

- 1 *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.*
- 2 *But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*
- 3 *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.*
- 4 *The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*
- 5 *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*
- 6 *For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.*
(Psalm 1)

In this first psalm, the writer draws upon rich imagery to mark out a sharp contrast between the righteous, the “blessed man,” the man whom the Lord “knows,” and the “ungodly,” those who fear not God. The God-fearing man does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly. Their counsel or philosophy does not chart the course. The wisdom or reason of unconverted worldly minded men is set on mischief, avarice, greed, worldly lust, malice, temporal things. The godly man reasons differently. He delights in God’s law, God’s counsel, the inspired scriptures, God’s leadership by the Holy Spirit. He meditates upon them, thinks on them continually. They become a part of his being, and direct his every action and undertaking.

The righteous man does not stand in the way of sinners. His anchor is not theirs. He is not established by what they are. Their hope is in temporal things, wealth, power, the admiration of men, the achievements of men. He is established in Christ. He is like a tree planted. It is fixed forever, never to be moved as long as it lives. Like a tree planted by the rivers of water, the godly man is fixed in Christ Who is the way, the truth, and the life. All that man needs to sustain him and make him fruitful flows from Christ. As the planted tree brings forth fruit, so the righteous brings forth lasting fruit.

The ungodly do not stand. They have no certain fountain of water, so they dry up. They are not fixed, so they drift with the wind. They will not stand in the congregation of the righteous, and cannot stand in the day of judgment which will surely come.

The “blessed” man does not “sit” in the seat of the scornful. The scornful is a fool resting upon a false hope. He is at ease when he derides the righteous and mocks the warnings of a Holy God, but his rest and security are a delusion. It will surely fail. The blessed man rests under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty. The righteousness of Christ is his hope and refuge. Because his “leaf,” the vitality of his life, gathers food from the eternal God, it shall never wither, but will prosper in all that he does.

-C.M.