Planted by the Water

Scripture — Psalm 1:1–6 (KJV)
Lesson aim — To recognize what shapes our choices and practice returning to God's Word for direction.

Introduction

Psalm 1 opens the book of Psalms with a wisdom poem about two ways of life. It begins with the counsel a person chooses to follow and ends with where that choice leads. The repeated verbs *walketh, standeth,* and *sitteth* can suggest how deeply an influence can take hold. Verse 2 turns to what shapes the blessed person instead: delight in the Lord's instruction and meditation on it "day and night." The contrast between a tree planted by water and chaff driven by the wind shows what each way produces over time. As we read, listen for how the psalm connects the counsel we receive, the fruit we bear, and the direction our lives take.

Part 1 — What Shapes Us? (Verses 1–2)

The psalm opens with three actions: walking, standing, and sitting. Read together, they can suggest how an influence becomes more settled in our lives. We hear someone's counsel, grow comfortable with their habits, and eventually find ourselves sharing their attitudes. Verse 2 turns our attention to what the blessed person delights in. To meditate on God's instruction "day and night" is to keep returning to it so that it shapes our ordinary decisions.

Discussion question: What advice have you heard so often that you accept it without asking whether it agrees with God's instruction?

(**Example:** "Treat people the way they treat you.")

Part 2 — What Sustains Us? (Verses 3–4)

Psalm 1 reminds me that a tree bears fruit **"in his season"** (verse 3). This psalm places a tree beside streams of water and sets it against chaff driven by the wind. The tree has a steady source of nourishment, and it bears fruit **"in his season."** Chaff, the light material separated from grain, goes wherever the wind carries it. The picture helps us understand what it means to prosper in this psalm. A life nourished by God can grow steadily, even when its fruit takes time to appear.

Discussion question: In what area of your life are you waiting to see fruit, and what would it look like to stay rooted in God's Word while you wait?

Part 3 — Where Does Our Way Lead? (Verses 5–6)

The word *way* connects the beginning and end of the psalm. Verse 1 asks us to consider the path we join, and verses 5–6 show where each path leads. When the psalm says the Lord "knoweth the

way of the righteous," it conveys his regard for those who walk in his ways. The closing contrast invites us to consider the direction our repeated choices are taking us, especially when those choices seem small.

Discussion question: If one of your present habits became a way of life, where would it lead you?

Call to Action

Carry one verse into one decision this week. Choose a verse from Psalm 1 and read it each morning. Name one situation where you expect to need direction. When it comes, pause and ask, **"What response would show that I have been listening to God?"** At the next class, invite volunteers to share what they chose and how the verse shaped their response.