

Supplement to Chapter 3

This is a supplemental lesson that may be used in part or in whole as a class overview of Chapter 3.

Display three large posters or divide a blackboard, chalkboard, large pad or butcher paper into three columns. Head the overall title "The Blessed Man". Write at the top of the first column, "Avoid", head the second column "Delight and Meditate", and the third one "Blessings". Write the first verse at the top of the first column, the second verse at the top of the second and the verse 3 at the top of column three.

1. Also, make sure you have an additional space available for this preliminary exercise.

a) Select a passage of Scripture that is not too well known (Suggestions: Psalm 37:1-8; Ephesians 4:1-6; Colossians 2:6-12). Have everyone read it quietly for themselves from their Bibles and then ask them to close their Bibles.

b). Fill in a short time with material unrelated to the Scripture, perhaps a prayer time or announcements, etc., anything that would draw their thinking away from the passage they read as would occur on a normal day.

(Ask if anyone has memorized this portion of Scripture or any part of it and if so ask them to please not participate in this part of the exercise.)

c) Start numbering down the side of your paper or board and ask the class to begin listing everything they remember or observed about what they read.

d) Let them exhaust their comments. Then if someone is present who has memorized it, have them quote the passage, obviously meditating their way through it, contemplating every word and thought. If there is no one in the class who has memorized it or even if there is, have the class open their Bibles and list what specifically they can draw from the passage as they now have the opportunity to meditate on it. Point out that when the truth they have been analyzing is memorized, it is in their heart and mind to meditate on at any time of the day or night.

2. a) Now turn to the first of the three sections on your board or paper and ask them to list the things the psalmist says to avoid. Because it is easy to pass over *unsavory friends*, have them pursue how the deeper implication applies to them personally. e.g. *walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly*: relate it to the uninvited input that was discussed in the prior chapter, about the subtle secular brain washing that constantly bombards our minds influencing our thinking and attitudes toward ungodly behavior.

b) Follow through with the same format for section two. Again list the three main conceptions: meditating, delighting and (by implication) obeying. Have them open up *The Sword* and contrast the aspects of "meditating" versus merely reading; between "delighting" and fulfilling an "obligation" that Christians are expected to perform. Discuss the relationship between memorizing or meditating and obeying. How can we obey Him if we don't know *exactly* what the Lord is saying; if we merely have our own or someone else's concept of what is stated in the Word.

c) Under section three, have them list the three aspects of the tree that are specifically identified, and how they relate to the "blessed man". Then elaborate by discussing other features of a tree that apply, e.g., a tree grows, it doesn't happen with a quick fix. Review the Scriptures given in *The Sword* regarding prosperity. Discuss *prospering* from this spiritual aspect. How specifically does Scripture memorization relate to the prosperity spoken of in these verses according to this psalm?

3. Blessed Commitment: Write out Psalm 1:2 and Psalm 20:8 on your paper or board. Many Christians labor under a burden of legalism that robs them of the delight that is inherent in memorizing Scripture. Do you think that the sense of "obligation", so often related to memorizing or even reading God's Word, delights our Lord? Would not such an attitude be an insult and a stench to Him? David was a man *after God's own heart*; his delight was to give Him pleasure. Why do you think we live so far from this perspective? How does one get from this modern day plague of legalism to the delight expressed in this psalm?

Do you want to be *blessed* and to be a *blessing*? Do you want to be like the tree *growing* in this psalm? Do you want to bear fruit and gain eternal prosperity? David has shown you the way as clearly as can be verbalized. What is the key? What practical step has he shown you that will start you toward fulfilling these desires?

You may want to have a time of prayer (silent and/or audible). Encourage your class to bring heartfelt regrets and sincere longings to the throne of the King of kings. David was not perfect, but he was a *man after God's own heart*. We can't expect to be perfect, but where is the focus of our heart?