simply rejecting God or being indifferent toward His will, not simply walking in sinful activity His will condemns, but actively mocking God, and the things of God.**
    4. **The third evil in the ungodly progression is not only tolerating blasphemy and mockery from others, but it does not bother you to be in the presence of such, AND YOU JOIN IN WITH THEM IN THE SCORN! *(God has become of so little concern that you say His name in vain, speak lightly of His will and purposes, and scorn the lives and values of those who fear Him.)***
14. Do not sit in the seat of the scornful.
    1. **Proverbs 1:20-33** – Wisdom calls for us to turn away from scorn, and the like.
       1. **(v. 22b)** – Those who MOCK do so in pleasure.
          1. **The effects of secular humanism on society reflect this.**
          2. **Entertainment is filled with mockery of God.**
       2. One should not “delight in the company of those who scoff at religion” (Keil & Delitzsch on sitting in the seat of the scornful).
       3. **(vv. 28-33)** – they have refused wisdom for so long to the point of scorn and mockery, and wisdom is no longer found. (LIKE GOD GIVING MEN OVER TO A DEBASED MIND)
       4. **(v. 26)** – the scornful will be the ones scorned in the end…
    2. **Proverbs 3:31-35** – Those who scorn God will be scorned in the end.
       1. The scornful joke about that which is holy, and God Himself now.
       2. They laugh at God, and all things that are of value to God.
       3. **THEY WON’T BE LAUGHING IN THE END!**
    3. **Psalm 1:4-6** – Those who scorn God will be punished.
    4. ***“FEAR GOD and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all”* (Ecclesiastes 12:13).**

**Conclusion**

1. We would do well to heed the first Psalm – There is no true happiness in the end for the man who is characterized by the negatives in the first verse.
2. We must understand that sin is progressive!
3. **(1)** Do not seek wisdom and counsel from those who do not value God, and spiritual things; **(2)** Do not associate with and participate with sinners in sin**; (3)** Do not mock God, and delight in the presence of those who do.
4. **These actions have logical and inevitable consequences. Do not underestimate the progressive force of your decisions.**
5. Instead, seek the opposite:
   1. Walking in counsel of God’s word – **(v. 2)** – seeking instruction on how to live from God instead of the ungodly.
   2. Standing in the path of righteousness – **(v. 3)** – standing firm as a tree and watered by God’s word to prosper in all efforts of righteousness – active in righteousness, steadfast.
   3. Sitting in the seat of the pious and worshipful – **(v. 5)** – the congregation ***(“assembly” – NASB***) of the righteous – ultimately in the judgment assembled by God in heaven to worship Him for eternity.