

SICK OF EVIL • Week 2: It Came From Within

Daily Briefing • Day 5 of 5 • Planted by the Stream

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:7

This week opened with Jeremiah's picture of a tree planted by water, unaffected by drought because its roots run deep. Today we close the week with the Psalm that pictures the exact same tree, and names the one practice that keeps it planted there. You can watch or listen to Sunday's message at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You have shown that You love me and that You are merciful and wise. I want to understand Your Word. I want to understand how Your commandments correlate to human flourishing. I pray that You would give me the desire, motivation, and drive to know Your Word, to clear out what I need to clear out in order to make space to gain fluency in Your Scriptures. Give me wisdom, give me understanding, and give me next steps in the name of Jesus. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

Every piece of flat-pack furniture comes from a real designer who had a specific finished product in mind. The instructions are not a suggestion. Skip a step, force a piece in backward, guess instead of reading, and you get something that still sort of looks like a bookshelf but wobbles every time you touch it. Knowing the furniture has a good designer does not produce the bookshelf. Actually following the design does.

This week has traced the same idea through Scripture. Money, education, politics, and science all failed as saviors because they were never built for that job (Jeremiah 17:5-8). Desire goes wrong when it takes the wrong bait (James 1:14-15). Behavior modification fails because only God can actually change a heart (Ezekiel 36:26-27). And you know that heart has changed by watching what it produces (1 John 2:3-6). Psalm 1 closes the loop. It names the one practice that keeps a life planted where it needs to be planted.

Before you can trust a design, you have to trust the Designer. Scripture describes God as wise, loving, and patient, but also just. He genuinely hates evil, and yet He offers mercy and full pardon for anyone who has been living as a traitor to His kingdom and wants to come back. Psalm 1 opens by describing what happens once you actually know that God. "Blessed 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" (Psalm 1:1). Notice the progression. Walking, then standing, then sitting. Nobody starts out sitting comfortably in the seat of scoffers. They arrive there one small step at a time. This means that once you know the Designer, you stop wasting time with the beliefs and behaviors of destructive God-haters.

The alternative Psalm 1 offers is not willpower. It is delight. Verse 2 says "His *delight* is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither" (Psalm 1:2-3). This is the same tree from Jeremiah 17 that opened this week, planted by water, unaffected by drought. Meditating on God's design as He has expressed it in His Law, commandments, and rules is not an academic exercise. It is what keeps the roots actually in the water.

Psalm 1 does not end with the tree. "The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away... for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish" (Psalm 1:4, 6). Notice what is not happening here. God is not shown reaching down to personally strike anyone. He's just letting people experience the consequences of their arrogance and folly. Chaff blows away because that is simply what chaff does when the wind comes. A scoffer's life was never actually thriving. It was always a dumpster fire waiting for enough wind to show it.

READ & MEDITATE

Psalm 1

"Blessed 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; ² but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. ³ He 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. ⁴ The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. ⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; ⁶ for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."

Read the whole psalm in one sitting. Notice the three postures in verse 1 are not separate options. They are a sequence, walking near the wrong counsel eventually leads to standing in it, and standing eventually leads to sitting down and getting comfortable there. Then notice the one specific practice in verse 2 that keeps the tree in verse 3 planted where it needs to be.

REFLECT

Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment is far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

Nobody wakes up one morning sitting comfortably in the seat of scoffers. Psalm 1 describes a progression: walking near it, then standing in it, then sitting down and making yourself at home.

Even if you haven't fully embraced the evil beliefs and behaviors of scoffers, where in your life right now are you still just walking near something you know is bad counsel, insight, or understanding, but still not fully sitting down in it?

Regarding other areas, be honest about which stage you are actually in. Are you walking, standing, or have you already sat down and gotten comfortable?

You cannot trust a design you do not trust the designer to have drafted. You wouldn't want to build a bridge designed by someone that has no experience or education in structures, engineering, architecture, materials, etc. Fortunately, Scripture describes God as wise, loving, patient, and just. In the Bible we see that God is someone who genuinely hates evil while offering full mercy and restoration to anyone who wants to stop being a traitor to His kingdom and come home.

Which part of God's character do you actually struggle to trust: His wisdom, His patience, His justice, or His mercy toward people who have genuinely failed Him?

Fill in the blank from Psalm 1:2:

"But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he _____ day and night."

(Psalm 1:2)

**These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.*

What is the actual difference between reading Scripture once and meditating day and night? Which one do you actually practice?

This is the same metaphorical tree Jeremiah described at the start of this week, planted by water, unaffected by drought. The practice from verse 2 is not academic. It is what keeps the roots in the water.

What would it look like for you to actually practice this kind of meditation this week, not just read a verse once and move on?

What currently takes up the time and mental space that could go toward this instead? Consider TV, video games, doom-scrolling, online shopping, obsessing over recreation or vacation, and things like that.

Chaff is not a tree that never managed to grow roots. It is what is left over once the real grain has been threshed out, light and hollow, never connected to anything at all. The tree in verse 3 has substance because its roots run into real water. Chaff has no substance because it was never anything but husk to begin with. That is why the same wind a deeply rooted tree does not even notice is enough to carry chaff away completely.

Considering this metaphor from the Psalm, does your life currently look more like a tree with real roots, or chaff blown away by a gentle breeze?

What is one specific thing you need to remove from your schedule this week to actually make room for the roots to grow deep by meditating on God's Word? Do some honest calendar assessment and time budgeting before moving on.

MY "I WILL" STATEMENT

Sample: *This week I will identify one specific thing on my schedule, a show, a scroll habit, a late bedtime, and remove it, replacing that time with daily meditation on God's Word so I can actually gain fluency in what He has revealed rather than staying a stranger to my own Bible.*

This week, because of what God has shown me in His Word, I will:

A NOTE ON WHAT COMES NEXT

Next week the series turns outward. God never designed you to do this alone. Week 3 asks what it looks like for a whole community of changed hearts to actually work together, and what kind of world that could build.

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Jeremiah 17:7 from memory:
