

Devotion

From the Storehouse series we discovered that ...

God's people are to bring all that's useful to a place reserved for the benefit of the community - a Storehouse.

¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it."

Malachi 3:10 NIV ⁱ

While having an understanding that God has created us *in Christ* to do good works that He had prepared for us long ago, we are now facing the truth that our commitment to God should bring us into a time of training and development into servants so we can grow up to be like Jesus.

The leaders of the church are "... to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." **Ephesians 4:12-13**

According to the ROOTED discipleship experience there are **seven rhythms** to the Believers faith experience. (BTW MPBC will be starting this group on Monday, March 14th at 6:00 p.m.)

The number **seven** has a strong biblical presence.

Scripture uses the number to emphasize God's perfection and completion. Here are a few examples.

- God created our week to have **seven** days and the **seventh** day was the Holiest and most sacred of all the days.

- In Matthew 13 Jesus is quoted as giving **seven** parables. ⁱⁱ
- **Seven** Psalms are ascribed to David in the New Testament. ⁱⁱⁱ
- In the book of Revelation there are **seven** churches, **seven** angels to the **seven** churches, **seven** seals, **seven** trumpet plagues, **seven** thunders and the **seven** last plagues. The first resurrection of the dead takes place at the **7th** trumpet, completing salvation for the Church.

The DISCIPLINE of Faith Living

The first rhythm or discipline in developing a stronger image of Jesus is to spend time with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit personally.

We begin with **Devotion**.

To be “devoted” to anything requires one to *give all or a large part of one’s time or resources* to that thing or person.

Also, the act of devotion is characterized by *love or loyalty*.^{iv}

Let’s look at the very first Psalm in scripture.

Psalm 1:1-3

*“Blessed is the one
 who does not walk in step with the wicked
 or stand in the way that sinners take
 or sit in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
 and who meditates on his law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
 which yields its fruit in season
 and whose leaf does not wither—
 whatever they do prospers.”*

About the Psalms.

Both the scope of the subject matter and the arrangement of the whole collection of poetry strongly suggest that each Psalm was viewed by its final editors as a guide for the life of faith in accordance with the Law, the Prophets and the Writings.^v

The Blessed Life – the life God has chosen for us in Christ!

Psalm 1 lays out a blessing for those who's devotion is for God and His ways. The psalter is a devotional author giving food for meditation and thought for the soul, and a stirring of desire for right living – or the virtues of God.

Starts with AVOIDANCE of sin.

Psalm 1:1-3

*“Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,*

You are blessed if you avoid keeping the company of those who have no time for God.

Don't walk, stand or sit with those who are sinning as a preferred way of life.

In more real terms for our understanding,

- Don't (walk in step) pattern your life as those who live in darkness.
- Don't (stand in the way) take the banner or philosophy of sinful people.
- Don't (sit in the company) enjoy socializing with people who disregard God's ways.

² *but [the one] whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
and who meditates on his law day and night. Psalm 1:2*

Includes DEVOTION to God

If you love God's words, are devoted or loyal to His ways, and are willing to pour your vast resources of time and energy into getting to know Him, you will have a blessed life.

*³That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers."*

The life devoted to God

- Has a **fresh new** beginning (*planted by streams of water*),
- Is **consistent** in fruitful living (*yields its fruit in season*),
- Finds **endurance** through life's trying times (*leaf does not wither*),
- Whatever challenges or tasks that lie ahead **God's people will find success** in His time (*whatever they do prospers*).

Not so for the WICKED!

Living a life that is **not** devoted to God can lead to a path of temptation and desire that steals away our love and loyalty to God – this puts us on the road of sin and darkness.

1 Kings 11:4

"As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been."

The final three verses of Psalm 1 confirm the teaching of destruction for those who have no devotion to God. They are referred to as "the wicked".

*⁴Not so the wicked!
They are like chaff
that the wind blows away.*

⁵ *Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment (but will fall), nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous (will have no place in the assembly).*

⁶ *For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous (God takes care of those who seek Him and find Him), but the way of the wicked leads to destruction. Psalm 1:4-6*

Wow! The question now will be a no-brainer – Are you interested in a blessed life or a life of destruction?

- Prayerfully seek out the Lord, repent of the sin in your life, and surrender to His loving and gracious power over the darkness of this world.
- Commit all of your being to Him who loves you.
- And be loyal to Him and His Covenant to us.
- Then start your journey of getting to know the life that God has chosen for you!

Then let it be to you as the Psalmist said of the Israelites of old.

Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

⁸ *They would not be like their ancestors— a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him. Psalm 78:7-8*

ⁱ All scripture references will be using the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.

ⁱⁱ Matthew 13:3-9, 24-33, 44-47

ⁱⁱⁱ Psalm 2, 16, 32, 41, 69, 95 and 109

^{iv} Merriam-Webster.com

^v NIV Study Bible, Copyright © 1985, 1995, 2002, 2008, 2011 by Zondervan.