



# THE PRAYER CLOSET

Encouraging & Equipping Believers in Prayer

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## PSALM 1

**Psalm 1** reveals that there are only two lifestyles – the godly and the wicked. The godly have surrendered to God's Son and seek to obey His Word. The wicked ignore and reject God, His Son, and His Word. They seek to live their lives based on their own wisdom and judgment.

**Psalm 1** also presents a question – which are you? Are you a godly person who trusts God's Son and seeks to obey His Word? On the other hand, are you a wicked person who ignores God and His truth? This psalm does not give any room for alternatives. It does not have a third category of people. You are living a godly life or a wicked life. You are either characterized by godliness or wickedness. There is no middle ground.

The Bible lists a series of contrasts between choices that must be made. The teaching of Jesus in **Matthew 7** alone declares this. In this chapter, Jesus says that there are:

- Two gates (7:13-14)
- Two roads (7:13-14)
- Two types of trees and their fruit (7:16-20)
- Two houses (7:24, 26)
- Two foundations (7:25, 27)

It is crucial to notice that Jesus did not give any other alternatives. He leaves no room for any other ways of life. It is either godliness or wickedness. It is either submission to God or rebellion toward God. It is either the path to heaven or the road to hell. You are on one side or the other. There is no middle ground in this life.

**Psalm 1** is the clearest and first full expression of this concept in the Word of God. This psalm is given to challenge you and encourage you to live a godly life. It shows the benefits of knowing and obeying God. At the same time, it reminds you of the consequences of the wicked lifestyle. In a world of wickedness, it's difficult to see the emptiness and destructiveness of a wicked life. Yet, this psalm openly displays that a life lived apart from God is a tragedy not only now but also for all eternity.

What does this psalm teach us about prayer? How can it enable us to seek God? You must remember that the Psalms are prayers. Psalms is the inspired prayer guide of God's people. They help us learn how to communicate with God. What lessons do we learn about prayer from **Psalm 1**?

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## Psalm 1 shows you how prayer can enable you to live a godly life.

Prayer can enable you to live a godly life. It is a powerful tool to help you live a life that is pleasing to God. In fact, you can't live a godly life apart from prayer. Prayer is ordained by God to draw us to Him that we can experience His presence, power, and transformation.

Again, it is crucial that you remember that the Psalms are prayers. This psalm is a prayer to God concerning the two lifestyles, the two ways of life – godliness and wickedness. In this prayer, David is pleading for God's help to live a godly life. You can use this psalm in the same way. It presents a model for seeking God's help to live godly. How can prayer be a tool for helping you live a godly life?

*When you pray, express your commitments to the Lord.*

David starts by stating what a godly person does not do, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful" (**Psalm 1:1**). The godly person does not come under the influence of the wicked. David is saying to God:

I will not listen to their counsel or advice;  
I will not fellowship with them or seek to imitate them;  
I will not allow their lifestyle to characterize the way that I live my life.  
He declares his determination to separate from what is wicked. He will not allow it to have influence over him.

Yet, at the same time, he makes known his commitment to saturate himself with God's Word, "But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (**Psalm 1:2**). He loves God's Word. He fills his life with it, meditating on it day and night. He reflects on God's Word in the course of daily activities and not just during a quiet time. He declares to God that He wants to fill his life with God's Word rather than the counsel of the wicked.

In order to live a godly life, express your commitments to the Lord. Openly and boldly, declare your commitment to avoid evil and fill your life with His Word. As you look around and see the evil around you, make known to God your desire to reject evil influence and to saturate your life with His Word. Express that this is your heart desire. David prays, "Lord, I don't want to be like the wicked around me; I don't want their influence to taint my life; fill me with Your Word. Saturate your life with my Word. Let it be the guide of my life."

Why is this so important? First, it provides you with accountability. When you pray this way, you are making a commitment. You're giving concrete expression to what You will do before and for the Lord. By doing this, you're committing to do this. It's practical standard, a goal that you are seeking to fulfill.

Second, you can plead with God on the basis on your commitment. Use your commitment to plead for God's power and grace. When you express your desire to reject the influence of the ungodly, plead with God to give you the wisdom and power to do it. When you make known your delight in God's Word, ask Him to help you saturate your life with His Word. Call on Him to help you meditate day and night in it. When you announce your commitment to the Lord, plead for His empowering to accomplish it. You can't expect God's help and power if you are not willing to commit yourself to Him.

*When you pray, express your contentment in the Lord.*

In **Psalm 1:3**, David states that the godly person is sustained by the Lord, "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." This is a vivid picture. It was especially vivid for those who first heard it and read it. Where did David live? He lived in a rugged, hot, and dry climate. To see a tree that did not wither and always had fruit would be a blessing. It would also be an amazing sight.

Yet, David compares the godly person – the one who surrenders to God and seeks to

obey Him – to this tree. In a world of wickedness and harshness, God will sustain His people. No matter what the godly person faces, God will continue to bless him and sustain him. He will continue to pour out His blessings on those who know him and love him. He continually supplies His people with all that they need, “But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (**Philippians 4:19**).

At the same time, the godly person is fruitful for God. He does not wither in the midst of adversity or suffering. This is due to God’s sustaining power. God blesses the Kingdom labors of His people. We can know for certain that all we do for Him is never in vain but is used and will be honored.

In this verse, David expresses his contentment in the Lord. Wicked people do prosper. But, it is nothing like God’s blessings on His own people. Blessings of the wicked are temporal. The blessings of the righteous are lasting and eternal. The prosperity of the wicked cannot compare to God’s blessing on those who know Him and love Him. There is no substitute for God’s blessings. Nothing that the world offers can substitute for what God gives.

Why is it important to express your contentment to God? It keeps you from envying wicked people. Yes, they do prosper. However, it’s nothing like what you have due to your relationship with God. God’s blessings in your life are much greater than those things that the lost have. Meditate on this truth:

They do not have a God like you do – merciful, kind, loving, good, gracious, power and righteous.

They do not have a Bible like you do – a guide, a lamp, and a light for your life in this world.

They do not have a continual supply of strength and power – the powerful, sustaining Holy Spirit who indwells you.

They do not have a source of hope and comfort like you do.

They do have the hope to be fruitful in every circumstance of life.

I could go on. Nevertheless, this shows that you have much more than the wicked have.

For this reason, express your contentment in the Lord and what he provides. You will honor God primarily. Yet, it will also set you free from envy. It can deliver you from being caught up in the materialism of the world.

*When you pray, express your confidence in the Lord.*

In this psalm, David expresses his confidence in God. He declares with **confidence that God will judge the wicked**. In **Psalm 1:4**, David provides an interesting contrast between the godly man and the wicked man, “The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.” David emphasizes that the wicked are not like the godly. **Psalm 1:4** literally states, “Not so the wicked.” David draws a hard distinction between the godly and the wicked. The wicked man has no claim to **Psalm 1:3**. He is not like the rooted, sustained, and fruitful tree. He is like the chaff – useless, rootless, and fruitless. With all his supposed power and prosperity, he is nothing at all.

God will make sure that the wicked man will receive a righteous judgment, “Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous” (**Psalm 1:5**). God will judge with a righteous judgment. The wicked will not escape. They may escape in this life. But, they will give account and face the total, righteous judgment of the living God, “the way of the ungodly shall perish” (**Psalm 1:6**). The wicked man will have a wasted life and an eternity of hopelessness.

At the same time, David announces his **confidence that God will secure the righteous**. He writes, “For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous” (**Psalm 1:6**). The word “know” in this verse means more than just factual knowledge. It refers to an intimate knowledge. God is intimately involved in the lives of His people. What David is saying is that God powerfully works in the life of those who know Him. He guides. He sustains. He blesses. He strengthens. He leads them to His heavenly home and rest. David declares his confidence in God. God will bless me and

secure me no matter what I face. He will secure me for this life and eternity to come.

We need a balance in our prayer lives. We do need to bring our complaints and cares to the Lord, "Casting all you care on him, for he careth for you" (**1 Peter 5:7**). However, we also need to express our confidence in the Lord. We must have a balance between our complaints and our confidence in Him. Cast them all at His feet. Give all those things that worry you and aggravate you to Him.

However, tell Him that you're confident in His ability to deal with it. Declare your confidence in God's ability to sustain you, bless you, encourage you, and make things right. By doing this you will honor God. Yet, it will also keep your faith from sinking. Expressing your confidence in Him is a faith building exercise. Declare His Word to Him; express that you believe what He says in His Word.

## **Psalm 1 gives you a dynamic model for praying for the lost.**

This psalm gives us insight on how to pray for the lost. It declares that there are only two ways – the way of the godly and the way of the ungodly. A person must make a choice. He must decide – God or himself, the way of godliness or ungodliness, a secure eternity or a hopeless eternity.

You can use the truths of this psalm as points for prayer. It can help you pray for those who need Jesus. What does **Psalm 1** teach us about praying for the lost?

*Pray that this person will see how blessed a godly person is.*

This psalm declares that God blesses the godly man. The godly lifestyle is sweeter and better than the pursuits of the wicked. God's blessings are better than anything that the world offers. Plead that the lost person will understand this. Ask the Holy Spirit to enable him or her to see the truth of **Psalm 1:1-3**. Pray that he or she will know that the fruit of sin cannot compare to the blessings God offers.

*Plead that this person will see the uselessness of a wicked lifestyle.*

He or she must see that their way is rootless and fruitless. Living a life of sin is a wasted life. That's why David writes, "the way of the godly shall perish" (**Psalm 1:6**). A life lived for sin and self is a wasted life. It means nothing now and nothing in eternity. It's like building sandcastles on a beach. When the tide comes in, it wipes out the sandcastles. You have nothing left. It's as if you never did anything. This is the future of the wicked. Everything they did will be swept away. It will mean nothing. Plead that this person will be convicted concerning this truth. Ask God to grant him or her a sense of despair and hopelessness that will lead him or her to seek God. Pray that the Spirit will reveal the foolishness of the belief that living as a Christian hinders you from enjoying and getting the most out of life. Ask the Spirit to root out the idea that living the Christian life is a waste.

*Ask that this person will be convicted of the certainty of judgment.*

**Psalm 1:5** declares that God will judge the wicked. They will give account to God. They will answer to God. They will also be found guilty and sentenced to eternal damnation in hell. Their way will perish; they will not escape. This will be a reality one day. It will happen. Because of this, pray that the person will be convicted about the certainty of God's judgment. Ask the Holy Spirit to flood this person's conscience with the holy terror of His judgment. Plead that they will know that they face an inescapable judgment and guilty sentence by God. Pray that this will move the person to seek God through faith in Jesus Christ.

*Pray that this person will see the deceptive and destructive power of sin.*

**Psalm 1:1** reveals that sin can lead a person further and further away from God and His truth. Notice the progression in **Psalm 1:1** – walks, stands, and sits. As a person yields to sin, to evil influence, it hardens him. It causes him to be more settled his rebellion toward God. This verse teaches that people living in sin go from bad to worse. Their hearts become more steeled in their rebellion toward God. Their lives become more filled with love for and

attachment to their sin. To an unsaved person, his or her sin and lifestyle may seem wonderful and exciting. Yet, it is a fast track away from God and into eternal damnation in hell. Sin is deceptive and destructive, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (**Proverbs 14:12**). Plead that this person will see how deceived that he or she is. Pray that he or she will understand the devastating consequences of his or her choice to live apart from God. Ask the Spirit of God to destroy his or her complacency in sin and rebellion.

*Plead that this person will know how great and good God is.*

This psalm gives us powerful and precious insight into who God is. The lost person needs to see how great and good God is. Pray that the Spirit will tear down the false ideas that he or she has about God. Plead that the Spirit will open his or her eyes to the truth of who God is. Ask that the lost person will see God’s way of salvation through Christ and the blessedness of following Jesus.

## **Psalm 1 reveals our need to adore God’s righteousness.**

Although the word “righteousness” is not used in this psalm, that characteristic of God is exalted in this prayer. God’s righteousness means that God always does what is right. He Himself is the standard of what is right. He always does what is right. He cannot do otherwise. He would not be God if he acted in any other way.

The Bible declares that God always acts in righteousness – that He always does what is right:

“He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he” (**Deuteronomy 32:4**).

“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (**Genesis 18:25**)

“The statutes of the LORD are right” (**Psalms 19:8**).

“I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right” (**Isaiah 45:19**).

We ought to adore God for His righteousness. We should continually thank and praise God for the fact that He always does what is right.

Many times, we ask the question, “Why?” Why do the wicked prosper? Why do the guilty escape justice? Why do bad things happen to good people? It is normal and necessary to ask these questions. It’s crucial that we bring these questions to God.

As you read and study the Psalms, you will see that this was the passionate practice of the psalmists. They asked the same questions. They passionately poured out their hearts concerning these questions.

Yet, they also balanced this practice with praise for God’s righteousness. They did ask these questions. Yet, they ended trusting God’s righteousness, adoring Him for this. An example of this is **Psalm 73**. Listen to His complaint, “They (the wicked) are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men” (**73:5**). The psalmist was jealous of the wicked. He could not understand their prosperity. Their prosperity only made them more defiant against God (**73:8-12**).

Yet, listen as he continues to pray, “Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down unto destruction” (**73:17-18**). He remembered the righteousness of God! The psalmist confesses that God would bless and secure him (**73:23-26**).

**Psalm 1** reveals the same truth. The righteous God will call people to account and perfectly judge them. He will reward accordingly and they will not escape. Nevertheless, the righteous God will also bless and sustain His people. He will secure them in this life and bring them to heaven for an eternity of reward and blessing.

When things aren’t right, bring your questions to God. Ask Him the tough questions. Yet, at the same time, adore God for His righteousness. Praise Him that He will always do right and will make things right. If

we do not do this, it is a matter of unbelief and not faith. Pray yourself from despair to faith, from frustration to a calm trust by adoring the righteousness of God.

## Psalm 1 teaches you how to praise God.

**Psalm 1** teaches us much about the character of our God. We are to take these truths about Him and turn them into praise to Him. The following are some truths from **Psalm 1** that you can use to praise God:

- He is the God who blesses (1:1).
- He is the God who delivers us from evil influence (1:1).
- He is the God who is opposed to the counsel of the ungodly, the rebellion of sinners, and the scorn of the wicked (1:1).
- He is the God who has given us His delightful Word (1:2).
- He is the God who has revealed to us His truth (1:2).
- He is the God who is worthy to be meditated on day and night through His Word (1:2).
- He is the God who continually supplies all we need (1:3).
- He is the God who enables us to bear fruit (1:3).
- He is the God who sustains us in all the circumstances of life (1:3).
- He is the God who prospers us in our labors for Him (1:3).
- He is the God who is not disturbed by the prosperity of the wicked (1:4).
- He is the God who sees all, even the wickedness of the evil (1:4).
- He is the God who will judge the wicked in righteousness (1:5).
- He is the God who will not allow Himself or His Word to be blasphemed forever (1:5).
- He is the God who is intimately involved in the lives of the righteous (1:6).
- He is the God who leads His people in the right and just way (1:6).
- He is the God who never abandons His people (1:6).
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- He is the God who will bring the evil of the wicked to an end (1:6).
- He the God who brings the rebellion and prosperity of the wicked to an end (1:6).

## Jesus In Psalm 1

As a Jew, Jesus read and was taught the Psalms. He sang them; the Psalms were Jesus' hymnal. He also prayed them. Jesus is the embodiment of **Psalm 1**. As you look at His life, you can see these things evident in His life.

As Christians, we are called to conformity to Christ. Use **Psalm 1** to praise Jesus and to ask that you will be made like Him.

Lord Jesus, the Father blessed you. You never walked in the counsel of the ungodly. You never stood in the way of sinners. You never sat in the seat of the scornful.

*Make me like You, Jesus. Deliver me from the influence of the wicked. Help me to avoid their counsel, reject their rebellion, and guard me from accepting their perspective.*

Lord Jesus, You delighted in the law of the LORD. In His law, You meditated day and night.

*Empower me to delight in the Word and to meditate in its truths daily. Grant me insight that I might become like You and walk in obedience to the Father like You did.*

Lord Jesus, You were rooted in the Father's love and power. He supplied all your needs. He empowered you to bring forth fruit. He sustained You in all that you had to face on this earth. He empowered you to do all His will. You were successful in doing all of the Father's will.

*Jesus, I want these same things to be true of me. Deepen my roots in the Father's love and power. Empower me to bring forth fruit. Sustain me in all that I face. Empower me to do all of the will of my heavenly Father.*

Lord Jesus, You taught that there are two ways

– the way of the godly and the ungodly. You never backed down from this. You taught the truth with compassion and without compromise.

*Grant me the strength to do the same. Deliver me from compromising with evil. Set me free from accepting the world's wisdom. I ask that I will be grounded in Your truth and will make it known to others.*

Lord Jesus, the Father had a plan for Your life. You walked daily in that plan. You never veered from it. Everything in your life was governed by His plan.

*Make the same true in my life. I confess that the Father has a plan for me. Empower me to walk in it. Deliver me from veering away from His plan for my life. I want everything in my life to be in accordance with the Father's will.*

Lord Jesus, You made it clear that rejecting You is like building on sand. It will not stand. The way of the ungodly shall perish. You were clear about this.

*Lord Jesus, help me to point others to You by my words and my deeds. Empower me to pray for those who need You. Deliver me from being complacent to those who need You because they will surely perish apart from You.*

## Praying 1 Thessalonians 1 For Your Church

The following are Scripture prayers that you can use to pray for your church. They are based on **1 Thessalonians 1**. This church had become a model church to others. Paul praised it for the example that they had set. This should encourage us to study and pray this chapter over our own churches.

Father, I plead in Jesus' name that \_\_\_\_\_ Church will be characterized by faith, love, and patient waiting for Jesus. I ask that this will be evident to all around us. I pray that this will be the testimony of those around us about us (**1:3**).

Father, I ask that \_\_\_\_\_ Church will know that we belong to the Father, that we are His precious people. I pray that we will respond to Him with love and obedience (**1:4**).

Father, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ Church will love the good news of Jesus Christ. I ask that we will have confidence in the gospel. Renew our conviction and assurance that the gospel is the only hope for sinners (**1:5**).

Father, I pray that we will be followers of Jesus, becoming like Him in word and deed. Transform us into the image of Jesus Christ (**1:6**).

Father, I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ Church will receive Your Word with joy and with a commitment to obey no matter what the cost (**1:6**).

Father, I ask in Jesus' name that \_\_\_\_\_ Church will be an example and blessing to the other churches around us. I pray that this church will bless and encourage the other churches around us. Teach us that we are not competitors but co-laborers with the churches around us (**1:7**).

Father, I plead that we will make the good news of Jesus known to this whole area. I ask that we would clearly and powerfully proclaim the gospel here and any other places we go. Empower us to reach the lost with the gospel of Your Son Jesus (**1:8**).

Father, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ Church will worship You in spirit and in truth. I ask You to tear down all our idols. Empower us to love You and serve You above everything else (**1:9**).

Father, I plead that \_\_\_\_\_ Church will wait for Your Son from heaven with patience and expectation. Empower us to be faithful until You return (**1:10**).

Father, thank You for delivering us from the wrath to come by Jesus Christ. I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ Church will love Jesus and will praise, exalt, and make Him known (**1:10**).

# Waiting On God's Healing

Praying for healing requires patience and expectation. We pray believing God to heal. Sometimes that healing manifests immediately. Sometimes it takes place over a period of time. Sometimes we see healing only after a long period of prayer.

The following are Scripture prayers that you can pray as you wait on God to heal. These Scripture prayers are based on what the Word teaches about waiting.

Father, I cry out to You with my voice. I lay my request before You to heal \_\_\_\_\_. I now wait in expectation (**Psalm 5:2**).

Father, I wait before You in prayer. Enable \_\_\_\_\_ to be strong and to take heart as he/she waits for Your healing power (**Psalm 27:14**).

Father, I wait in hope, believing You to heal \_\_\_\_\_. You are his/her help and shield (**Psalm 33:20**).

Father, I wait for You to heal \_\_\_\_\_. You will answer, O LORD my God. I believe You will touch \_\_\_\_\_ with Your power (**Psalm 38:15**).

My Father, My Strength, I watch for You to heal \_\_\_\_\_ (**Psalm 59:9**).

Father, I wait patiently for You to heal \_\_\_\_\_; I believe You to hear my cry and to turn to him/her in Your healing mercy and power (**Psalm 40:1**).

I wait for You, Lord, to heal \_\_\_\_\_. My soul waits on You and in Your Word, I put my hope for \_\_\_\_\_'s healing. You are the healing God. Your nature is to heal. You have made this known in Your Word. I believe this and wait for You to heal \_\_\_\_\_ (**Psalm 130:5**).



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