

Transformed By Praise

Week 7 Study Questions (pp. 77-98)

Group Questions

Discussion starter: When you were a child, did you delight in the instruction of your parents? Do you delight in it now?

1. What does the Hebrew word *torah* mean? How do the various meanings of *torah* change the way you view the Psalms?
2. On page 81, the author writes, “abundant living comes through delighting in the instruction of the LORD.” Why is this true? How does Psalm 1 inform your answer?
3. When the book of Psalms was first compiled in its final form, for the original audience where was the instruction for delighting in the LORD specifically found? Generally found? What reasons does the author give to support these answers?
4. In Psalm 119 (the longest psalm and chapter in the Bible), the psalmist repeatedly expresses his love for and delight in the instruction of the LORD because it leads to abundant living. In light of Paul’s teaching in Galatians 3, does it seem strange to you that a faithful Israelite could love God’s OT law? How does the gospel allow us to continue to delight in the instruction of the LORD?
5. According to Psalm 1:2, one way we are to delight in the Lord’s instruction is to meditate on it. What do you associate with meditation? How has your view of biblical meditation changed after reading this chapter?
6. On pages 88-92, the author interprets Psalm 1:1 as teaching us to avoid the wrong advice in three key areas. What are they and how are they related to each other? How does the teaching of the NT inform your answer?

7. What are some of the positive benefits of biblical meditation? What might be some unpleasant ramifications of practicing biblical meditation? Is biblical meditation a suggestion or a command for Christians?

8. On pages 92-97 the author explores the how's of biblical meditation. How might you
 - a. meditate with your mouth?

 - b. meditate by thinking?

 - c. meditate by thinking deeply?

 - d. meditate by thinking deeply in the Spirit?

9. Psalm 1 promises the believer that the abundant life is the happy life and the holy life. On page 97 the author writes, "The abundant life is the godly life...Psalm 1 paints a picture of happiness, and it promises you success. This happiness and success are rooted in living by divine principles." How does Jesus make this *torah* good news ("gospel") for sinners?

Digging Deeper

On page 83, the author begins a section that shows how the Psalms are divided into five books, and how this links the Psalms with the torah of Moses (the Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). This argument is based on the literary structural arrangement of the Psalms using the key repeated word "Amen" and the similarity of the immediately prior instructions to praise the LORD. The gospel of Matthew is the most "Jewish" gospel and is also arranged into five "books" (with introduction and closing sections totaling seven sections). The repeated phrase (with some variation) in Matthew which concludes each section is "when Jesus had finished teaching" (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). Scan the discourses of Jesus in each of these five sections and identify the major themes of the torah of Christ.

Application

Using what you learned about biblical meditation in this chapter, meditate on Psalm 1 this week. You might find that you will memorize it without even trying!