

Psalm 1

Sitting, walking, standing. - Do you ever think about how you sit and walk and stand? I don't mean asking yourself whether you have a nice posture or a good stride. I mean – the down to earth stuff that you actually do on a daily basis. In one way or another, we all sit and walk and stand – these physical necessities of life. And the entire book of psalms begins with a focus not on the quality of worship or the good works we do, but on the way we sit and walk and stand. The book of psalms is supposed to be about worship – and yet it starts with the way we sit and walk and stand.

It blows away some of the modern ideas we have about doing good deeds. In Christian circles, we often assume that some kinds of action are good: praying, worshipping, coming to church, reading the bible, visiting people who are unwell, doing mission. And we forget that all of these are sinful activities – not that they are evil in and of themselves – but even the highest, most sublime activities in which human beings are engaged, are marred by sin.

So our prayer, or worship, our bible reading, our Christian ethics, our good deeds, our worthiest motives – are all, fundamentally affected by sin. So right here, at the beginning of the book of psalms, we are reading about worship. Not about the nasty things we are doing when we are not worshipping – but even and perhaps especially, in the heart of our worship – we have the capacity to sit in the seat of mockers, to walk according to the counsel of the wicked, to stand in the way of sinners.

Have you ever pondered that? In what ways do we actually sin while we are here in worship? Yes, we can be the people who campaign for justice, who visit the sick, who evangelise, who preach the gospel and if necessary use words, - we can do all of these great things, and still be walking in the counsel of the wicked, and standing in the way of sinners, and sitting in the seat of mockers.