

Women in the Word, Psalm 1  
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## LIFE IN CHRIST

### INTRODUCTION

--Psalm 1 is a description, not a prescription. A wisdom psalm that does give insight on how to live—but it is not primarily about moral instruction. It is good news about what it means to be “in Christ.”

--Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 connect. They are the “two pillars” that we go thru to enter the “temple of the psalter.” We see Christ in them. The truth of finding refuge in the Son ties them together. Note the “bookends,” (first and last verses): *“Blessed is the man (1:1)...Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him” (2:12).*

### 1) POSITIONED IN CHRIST

--We are “in Christ.” NT uses that phrase repeatedly for the saved ones. It is our position. Out of that position, we live. (Note the imagery in Psalm 1, words of position: walk, stand, sit, planted, going a certain ‘way’)

--Verse 1. It’s not telling us to do anything. It’s describing a believer. A believer is not taking truth (“counsel”) from the wicked. He’s not an unrepentant sinner, going the wrong “way.” He’s not someone who rejects/“scoffs” at the LORD.

--The “blessed one,” the believer, is described in Romans 8:4-- *“does not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”*

--The unbeliever is described in Romans 8:7 *“The mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.”* See also Ephesians 2:2.

### 2) CHRIST IS THE FINAL “TORAH of the LORD”

--Torah basically means instruction—God teaching us about Himself and our life in this world. To “delight in the Torah of Jehovah” is, ultimately, to delight in the self-revelation of the covenant God.

-- Jesus told the studious Jews, *“You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me...Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his*

writings, how will you believe My words?" (John 5: 39, 45-47). (Sad example of the "hassidim" today, studying Talmud full-time, far removed from the LORD's true revelation of Himself).

--Jesus said, of His completed work, "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me" (Luke:24:44).

--Hebrews 1:1-3 "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things...." (Psalm 2:8 says even the nations are His inheritance)

--The "wicked" of Psalm 1 aren't people who "don't read their Bibles"—but those who reject God's revelation, His "last days" word: His Son.

### **3) CHRIST PLANTS AND PROSPERS YOU**

--Compares you to a tree, strong, stable, rooted and established

--"Streams of water" and "yielding fruit" are images throughout Scripture (even to Revelation 21) for the work of His spirit in the "blessed" ones.

-- Jesus connects the "blessed life" to Himself: "*I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly*" (John 10:10)

--Life in Christ produces a lifestyle that flourishes

--"*Apart from Me you can bear no fruit*" (John 15:5)

--Paradox: The life of the believer doesn't outwardly seem to prosper. Failure. Suffering. Persecution. Jesus proclaims the paradox in His "blesseds" (Matt 5)—you are the ones who will be reviled, persecuted, hungry and thirsting. (Psalter contains the paradox: here we enter it with a pronouncement of the believer's abundant happiness—yet the Psalter is full of the suffering of God's people.

### **4) CHRIST SHIELDS YOU FROM THE WRATH TO COME**

--Nothing more opposite in the plant world than a tree growing by a river, and chaff blowing in the wind!

--Terrifying claim in Psalm 1: people will be driven away (Jesus speaks of chaff being burnt), unable to stand in the judgment

--Just as there are 2 "ways," there are 2 life outcomes: eternal, blessed life, and "perishing." Psalm 1 ends, "*The way of the wicked will perish.*" Psalm 2 ends with a warning to the rebellious and unrepentant: "*Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way.*"

-- The Son was given that "*whoever believes in Him should not perish*" (John 3:16)

## 5) CHRIST BRINGS YOU INTO AN ASSEMBLY OF THE RIGHTEOUS

--1<sup>st</sup> verse of the psalter begins with the individual (*"Blessed is the one"*); last verse ends with a universal call: *"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord"* (Psalm 150:6).

--You are part of what God is doing in ALL of history: assembling a people to worship and enjoy Him forever. Goal is not one righteous man, but a multitude of the righteous (Gen 12:3 *"all peoples on earth blessed"* through Christ; Heb 2:12; *"every nation"* of Rev 5)

--The assembly of the blessed is described in Hebrews 12:22-29. *"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,<sup>23</sup> and to the assembly<sup>[a]</sup> of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect."*

## 6) CONCLUSION

- Jesus took the curse, so that we could be "blessed"
- He endured the scoffers
- He fell under the judgment, so that we could stand in it.
- He conquered death so that we could have undying life

### Sources:

Prof Charles Telfer, Psalm 1 chapel address, WSC

Rev Mike Brown, Psalm 1 sermon, Santee URC

Commentaries of J. Boice, M. Futato, D. Kidner, O.P. Robertson, W. Van Gemeren

### FOR DISCUSSION

1. How does being "in Christ" motivate and encourage you in your walk (as described in Ps 1:1-2)?
2. Why do you think Psalm 1 is Psalm 1? How does it lead us into the Psalter?
3. Psalm 1 is often called a "wisdom" psalm. What wisdom do you find in it?