

DISCUSSION IDEAS
THE BLESSED LIFE

Psalm 1

April 23rd, 2017

Page 1 of 5

**“A BIBLE THAT’S FALLING APART
USUALLY BELONGS TO SOMEONE WHO ISN’T.”**

~ Charles Haddon Spurgeon ~

♦ **DISCUSSION POINT ONE: HOW CAN WE DECIDE WHAT IS TRUTH.**

Assuming that you have at least one opinion, how can you tell if what you believe is true?

What were you were taught as a child that might color your views?

What do your friends believe?

Example: Many pilots and their passengers have died because they believed that they could determine by feelings which way was "up" while flying in the clouds. It is a fact that your feelings of which way is up are totally unreliable in that situation.

Now read Psalm 1:1.

In this verse, what three things does the author make clear about who influences us?

What, specifically, is God warning us to avoid?

Think about the word "wicked" in this verse.

Can you think of an example of a very attractive, but totally false, influence on your thinking?

How can we keep from being influenced by false teachings or beliefs?

Maybe you have listened to Bible teachers and preachers on the radio, TV, or other media, who sound very convincing. But how can you be sure that they are correct?

Check out Acts 17:10-11. Why were the Bereans considered to be "more honorable"?

Discuss Psalm 1:2.

How does that compare to the actions of the Bereans?

What things can you do to make God's perspective part of your life and an anchor to your opinions?

♦ **DISCUSSION POINT TWO: TRUE PROSPERITY.**

Talk about the image described in Psalm 1:3.

In what ways could your life be like that of a healthy, thriving tree?

How does the idea of being near streams of water apply to our lives?

What actually is meditation? How do we go about doing that?

What is the measure of "prosperity" in this context?

DISCUSSION IDEAS
THE BLESSED LIFE

Psalm 1

April 23rd, 2017

Page 2 of 5

♦ **DISCUSSION POINT THREE: SATURATING OUR MINDS WITH GOD'S WORD.**

List some specific actions which we can choose in order to saturate our minds with God's perspective.

Who do we trust to teach the Word correctly?

What are some ways to avoid being "sucked in" by the influence of those who teach a distorted interpretation of God's Word? How can we check out their true beliefs?

NOW, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT THIS WEEK?

If you do not already have one, make a specific plan.

How helpful would it be to ask someone to hold you accountable to follow your plan?

♦ **FOR PRAYER:**

Our Grace Church Elders: Pray for our elders as they continue to guide Grace Church, always seeking God's will.

Shelter Valley: Continue to uphold the Shelter Valley believers, and the GCC team that serves there.

Pray for Scott and Leslie Stevens as Scott heads up this ministry.

Pray for the developing local leaders and for continued growth in understanding among those who attend about God's Plan and what it really means to follow Him.

Home Groups: Pray for our home groups.

Pray for the leaders to grow in understanding and skill so that those in each group will truly grow in their walk in the Spirit and in true agape love.

Pray that more folks will take part in a home group and be encouraged as a result.

Pray that each one of us would seek to learn how to use our individual spiritual gift(s) to build up the Body of Christ.

Gettises: Pray for the Gettis family in San Jose, Costa Rica.

Praise God for:

- David's first week of working at ESEPA. Everyone is making him feel very warmly welcomed.

DISCUSSION IDEAS
THE BLESSED LIFE

Psalm 1

April 23rd, 2017

Page 3 of 5

- He is excited to be able to tackle various immediate technology needs, including improving the seminary's frustrating Internet speed (shared by professors, staff, and students) and automating the student registration process, which will save the Academic Dean a lot of time and frustration and provide more accurate and up-to-date information.
- David is also grateful for daily opportunities to practice his Spanish and will be starting Greek I (in Spanish) in a few weeks!
- Good health for everyone.

Please pray for:

- Finding a church home soon.
- Building solid relationships.
- Continued faith and patience during a time of learning and waiting on God in many areas (learning new language/culture/career, making friends, obtaining residency, purchasing vehicle, etc.).

Pearsons: Continue to pray for John and Bobbie Pearson. Their son, John Caleb is on hospice care with advanced cancer. He and his wife Cheri are now staying at a rental condo near John and Bobbie in Forest, VA. He is bedridden and on two meds for pain control. John and Bobbie take a turn in the around the clock family schedule for sitting with him. Thanks for prayers during this stressful time.

Barangonan Island: Let's continue to pray for the Lord's love and power to be seen in Barangonan Island.

Continue to pray for wisdom and encouragement for the Ingvoldstads and the Binders as they adjust to a changed way of life.

Uphold the island church leaders in prayer. Remember, God wants YOU to be a part of what He is doing.

Pray the Elders in Training: Eddie and Ted, the teacher geeks, Jeremy who has the gift of discernment to protect the flock, and Sid who leads in outreach to other islands. Pray that the evil one will not attack them.

Continue to uphold the Tagbanwa believers who go to a neighboring island every Friday to teach about God. Pray too for the hearers to respond.

Continue to pray for strength and endurance for those who go, as well as understanding for those who hear.

Thank God and uphold in prayer the "TFG" (Time For God) group of children and young folks who meet every day!

DISCUSSION IDEAS
THE BLESSED LIFE

Psalm 1

April 23rd, 2017

Page 4 of 5

Pray with the strong, self-motivated women's group as they study God's Word and grow to be mature believers.

Persecuted Believers:

Let's not forget to uphold our fellow believers around the world who are experiencing real and intense persecution for following Jesus.

THIS WEEK:

1. **Laos:** Four Hmong Christian families in Laos were driven from their village because of their faith. They have continued to share Jesus even while camping in a rice field.

In early February, village authorities confronted the Christians, insisting that they renounce their Christian faith. When the families refused, they were expelled from the village. The group of about 28 men, women and children ended up camping in a rice field, where they were soon visited by a curious Khmu family from a neighboring village.

The Hmong Christians eagerly told the Khmu family about the great creator God who is all-powerful over the spirits and who sent his son for them. The Khmu family came to faith in Christ, even inviting a VOM partner to visit their village and share more about Jesus.

Recently, government officials visited the Hmong families and later told local authorities that the families have a right to believe whatever they wish. Pray that these believers will be allowed back into their village.

2. **Iran:** Several Christian men face charges related to evangelism in Tehran, and two are still in prison.

Pastor Victor, Amin Nader Afshar and Kavian were arrested at the pastor's house during a Christmas celebration in 2014 and released on bail in early 2015. Pastor Victor was charged with evangelism, acting against national security and conducting illegal Christian gatherings.

Pastor Victor's son, Ramiel, was then arrested at a picnic in August 2016 along with Amin and three others. Two of the men, Amin and Hadi Askary, are still in prison.

All five have been charged with acting against national security and organizing and creating house churches, and Ramiel faces additional charges for propagating the teachings of his father.

DISCUSSION IDEAS
THE BLESSED LIFE

Psalm 1

April 23rd, 2017

Page 5 of 5

Pray that the two still in prison will be released, that bail money will be restored and that the case against Pastor Victor will be dropped. Pray that the judge and other officials will rule justly and come to know the truth of Christ that these men are proclaiming.

- 3. Mali: There is a shortage of Bibles in the Sikasso Region of southern Mali, and the Bibles are desperately needed because of an increasing number of new Christian believers.**

In the past, Islamic extremists destroyed Bibles first when attacking villages. VOM recently replaced 1,200 Bibles, but that number represents only a fraction of what is needed in the area.

Brother Amadou Barry, a pastor and former imam, placed his faith in Christ after a pastor gave him a Bible in Arabic. He had read in the Quran that Jesus, son of Mary, is above all, and he saw that confirmed in Philippians 2 and Colossians 2. Unsettled by these Bible verses, he returned to the pastor who had given him the Bible and told him he believed Jesus is God.

Please pray for the courage of pastors engaged in door-to-door evangelism, and pray that they will receive adequate literature and resources to replace the Bibles that are destroyed.