

# Blest Is the Man Who Shuns the Place

Words: Isaac Watts, 1719.

Music: Alexander Reinagle, 1836.

In the parish church of Fettercairn a custom existed of the precentor, on communion Sabbaths, reading out each single line of the psalm before it was sung by the congregation. This practice gave rise to a somewhat unlucky introduction of a line from the first Psalm. In most churches in Scotland, the communion tables are placed in the centre of the church. After sermon and prayer, the seats round these tables are occupied by the communicants, while a psalm is being sung.

On one communion Sunday, the precentor observed the noble family of Eglantine approaching the tables, and likely to be kept out by those who pressed in before them. Being very zealous for their accommodation, he called out to an individual whom he considered to be the principal obstacle in clearing the passage, Come back Jock, and let in the noble family of Eglantine; and then, turning to his psalm-book, he took up his duty, and went on to read the line,

Nor stand in the sinners way.

[Long](#) , p. 229

Blest is the man who shuns the place  
Where sinners love to meet;  
Who fears to tread their wicked ways,  
And hates the scoffers seat.

But in the statutes of the Lord  
Has placed his chief delight;  
By day he reads or hears the Word,  
And meditates by night.

He, like a plant of generous kind,  
By living waters set,  
Safe from the storms and blasting wind,  
Enjoys a peaceful state.

Green as the leaf, and ever fair,  
Shall his profession shine;  
While fruits of holiness appear  
Like clusters on the vine.

Not so the impious and unjust;  
What vain designs they form!  
Their hopes are blown away like dust,  
Or chaff before the storm.

Sinners in judgment shall not stand  
Amongst the sons of grace,  
When Christ, the Judge, at His right hand  
Appoints His saints a place.

His eye beholds the path they tread,  
His heart approves it well;  
But crooked ways of sinners lead  
Down to the gates of hell.