

Day by Day - Psalm 1 **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

Notes from the Sermon

The 1970's Rock Opera *Godspell* has a song with a simple lyric that has caught my attention.

Day by day
Oh Dear Lord
Three things I pray
To see thee more clearly
Love thee more dearly
Follow thee more nearly
Day by day

I have since learned that this was a prayer written by 13th Century Bishop Richard of Chichester. A simple yet profound prayer, and one that is so appropriate as we enter the New Year. This really is the goal for followers of Jesus, to continually grow in our vision and knowledge of Jesus, grow deeper in love with Him, and walk more closely with Him.

The first Psalm is more than a simple song, it sets the trajectory for the entire books of Psalms and Proverbs. This ancient poem written to sing pictures two paths with two hikes that have two destinations. The path of the wicked leads to meaninglessness and judgment. But the path of the righteous leads to permanence, strength, and blessing. Its as if the Psalm is continually calling us and telling us that no matter where we are on the trail, the fork in the road is always right ahead. So whether 2025 was a year of spiritual health and blessing, or if you hiked your life right into a ditch, as we begin 2026 you are looking at a trail with two divergent paths right in front of you.

Well, of course, we want to walk in the path that leads to being like a tree planted by a river, always bearing fruit, and prospering in whatever we do. So how do we walk this trail. The Psalm gives us an incredible clue in verse 2. "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night." The Psalm invites the reader and singer to two things involving the Word of God. First, to delight in it, to find joy and beauty so deeply that it stirs affections. Second, to meditate day and night. In other words, the call is to love God and His Word, and out of that love to build a rhythm of looking to Scripture to hear His voice and engage a conversation with Jesus.

There is something about January 1 rolling around. Don't believe me, just visit your gym this week or try to buy stuff in the health food aisle at your grocery store. Yet, for most of us, resolutions have short lives. This is also true in our spiritual lives, we often make promises about reading our Bible, praying, getting to church (on time), and so forth. Yet, resolutions generally have a short shelf life and are often driven out of a sense of duty or guilt. What we actually need is to have our affections stirred and walk a path of delight in knowing our God. The way to do this is through rhythms built on what theologians call the means of grace. These are spiritual practices and disciplines given by Jesus and through Scripture for intimacy with God and our Spiritual growth. They are given out of love as an invitation to see Jesus more clearly, love Jesus more dearly, and follow Jesus more nearly. And they are to be rhythms in life, creating a mind set of focus on Jesus "day and night."

We are talking about rhythms rather than resolutions. Resolutions are promises made for a fresh start, but rhythms are practices we develop over a long time, even a lifetime. We break resolutions by January 15 and then feel guilty next year when we realize we are in the same place we were the previous New Year. But development of the rhythms of grace begin with the reality that we are loved and accepted, if we are children of God through belief in Jesus, and therefore there is no failure or guilt in life. This stirs our love for God and desire to know Him, and so we hear the invitation. But we do have a role in walking, hiking, moving in the direction of delight in God and rhythmic giving ourselves to these practices.

So this morning we will look at five of these practices. These rhythms of grace are actually interwoven since they create a place of communication with Jesus and build trust in Him. Our encouragement is to find a rhythm that works for you. If they are new, start simply, but seek consistency. Find a daily time to open the Scriptures and read. There are all sorts of plans and devotional materials you can find to help in this. The best advice I can give is to buy yourself *The ESV Study Bible* to help you understand what you are reading. Second, build a rhythm of prayer. We tend to make prayer too complicated, when in reality is just a conversation between a child and his or her daddy. Just talk to God. Praise Him, repent of sin, ask him for your and other people's needs, and then yield yourself to His glory and purposes. Third, make sure you rest and Sabbath. In other words, be intentional to protect Sunday mornings, to set aside times to be with family, to sleep, and to detach from your work. Fourth, sing. Build a good playlist of worship songs, and sing these in the shower, in your car, with your family. And fifth, set aside a time or two a month to fast. Skip a couple meals and set aside part of a day to listen to God and pray. These are pathways to Jesus, but we do have to walk, to hike, to be intentional about which trail we take.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Jeremiah 17	Jeremiah 18	Jeremiah 19	Jeremiah 20	Jeremiah 21	Jeremiah 22	Jeremiah 23

Reading from this past week's sermon: Psalm 1

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Judges 1:1-2:5

Family Worship

Song - *Behold Our God*

<https://youtu.be/Gqrlj3Lkf58?si=EXVHBqOJfw5rn1lp>

Gospel Project

Unit: Hope at Home

Story: God Brought His People Home

Big Picture Question: How did God plan to fix what sin broke?

Answer: Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah.

Scripture: Ezra 1-3

New City Catechism

Question 1: What is our only hope in life and death?

Answer: That we are not our own but belong to God.

Verse: Romans 14:7-8

Psalm 1

- What is the difference between the two paths shown in Psalm 1. Which have you been hiking recently?
- What is the difference between resolutions and spiritual rhythms?
- What are the five rhythms of grace mentioned in the sermon? What is a step you could take in the coming weeks to build each of these into a rhythm? Which do you need to give intentionality to in the coming weeks?
- How does the prayer of Richard of Chichester help us remember the purposes of the rhythms of grace and keep them from just being religious duties?

Prayer

*Pray that we all would build healthy Spiritual rhythms in our lives that would lead us to see Jesus more clearly, love Him more dearly, and follow Him more nearly.

*Pray for our MomCo ministry that loves and serves mothers in our community.