

Ever feel withered?

Psalm 1

Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.

In all that he does, he prospers.

The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

Its leaf does not wither.

Does it ever feel like your leaves are withering? I know I feel that way. Why? Well, according to this psalm, it is when my delight is not or no longer is in the law of the Lord.

When my delight is in my accomplishments, I wither when I don't achieve what I want or what I think I should.

When my delight is in the approval of others or praise from them, I wither when I don't get that approval or praise.

When my delight is in my success, I wither when I am not successful - either in my own eyes, or by what the world is telling me is success.

When my delight is in anything but the law of the Lord, I am bound - sooner or later - to be disappointed and my leaves wither. And a tree with withering leaves also produces no fruit. No good fruit, anyway.

So how to be renewed? How to get my strength and energy back? To take *delight in the law of the Lord*. "Law" there doesn't mean the Ten Commandments, but is the Hebrew word *Torah*, which means word or instruction; it is what the first five books of the Bible are called - the Torah. We could say it is even a shorthand way of saying God's Word, or the whole Bible.

That is where I hear of all that God has done for me in His Son Jesus Christ.

That is where I hear how valuable I am to God - that He would trade His own Son for me, a sinner, that I could be saved.

That is where I hear of His forgiveness for my failures.

That is where I hear that God is working all things for my good - even things I think are bad, or struggles that are tough.

That is where I hear all of God's promises to me; all that He has for me; more than I could ever imagine.

When my delight is in Him and His Word, then I have what I need and what will get me through the trials, struggles, and disappointments of this world and life. For through His Word comes the living water of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, to give me life and hope again. Yes, life and strength for a withering man and his withering leaves.

Lord, help me delight in Your Word, and give me the strength, energy, and confidence I need for this day, the living water of Your Spirit that gives me life now and forever. Amen.