

Daily Bible Readings 2020

Read one text daily, then start over through the list again & again until year-end.

Day 1	Ephesians 1
Day 2	Ephesians 2
Day 3	Ephesians 3
Day 4	Ephesians 4
Day 5	Ephesians 5
Day 6	Ephesians 6
Day 7	Psalm 1
Day 8	Psalm 8
Day 9	Psalm 13
Day 10	Psalm 15
Day 11	Esther 1-2
Day 12	Esther 3-4
Day 13	Esther 5-6
Day 14	Esther 7-8
Day 15	Esther 9-10

Recommended Books on The Psalms

The 150 Psalms are among the best texts in the Holy Scriptures for the purpose of personal and private devotion.

Here is a list of books I recommend to you as you seek to crack open the Psalms.

“The Songs of Jesus,” by Timothy Keller

“Reflections on the Psalms,” C.S. Lewis

“The Case for the Psalms: Why They are Essential,” N.W. Wright

“The Treasury of David,” in Three Volumes, Charles Spurgeon

You are welcome to borrow my copies as they are available.

Also, the church has established a rich tradition of setting the Psalms to music - not a new idea as many of the Psalms are songs, written for temple worship in Israel, during the golden age of King David and King Solomon. In the Christian tradition, you can find chant, choral, hymnody, and contemporary settings to most of the Psalms. The Psalm singing traditions of Scottish Covenanters and Presbyterians, not to mention the Continental Reformed churches of the historic Reformation to the present, have set each of the 150 Psalms to tunes, and many of these traditions sing them without any musical accompaniment. In my opinion, the best way to use the Psalms, is not to study them with notes or commentaries, but to sing and pray them in your personal devotions and in the corporate worship of the church.

You are welcome to share my Spotify playlist of Psalms set to a variety of tunes, or to collect your own online or disc.

Also, if you would like a copy of my “Crash Course in the Psalms,” then contact the Sterry Office at (208) 722-6201. It’s about 14 pages long. You may request an electronic file or a printed copy.

Psalm 1

*Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;*

2

*but his delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law he meditates day and night.*

3

*He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.*

4

*The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.*

5

*Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;*

6

*for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.*

Psalm 1 is a contrast between the righteous and the wicked. Its focus is upon how we can be righteous, and so most of the contrast is devoted to describing the righteous. The author, most likely David, is our Life Coach - Psalm 1 is the way to live in fellowship with God.

Outline of Psalm 1

- (1) The righteous are not to live like the wicked.
- (2-3) The righteous delight and meditate upon God's law.
- (4-5) The wicked are unstable in this life and so also in the Final Judgment.
- (6) The main contrast between the righteous and the wicked concerns God.

Notes verse by verse

(1) *"Blessed,"* has a deeper meaning than "happy." The Hebrew Scriptures are thematically arranged around God entering into a covenant with creation, especially the human race. The terms of the covenant are God's law. The two parties of the covenant are God and humanity. If we live according to God's law, then we are *"blessed,"* meaning that we enjoy a relationship with God in peace, joy, love, hope. We are able to live according to our created purpose toward a glorious end. (There is so much more to say, and that's why Covenant Theology is such a critical and foundational field of biblical studies. We will have to do something about this in the future.)

"Man," is not used here with gender specificity. It refers to humanity - to our race, male and female.

The remainder of (1) is structured around three actions, each describing a deeper association with the wicked:

does not **walk**
does not **stand**
does not **sit**

who walks not in the counsel of the wicked...

We might think, "I'll be okay listening to what the wicked have to say about worldview and lifestyle. The wicked won't rub off on me..."

nor stands in the way of sinners...

If we invest too much time listening to and considering the wicked's worldview and lifestyle, without any better input, then we may might take a stand with them on certain issues, convictions and behaviors.

nor sits in the seat of scoffers...

We begin to mimic the wicked's lifestyle and behavior to the point where there is little noticeable difference between us and them.

does not **walk** = **Influence**
does not **stand** = **Association**
does not **sit** = **Collaboration**

At this point some Christians have concluded that they should not have any kind of relationship with the wicked. But here is a suggestion of how the righteous should relate to the wicked:

Influence =

The righteous, as good neighbors, proclaim a better way to live in relationship to God.

Association =

The righteous love the wicked by modeling a relationship to God and his law.

Collaboration =

Without endorsing or participating in the wicked's worldview or lifestyle, the righteous join hands with the wicked only to do God's good work in this world.

There is another three-part description in (1) of varying degrees:

wicked = worldview
sinners = behavior
scoffers = relationship

The "wicked" describes a person or group's view of truth/reality - philosophy of life. "Sinners" describes the behavior that flows from an evil worldview... "Scoffers," describes the scorn the wicked sinner heaps upon the righteous, marring any good and productive relationship as fellow human beings. So many individuals, groups and movements claim to be open minded and embracing of all others, but truthfully, the wicked scorn and mock anyone, who does not agree with them and follow their lead. The righteous are called to get out in front and lead the wicked toward a better way.



(2-3) The righteous delight and meditate on God's law. At the time of the writing of Psalm 1, the Holy Scriptures were comprised of the Five Books of Moses, the Torah, that is "The Law of God." Unlike other ancient and classic bodies of Law, the Torah presents God's law imbedded in historical narrative - stories telling us about God redeeming his people. The gist is this: Since God has graciously redeemed you from sin, death and darkness, then you should express gratitude by living according to his law, which shows you the right way and ultimately drives you to embrace Messiah, your only hope of God's favor.

Delight in God's law! Is this your view of God's law? Do you like it or loathe it? During the historic Reformation period of western civilization, John Calvin, a minister and leader in Geneva, Switzerland, influencing, if not birthing the Reformed, Presbyterian and Puritan traditions, wrote and taught the 3 purposes of God's law:

to promote good
to deter evil
to drive us to Christ Jesus

All three of these purposes cause us to delight in God's law, that is, to be grateful for it, to acknowledge its goodness, and to seek to live according to it in our day.

Meditate upon God's law! What? Do you actually suggest that we should study the Mosaic law and seek to live according to it?! Yes, in light of the teaching of Jesus and his Apostles, we should do so.

Meditation #1 =
Consider how God's law promotes good
Meditation #2 =
Consider how God's law deters evil
Meditation #3 =
Consider how God's law drives us to embrace Jesus Christ,
the only One, who has perfectly obeyed God's law.

Aside note = Do you struggle to obey the laws of the land? Do you think that some laws are good but others are bogus? Do you think that the laws of the land have unnecessarily increased? How do you know whether or not one of the laws of the land is good or bogus? Is God's law your standard? If not, what is your standard? Way too many Christians in the 21st century have discarded God's law, replacing it with a standard of "self" - what I think is best for me. Jesus summarized God's law in two parts - 1) Love God, and 2) Love Neighbor. When evaluating the laws of the land, ask, "Does this law help me love God and neighbor?" This is a better way than asking, "Does this law cramp my personal preferences and style?"

"day and night..." = a regular, daily delight and meditation. (David had only 5 books for delight and meditation. We have 66!)

If we delight and meditate upon God's law, then our life is described as a well-situated, watered tree, thriving - producing fruit! The tree in this illustration is an evergreen - prosperous in every season. The streams of water are God's law, nourishing our roots.



(4-5) In contrast to the righteous, like an evergreen tree, the wicked are like chaff blowing away in the wind! The winnowing of grain still occurs today, but not as commonly as in ancient epochs. The crushed grain is placed in a shallow basket in the hands of the winnowing, who tosses the grain into the air. The grain falls back into the basket while the chaff blows away. The chaff, the outer husk, is useless for human consumption. It disappears with the wind.

In the final judgment, the wicked will not be exonerated or delivered. They will be swept away. The righteous will be exonerated and delivered. The Apostle John tells us that the righteous will be exonerated and delivered in the final judgment only because they are united to their "advocate," that is their defense attorney, Jesus Christ.

(6) In this final couplet, two ways are contrasted: 1) the way of the righteous and 2) the way of the wicked. The latter is a dead end! The former is a path that God has blazed. God "knows" this path because he made it and because he has walked it! In his Covenant law, God paved this path. Then, God the Father sent his Son, the Covenant keeper, to walk the path with many in his footsteps.

for the kids!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Psalm 1

X C D X C H A F F M G Y N U O B A
A K Z Z L J F V M E D I T A T E C
D P T I W I N D C B L E S S E D P
E X Z C R S S Q D Q T R E E Z U E
L N S F Q F L O R D T S Y P X N R
I R S N F G S I T J H R X X I G I
G S G C O N G R E G A T I O N O S
H C V A L P B P R O S P E R V D H
T R I G H T E O U S C V F R H L U
D T T V M R Q G S Q Z E A B S Y M
U L N G L R J A Y F P Z G C L A W
F T G K T F R U I T B L E W J M J
H R J M C O U N S E L U S I W K P
W E I S E A S O N B J U G Z I V F
L S I N N E R S G F V F G R Q I J
R I V E R E N B F I Q Y N C I W Z
L G Z D U M B D N X L E K O C P F

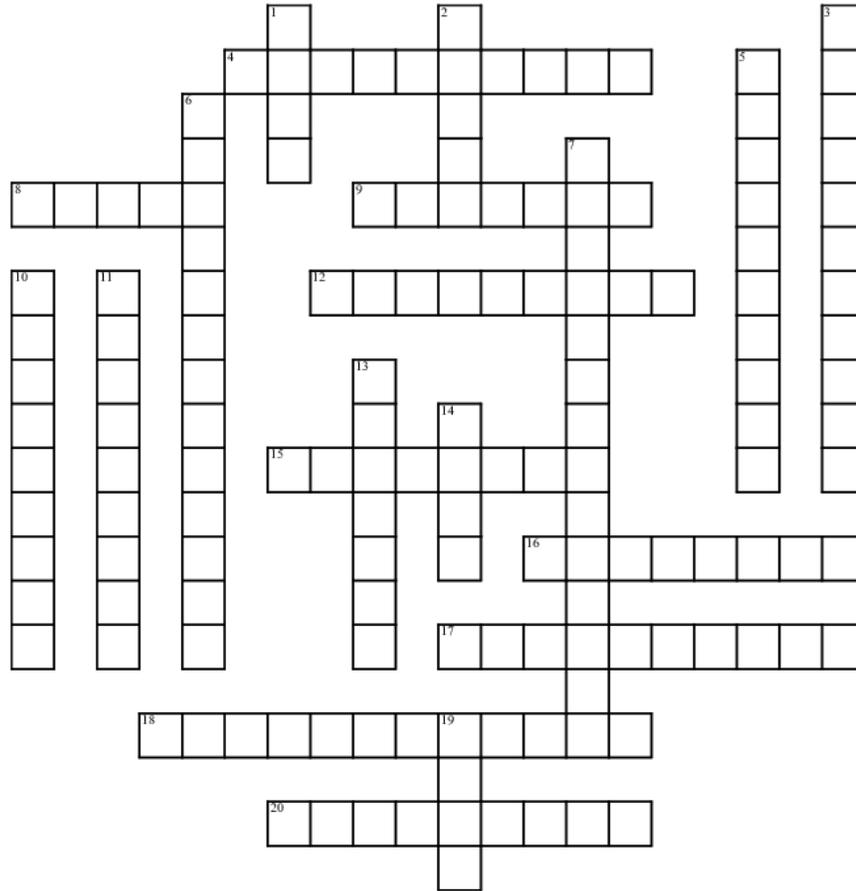
perish	prosper	righteous	congregation
wind	chaff	season	fruit
river	tree	meditate	Lord
law	delight	sit	counsel
ungodly	sinners	blessed	

for kids of any age!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Passion and Death of Christ



- Across**
- 4. Supper Jesus celebrated as a Passover meal
 - 8. The man who was pressed into carrying the cross for Jesus
 - 9. Jesus shows the depth of God's love by his Death and
 - 12. The crime of insulting God or Claiming Godlike attributes
 - 15. Means "place of the skull"
 - 16. The criminal released by Pilate to the crowd, instead of Jesus
 - 17. The person in charge of the Temple worship
 - 18. Unfounded prejudice against the Jewish people
 - 20. God permitted the suffering and death of Jesus because of his ____ love for humans
- Down**
- 1. The first and faithful witness to Jesus
 - 2. Betrays Jesus with a kiss for 30 pieces of silver
 - 3. A brutal form of capital punishment used by the Romans that involved nailing
 - 5. Garden where Jesus prayed in agony and the soldiers came to arrest him
 - 6. A cruel and ruthless Roman governor of Judea
 - 7. The high priest at the time of Jesus' crucifixion
 - 10. Means witness
 - 11. The memorial of Jesus sacrifice on the Cross
 - 13. Means God loves us
 - 14. God sent his son to die out of
 - 19. Means "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews"