



## ***‘Two Roads Diverged In A Wood...’ Psalm 1***

### *Icebreaker:*

Hopefully you’ve read the Robert Frost poem *The Road Not Taken* which ends:

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference*

What’s one decision you’ve made in your life that has made ‘*all the difference*’ for you?

### *The Study:*

As we launch our new series in the Psalms – “*Songs In The Key Of Life*” – we begin, at the beginning, with Psalm 1. It’s a beloved, memorable poem which sets the tone for the entire book, by reminding us that life is rather simple in the end. A blessed life comes down to a very simple choice – who are we going to live for – God or ourselves?



***Let’s first take 15 minutes to run this psalm through our 3-Step Bible study approach. Read the psalm through a couple times (in different versions), then do the following exercises, five minutes for each section.***



### **Step One: Observation ~ *What do I see?***

Specific Observations (Write at least ten!):

### **Step Two: Interpretation ~ *What does it mean?***

Ask questions! – *What was the author saying to his original readers? Is there anything difficult to understand? What would I like to know more about? Can the passage be interpreted in different ways?*



### **Step Three: Application ~ *What should I do about it?***

What timeless principles does the passage teach?

What truths does this passage teach me about God?

What do I sense the Lord wants me to do in response?

1. In the message, we talked about four elements that are common in Hebrew poetry. Discuss what each is, and why each is important for better understanding the psalm.

### ***Flow***

*Does anything stand out about the flow of Psalm 1?*

### ***Structure***

*How would you break out Psalm 1 into sections? What would you label them? Work on your own first, then share your thoughts.*

### ***Imagery – Wordplay***

*What words or images stand out in this psalm for you?*

### ***Repetition – Parallelism***

*How is verse 1 an example of this?*

2. *“Blessed is the man...”* How is a blessed life different from a happy life? Read the following verses then discuss your thoughts.

*Psalm 4:6-8; Philippians 4:11-13; Revelation 2:8-11*

3. The parallelism in verse 1 provides an important insight in how evil grows in our hearts.

a. We move from walking to standing to sitting. What’s the idea? How does a person ‘break bad’?

b. Does it matter that you feel sin to be sin, for it to be wrong? Read Proverbs 14:12.

4. The message of Psalm 1 is not: *“Stay away from evil people, and do good things, and you’ll be fine.”* Verse 3 makes it crystal clear that the blessedness and fruitfulness of a righteous person doesn’t come from themselves. Where does it come from? And what is this a symbol of?

5. Read John 15:1-8. What is Jesus telling us to do, and how does it relate to Psalm 1?

6. For many people, religious things like Bible reading, prayer, going to church, etc. are all things to do to check off a list. How is this different from what Psalm 1 and Jesus are describing?

7. *“The wicked are...like chaff that the wind drives away.”* How does this imagery change the way you think about things like sin, and living without God, or living for evil? Complete this sentence: *“If this is true, then evil must be....”*

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