

MARANATHA BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

9 August 2020

Combined Worship Service

"Present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28)

Address: 63 Cranwell Road, Singapore 509851

E-mail: maranatha.bpc@pacific.net.sg

Sunday School: 10 am

Sunday English / Chinese Worship Service: 10.45 am

Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8.30 pm

Rev Colin Wong (HP : 9665 8160); Elder Daniel Tau (HP : 9761 5415); Elder Peter Ong (HP : 9626 7045)

THE BLESSED MAN

Like Psalm 2, Psalm 1 is without a title, but Bible scholars believe that this Psalm is ascribed to King David (Acts 4:25). To many Bible students, the Psalm summarizes the two ways open to mankind – the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked. They say that this Psalm may be classified as a wisdom Psalm because of its emphasis on these two ways of life, the use of the similes, the announcement of blessing and the centrality of the Law for fulfillment in life.

The Blessed Man

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful (1).

“Who is a blessed man?” The Psalmist describes him who leads an untarnished and prosperous life in accord with the Word of the Lord, and contrasts him with the ungodly who shall perish (6). The expression (walk, stand and sit) signifies a progression from a casual influence of ungodly people to conclusion with them in their scorn against the righteous.

Let us consider the first three verses of this Psalm, and ask ourselves one important question: Who is a blessed man?

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly (1a).

“Blessedness” is a Christian virtue. A blessed man is one who trusts in his Lord (Psalm 2:12; 34:8; 40:4). He is one whose sins are forgiven (Psalm 32:1, 2). He is one who considers the poor (Psalm 41:1). He is one whom God chooses (Psalm 65:4). He is one who comes into God’s house with praises (Psalm 84:4). He is one whose strength is in the Lord (Psalm 84:5). He is one whom God chastens (Psalm 94:12). He is one who keeps God’s Word and practices righteousness (Psalm 106:3). He is one who fears the Lord (Psalm 112:1).

Jesus, in his Beatitudes, shows us who a blessed man is (Matthew 5:3-11). However, being blessed does not mean that we are free from the trials of life or from adverse circumstances of life (Matthew 5:10, 11).

Here is the description of the Psalmist of a blessed man. Firstly, a blessed man is one who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly (1a). A man's walk is the course of his life. A blessed man is a righteous man. He hates the thought of sin. He does not walk with the impious. Like Enoch, he desires to walk with God (Genesis 5:24). He does not throw in his lot with the wicked nor does he participate in their projects or designs. He does not take part in their actions nor does he follow the same moral paths (Proverbs 1:10-19). He knows where he stands. He knows what is right and what is wrong. He does not follow them blindly. He is not persuaded by their aims, maxims, principles, practices, deliberations or persuasions. He is deaf to the counsel of the ungodly, though they may be men or women of high society (2 Samuel 16:20-23; 1 Kings 12:6-11). However, a blessed man is open to the good, godly advice of the godly, though they may be men or women of no high standing in the society.

... nor standeth in the way of sinners (1b).

Secondly, a blessed man does not stand in the way of sinners (1b). He does not station himself with ungodly people. He does not mingle with lawless people. He knows these people openly defy God's Law. They have no fear of God (Romans 3:18). Therefore, he chooses his friends, even church friends, very carefully. He knows who are trustworthy and who are not; who are God-fearing and who are not.

A blessed man has certain guidelines to choosing his friends. Psalm 119:63 is one of his guidelines – "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts."

Who are his friends? There are two very important ingredients to choosing one's friends, even Christian friends. We need to ask ourselves two important questions before choosing friends. Some of us may have some good, supportive, caring, sacrificial non-Christian friends. We thank God for such friends. But no matter how good and caring they are, there is still a difference between us. Our philosophy of life is different. Ours is based on God's Word. Theirs is based on worldly wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:21).

What are the two essential ingredients to choosing a friend? They are God-fearing and Word-abiding. The blessed man's friends are people who fear God and practice God's Word. The fear of God drives us away from evil (Genesis 39:9). The doer of God's Word is blessed in his doing (James 1:25).

Who are your friends in church? Who are your friends outside the church? Are they God-fearing and Word-abiding people?

... nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful (1c).

Thirdly, a blessed man does not sit in the seat of the scornful (1c). He has no fellowship with them in the "scorn" which they cast upon the Christian religion (2 Peter 3:3, 4). He has no fellowship with scorners who laugh at God's servants (Nehemiah 2:19; Job 16:20; Psalm 22:7; Matthew 9:24). He has no fellowship with people who ridicule Jesus and say that he was born of a German father. He has no fellowship with the liberals who deny every cardinal teaching of the Bible. He has no fellowship with people who express the indifference and hatred of divine things. He has no fellowship with people who disregard God's name (Exodus 20:7).

Be careful of the people whom you fellowship with, even church people! Look for fellowship that

provoke you to love and to good works (Hebrews 10:24). A fellowship that does not edify one another is destructive to the Christian faith. Look for fellowship that builds you up in the most holy faith (Jude 20).

The Delights of the Blessed Man

But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night (2).

A blessed man delights in the Law of God (2a). God's Word is his delight (Psalm 119:47). He finds joy reading it (Jeremiah 15:16). He regards it more than his necessary food (Job 23:12). He loves the Decalogue (i.e. Ten Commandments) because it is the transcript of the moral character of God. He knows that if he were to live morally, he must know the Ten Commandments (Luke 10:25-37).

A blessed man knows the danger of not reading the Word. Zechariah warned the people of God that those who would not listen to the Word when it is available to them would not find it when they need it one day to satisfy their hungry hearts (Zechariah 7:12, 13; Amos 8:11, 12). Those who despise the Word will only reap a famine (Proverbs 13:13). Therefore, when the Spirit of God speaks to your heart to read the Word, please do not harden it against the voice of God (Hebrews 3:7, 8).

Do you delight in reading God's Word? Is reading God's Word a chore or a delight in your Christian life?

A blessed man not only delights in the Word, but he also meditates on it. He does it day and night, not periodically. He reflects on the Word all the time. He internalizes God's Word. The Word becomes a part of his life. He hides it in his heart and it keeps him from sin (Psalm 119:11). He walks confidently (Psalm 119:133, 165). The Word becomes a lamp to his feet and a light to his path (Psalm 119:105). He has success in life (Joshua 1:8).

The Blessings of the Blessed Man

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper (3).

A blessed man is like a tree planted by the rivers of water (3a). In hot Eastern countries, trees flourish most by the side of water courses. When all around is burnt up with heat and drought, they are fresh and green.

A man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers; but delights in the Law of God and meditates on it day and night shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of the water. He who constantly keeps in step with the Spirit will never get dry and dull spiritually (Galatians 5:16).

A blessed man brings forth his fruit in his season (3b). He blooms and bears fruit in his season. Like a tree that bears fruit in its season, God will prosper him in his season (Galatians 5:22, 23).

A blessed man is ever vibrant (3c). Like a tree planted by streams of water and its leaf does not wither, a man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers; but delights in the Law of God and meditates on it day and night shall not fall away in time of temptation and persecution. He is like the good seed that falls into good ground (Mark 4:20).

A blessed man prospers in whatever he do (3d). A man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers; but delights in the Law of God and meditates on it day and night shall have good success (Joshua 1:8). He who listens to the Word and practices it shall be blessed by his doing (James 1:25). He is like a man who builds his house on rock (Matthew 7:24-27).

If a man reads, meditates on and practices God's Word, his actions will be godly and his God-controlled activities will prosper in its season.

Spiritual prosperity is what Christians long for. We desire to see our soul prospers in the Lord (1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 John 3:2).

Who is a blessed man? He is one who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the Law of God and he meditates on it day and night. He blossoms and bears fruit in its season. He flourishes and prospers spiritually, like a tree planted by the streams of water that never dies. Amen.

Pastor Colin Wong

Theme for the Quarter :
FREE IN CHRIST
(An Exposition on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians)

Combined Worship Service :
Rev Colin Wong speaks on Another Gospel (Galatians 1:6-10)
Interpreter : Seow Zhi Fa