

**Psalm 37:1-6**

1 Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers, 2 for they will soon fade like the grass, and wither like the green herb. 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so you will live in the land, and enjoy security. 4 Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. 6 He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

There it is. You now know what to do. Do not fret because of evil, do not be envious of sinners, be happy with Lord, be committed to the Lord, and trust in the Lord. Now all we have to do is obey the Word. However, it is not that easy. The Scripture does provide sound advice but I think it is important to understand that the scriptural instruction is not about what someone else should or should not be doing; the lesson is for the individual that hears or reads the words. It is in regards to what you should do.

The scriptural lesson, like many biblical lessons, provides a contrast between the righteous and the wicked; the obedient are blessed and the disobedient are cursed. Also, like many scripture lessons it is personal. Whereas, we prefer to point our fingers at the other person, thinking it is the other guy that is the sinner. We tend to criticize, complain, judge, and view the self as being righteous. So, the Scripture teaches us not to be frustrated, angry, or fret, when you do not see immediate vindication. Instead, have patience and trust in God. When you trust in God, it enables you to have peace, serenity, and understanding.

The contemporary lesson for us is to take the biblical lesson and apply it in our daily lives. The challenge is not to fret over the wicked when the reality is that they make us mad. The challenge is do not be envious when the reality is we do not want them to take advantage. The challenge is trust in the Lord when the reality is that we want immediate justice. The real challenge for us is to live by faith when there are others that do not. It is hard to follow biblical lessons when you try to follow them because you are supposed to, especially when you are confronted with the evil or real life problems. But it is easy to follow biblical lessons when you are ruled by love and appreciate the loving relationship. When you live by faith, you find peace and happiness, it does not require external stimulus, and it is not destroyed by the poor attitudes and behavior of others.

There is always a consequence of behavior. The Bible repeatedly provides lessons where God rewards the righteous and punishes transgression. What goes around comes around. The bad behavior of the wicked is their own undoing in time. So, we are not to be disturbed by the wicked but be patient for divine retribution.

The Scripture is one of spiritual nurturing. Our faith develops into a well being of peace. This comes from discernment by understanding who you are in your relationship with Lord, trusting in God's divine retribution. When faced with everyday life, we know the biblical lessons of what to do and what not to do, we know there are several important things to living a Godly life - worship, Bible study, prayer, fellowship, missions, etc. I think one key thing is your attitude. When you appreciate the relationship, it pulls all of the disciplines in together. When you have a loving relationship, you appreciate it, respect it, honor it, cherish it, and you do not want to disappoint the other one in the

relationship. When you are in a loving relationship, spiritual wellness fills you with peace, joy, and love.

I was in the grocery store this past week and in the checkout lane next to me the cashier that was working is known to me to be nice, friendly, meek, and a person of humility. A man had four drinks that cost a little over five dollars. He was arguing with the cashier about the price. She did a marvelous job in spite of him being rude and obnoxious. She was very courteous. I thought about challenging the man “Hey mister, be nice! She’s one of the good ones.” His mindset was one of anger and frustration. But the cashier did not upset him and the store itself did not upset him. I thought “He just does not get it. He has allowed a small amount of money to upset him and take away his happiness.” The irony is that people will pay a whole lot of money for happiness. They will buy expensive cars; have oversize houses, extravagant vacations, and virtually unlimited entertainment. We will spend lots of money to try to be happy even if it is just for a little while. What this man did was instead of spending money for happiness, he allowed the issue of a little bit of money to take away his happiness. His life is out of balance. By fretting over one dollar he has allowed it to take away his happiness when he would spent a hundred dollars, or a thousand dollars, or more in order to get some happiness. In life people look for external stimulus to bring pleasure and allow external stimulus to destroy the joy of living.

It is up to each individual to live a Godly life. The Christian is not perfect. Never will any one of us be in one hundred percent complete obedience. We have the same weaknesses as everyone else; the same temptations, problems, frustrations, and the same desire for vengeance and justice. Since I am not perfect, I must accept the fact that everyone else around me with their imperfections and I must withhold my judgment because only God has the right to judge.

Instead of fretting about the behavior of others we should show them the love of the Lord. We should invite people to come to church. I think it is better to invite others to come and worship with us. I think it is even better to invite others to come to the party because this is where we celebrate God and engage in the loving relationship. I often ask people “Where are you in your relationship with the Lord?” It is not a yes or no question but opens the door for discussion and provides an opportunity to engage in conversation that will help you lead them to the Lord.