

INTRO - Last week in Bible Class, as we were talking about the 4th commandment, about honoring parents, Aaron Wisroth shared that his grandfather had made a big impact on his life. I responded that my grandfather had also made a big difference in my life of faith. Among other events, I remember my confirmation day. After I had completed my ceremony, and made my vows, my grandfather came to me. With love in his eyes he encouraged me, "I hope you do a better job of keeping your vows, than I have in keeping mine." I remember his words today and I understand that he wanted me to grow strong in my faith, and for my faith in Jesus to make a difference in my life, and through me to others.

I. Is there anything a loving Christian parent wants more than for their children to grow in faith and live a life of faith which makes a difference for the kingdom of God?

A. Our Psalm for today talks about the righteous, who are strengthened in faith, who bear fruit for the kingdom of God. **¹Blessèd is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; ²but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. ³He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.**

1. The righteous man grows like a tree beside stream of water. Have you ever traveled in the West? In 1979 my wife and I visited her college roommate's family in western Oklahoma. There were few tree on the plains, until we came to a stream. We could tell when we approached because there were cottonwood trees lining the banks. These trees survived the lack of water. They sunk their roots deep to the water by the stream. And they bore fruit - more trees grew.

2. That is what Christian parents would want for our children. We want them to continue in faith, through a dry world which attacks our relationship with God.

3. We want them to bear fruit, to share their faith, the love of God in Jesus, with family, with friends, in the community, with the world.

B. Please consider this is the desire of parents, or grandparents, of family for their children. However, those under 18 are not the only children.

1. When we pray the Lord's prayer, Jesus teaches us to pray, **"Our Father."**

2. 1 John 3 encourages us, **1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.** (1 John 3:1)

3. This Psalm is about all children of God. Our Heavenly Father wants adults to be planted and grow in His Grace.

C. And listen to the Psalm. The one who grows and bears fruit is the one whose **delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.**

1. The Hebrew word for "law", Torah, also means teaching or instruction. Delight in the law, in the teaching of the Lord feeds the growth of the child of God.

2. Meditating on the law of the Lord day and night strengthens the child of God for growth and bearing fruit.

II. There is another side to this Psalm. **⁴The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.**

A. The Lord desires the growth and health and fruitfulness of righteousness for His children, as we desire for our children, but evil in our world is real.

1. Look at the world around us, at the crime. Look at the push for behaviors which break the laws of God. Look at the attack on the Christian faith.

2. The devil is real, and his temptations are real.

3. People of faith around the world face opposition to discipleship and righteousness..

B. But the evil is not just outside the church.

1. We all fight the temptations of sin in ourselves. We fight anger, and greed, and lust, and doubt, and rebellion.

2. As Paul writes, ¹⁹ **For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.** (Rom. 7:19)

3. Unfortunately we all fail and sin. We all face judgement. We all need help to live as righteous children of God.

III. You see, one of the reasons I needed my grandfather's encouragement is that I struggled living as a child of God should. Believe it or not, I was often in trouble in first grade. I was often in the corner for misbehavior, in the cloakroom, and even at the Principal's office 7 time! My grandfather devised a scheme to encourage good behavior. It worked, somewhat.

A. So we need help. For those of us who struggle, remember the Psalm ¹**Blessèd is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; ²but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.**

1. The Word of God is the tool for God's children.

2. Psalm 119 teaches, **Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.** (Ps. 119:105) We sang that truth in our sermon hymn today.

B. But, for sinners who struggle, God gives His word in a more full way. ¹⁴ **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.** (Jn. 1:14 ESV)

1. Jesus is The Word of God, our Father's BEST communication of who He is, and what He has done.

2. For those who struggle with temptation, with sin, for all of us, Jesus is the word of God. John also says of Jesus, **"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"** (John 1:29)

3. Jesus forgives those who have sinned. He makes sinners righteous in God's eyes. And forgiven people have a new start on serving our Lord. Our sin is in the past. We can continue to live as His righteous children.

C. No wonder Peter encourages us, ¹⁸ **But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Pet. 3:18 ESV)**

1. Knowledge of God strengthen us in our walk of righteousness.

2. God gives knowledge in His word, the Bible.

3. God gives knowledge and grace in His Word, JESUS!

CONCLUSION - Today is the First Day of Sunday School, a day when we work to help people to meditate on the word of God, to find delight in His love throughout history, His love in our lives. Would you live as a righteous child of God? For those who desire a righteous life their **delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.**