

# Principles for Spiritual Success

Lesson for Sunday, January 8, 2023

## INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Review the vision...then review the four parts...
  - Ask: How do we worship God well? *Allow for some discussion...*
  - Refer to Matthew 22 – We are to love Him with all our heart, soul and mind. How do we do that?
- ⇒ Connect worshipping God and loving Him well with our relationship to His Word. The point being that we cannot worship Him if we do not know Him. How do we know Him? Through His Word.
- ⇒ One's spiritual life will not rise above their knowledge, understanding, appreciation and application of Scripture in their life. Spiritual success cannot be experienced apart from the Bible.
- ⇒ Here's the important point to notice: You can be blessed! Read Psalm 1:1 (just the first word).
  - The word "blessed" means blessed of God. It describes the life that has been divinely given a sense of contentment and happiness.
  - Is that what you want in 2023? The rest of Psalm 1 tells us how that can become a reality.

## OUTLINE:

1. The Principle of **Separation** (vs. 1)
  - a. Separation from **People**: Verse 1 describes three types of people. Notice how the descriptions become progressively worse as we work through the verse.
    - i. The **Ungodly**: Literally this is the person who lives without God, or the individual who lives as if God doesn't exist. We would call this individual a secularist.
    - ii. The **Sinner**: These are people who intentionally practice sin.
    - iii. The **Scornful**: A scorner is one who mocks and ridicules others. In this context, it would be people who mock and ridicule God and His followers. We are seeing more and more of these in recent times.
  - b. Separation in our **Position**: Notice that we are to be mindful of how we relate to these kinds of people.
    - i. We **Walk**: Walk is a word often used in Scripture to describe one's lifestyle. There ought to be a difference between how God's people live compared to the rest of the world.
    - ii. We **Stand**: To take a stand with someone is to identify with their position. We belong to God. Our identity is in Christ and we are to align ourselves with Him. This requires that we think biblically about the issues of our day.
    - iii. We **Sit**: We usually sit with others in order to fellowship with them. As Christians we are not to fellowship with the world. Our primary fellowship is with the people of God, specifically within our local church.
  - c. Application: Watch your **relationships** (cf. Proverbs 13:20).
    - i. The principle of verse 1 is that if we want to experience spiritual success, we must work to avoid these kinds of people.
    - ii. This doesn't mean that we isolate ourselves within the walls of the church. We have been commissioned by Jesus to reach these very people! But we must actively work against allowing them to influence our lives and our thinking.
    - iii. Discuss: How are often influenced by these kinds of people? *Media, co-workers, etc.*
2. The Principle of **Study** (vs. 2)
  - a. Our success is directly related to our time in God's Word. This is the point of verse 2.
  - b. Note these key words:

- i. Delight: This means to take pleasure in. Christians are to take pleasure in the Word of God.
    - ii. Meditate: Pondering something over and over in our minds. Remember the illustration of the cow chewing her cud (rumination)? Read Proverbs 23:7.
  - c. Application Thoughts:
    - i. Do you delight in your time in God's Word? *Evaluate why or why not...*
    - ii. How should this impact our attitude toward attendance in things such as Sunday School, Sunday services and Wednesday night? *Should be a delight!*
- 3. The Promise of **Success** (vs. 3)
  - a. This verse paints a beautiful picture of the life every person long for.
    - i. "A tree planted by the rivers of water." A life located in the ideal place, set up for success.
    - ii. "Bringeth forth his fruit." A life that produces good fruit. Discuss what the fruit of the Christian would be.
    - iii. "His leaf also shall not wither." This tree is an evergreen! It never withers; it is never barren.
    - iv. "Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." To prosper means to make progress.
  - b. This is a biblical theme. See Joshua 1:8; John 15:7, 16; Colossians 2:7.
- 4. The Price of **Sin** (vs. 4-6) – *Keep this point brief...*
  - a. The last half of this psalm describes the one who ignores the first half. They are simply called "ungodly." Refer to the description/definition from point 1.
  - b. Note how the psalmist describes this individual:
    - i. Chaff: What is chaff? A lifeless shell.
    - ii. Blown by the wind: A life controlled by other forces.
    - iii. Won't stand in judgment: They are already doomed. The path they have chosen only leads in one direction.

#### CONCLUSION:

- ⇒ Simple question: Which life do you want to lead?
- ⇒ Give your class some pointers on how they can effectively study their Bibles effectively in 2023.
- ⇒ Make sure to offer your help!