

January 1, 2012

THE BLESSED MAN
Psalm 1

This Psalm sets the tone of all the Psalms. **The** subject is Spiritual (eternal) blessedness. **It** IDENTIFIES the õblessedö man and DISTINGUISHES him from the õungodlyö (or wicked) man.

We need to make a distinction here between the TEMPORAL blessings of God and the SPIRITUAL ones. **All** (without exception) are õblessedö of God in a TEMPORAL way. **Every** breath we take, **every** beat of our heart, **every** recovery from sickness, **every** day of success, **even** life itself is a TEMPORAL blessing from God.

Look at Matt 5: 45 “**He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.**”

The TEMPORAL Goodness of God is extended to ALL (without exception). **God’s** TEMPORAL Mercy reaches the elect, as well as, the non elect. **These** TEMPORAL õblessingsö of God fall on the saved, as well as, the lost. **No** indication of salvation.

This Psalm is not about TEMPORAL blessings. **It is** about God’s SPIRITUAL (eternal) blessings.

Look at Psalm 1: 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.**”

As you can see, this covers the entire man, (õwalkingö, õstandingö, õsittingö). **It is** his WHOLE person. **It is** all that a man IS and all that a man DOES (in a Spiritual sense).

This man is NOT õblessedö BECAUSE he does these things. (**I.e.** He is NOT õblessedö BECAUSE he **does not** õwalkí ö, or õstandí ö, or õsití ö). **But**, rather, he DOES these things because he IS õblessedö. **Being** õblessedö is the REASON he does these things. **HIS** doing is NOT the CAUSE of his õblessednessö. **Rather**, his õblessednessö is the CAUSE of his DOING.

Now, this is just the opposite of our natural way of thinking. **When** it comes to being õblessedö of God, this is NOT the way our (untaught) minds would go. **By** nature we think that blessedness from God is the result of OUR doing. **We** think it is the result of OUR efforts. **Our** natural desire is to believe that we are in the favor of God (õblessedö) because WE have DONE something.

This is what we WANT. **It is** what we WANT to believe. **And**, this is what the õungodlyö teach us. **They** teach us what we WANT to hear. **This** is the õcounsel of the ungodlyö. **To tell** a sinner that God will õblessö them IF they will just DO (something) is õungodlyö. **It is** õwickedö. **It is** opposed to God’s testimony.

What does God say on this matter? **How** does God say that sinners are õblessedö?

Look at Ephesians 1: 3-6 “**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:**

4 **According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him.**

5 In love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

This tells us that GOD is the One who has õblessedö sinners. **And**, He õblessedö these sinners with õALL spiritual blessingsö. **He** õblessedö them õin Christö. **He** õblessedö them õbefore the foundation of the worldö. **This** õblessingö is according to õHis willö. **It** is to the praise of the glory of õHis graceö. **God** (Himself) has õmade us accepted in Christö.

Do you see ANYTHING in here about a sinner DOING something in order to BECOME õblessedö? **NO!** **God** has done the õblessingö. **The** sinners that are õblessedö have done NOTHING to be there. **They** have done NOTHING to deserve it. **They** have NOTHING to obtain it. **There** have made NO contribution.

It is GOD who sovereignly chose them. **It is** GOD who MADE them õaccepted in the belovedö. **It is** GOD who has õblessedö them. Sinners do not/cannot DO anything to BECOME õblessedö. Rather, sinners FIND themselves AMONG those God has õblessedö from all eternity.

“Noah FOUND grace in the eyes of the Lord.” I.e. **He** FOUND himself AMONG those whom God had õblessedö in Christ õbefore the foundation of the worldö.

Psalm 1 is NOT teaching a sinner how to BECOME õblessedö by DOING. **It is**, rather, teaching us how to IDENTITY the man whom God has õblessedö. **It is** teaching us how to DISTINGUISH that man from the õcursedö man, the õwickedö man, the õungodlyö man.

It is a Psalm to teach us how to IDENTIFY and DISTINGUISH those whom God has õblessedö from those that give no evidence of such õblessingö.

We will see in this Psalm that the õblessed man is THREE things. **He** is:

1. The DELIVERED man.
2. The DELIGHTED man.
3. The DETERMINED man.

FIRST, the õblessedö man is the DELIVERED man. **He** has been DELIVERED from the õungodlyö.

Look back at Psalm 1:1 **“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.”**

We saw in Ephesians 1, this man has been õblessedö from eternity. **God** chose him IN CHRIST õbefore the foundation of the worldö. **He** has been given õall spiritual blessings in Christö. **So**, does this mean that the õblessedö NEVER walked, or stood, or sat with the õungodlyö?

No! **He** has BEEN there, DONE that. **The** õcounsel of the ungodlyö, the õway of sinnersö, the õseat of the scornfulö, these represent the natural (spiritual) direction of all (without exception).

So, up front, we need to know something. **Who** are **“the ungodly?”** **These** are NOT the lawless, the immoral, or the profane. **“Ungodly”** (in this Psalm) is addressing a Spiritual condition. **This** Psalm is addressing the (spiritually) õblessedö and the (spiritually) õungodlyö.

ōThe ungodlyö are described in the Scriptures. One way is as òfalse prophetsö.

Look at Matthew 7: 15 “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

“The ungodlyö are recognized by their òfruitsö (their DOCTRINE). The òungodlyö are those who look (in appearance) like the òblessedö. They come in òsheep’s clothingö. They appear to be concerned for sheep. They come preaching salvation. They call their salvation ògraceö. They say it is all of Christ. **But**, they always add that condition.

Another way the òungodlyö are described is as those who come wanting to give you òcounselö, wanting to give you advice or to influence your (spiritual) direction, but NOT by the Gospel.

Look at 2 John 9-10 “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10 ¶ If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:”

The òungodlyö are those who do not know God, nor do they seek God, nor do they worship God. They call their salvation a salvation of ògraceö. **But** (in reality) it is WORKS in disguise. **Jude** described the òungodlyö.

Look at Jude 4 “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The end of the òungodlyö is eternal destruction. **Look at Psalm 1: 6 “For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”**

But, the Bible is also clear that “**Christ died for the ungodly**” and that “**God justifies the ungodly**”.

Look at Romans 5: 6 “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”

And Romans 4: 5 “**But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”**

All start out among (aligned with) the òungodly. The òungodlyö perish, along with, all who remain aligned with them. **But** NOT ALL who start out òamongö the òungodlyö remain there. **God** shows Mercy to SOME. **He** graciously DELIVERS (some).

So, we must understand that the òblessedö man is NOT the man who NEVER walked with the òungodlyö. **He** is the man who NO LONGER òwalksö there. **He** NO LONGER òstandsö or òsitsö there. **The** òblessedö man is the man whom God has graciously, mercifully DELIVERED from these things. **And**, it is in his DELIVERANCE that the òblessedö man is IDENTIFIED and DISTINGUISHED from the òungodlyö.

Look back at Psalm 1: 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.”

We can easily see three ways in which God has DELIVERED the õblessedö man from the õungodlyö.

First, he is DELIVERED from **õthe counsel of the ungodly**". "Counsel" is advice. **It is** direction. **The** õblessedö man is the man that does NOT take his õcounselö (advice/direction) from the õungodlyö. **He**, rather, takes his õcounselö from the scriptures.

Look at Romans 6: 17 "**But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.**"

"**That** FORM of doctrineö is the Gospel. **God** has brought the õblessedö man to the Gospel. **He** has taught the õblessedö man of Christ. **He** has made the õblessedö man õwilling in the day of His powerö to look to Christ ALONE.

The õblessedö man believes God. **He** takes God at his word. **He** is the sinner who ONCE took his õcounselö from the õungodlyö. **I.e.** **He** ONCE believed that God would save/bless because of something HE had done. **But**, God has (now) DELIVERED him (from) õthe counsel of the ungodlyö; and DELIVERED him (to) the Word of God (the Gospel).

We have already looked in depth at who the õungodlyö are. **But**, their BOTTOM LINE: **The** õungodlyö are those in every generation who INSIST that sinners are saved and õblessedö of God by what Christ did PLUS what sinners do. **It is** not Christø death ALONE.

According to the õungodlyö, sinners are not saved or õblessedö UNTIL they RESPOND to Christø death. **They** make the sinnerø RESPONSE the (real) CAUSE of salvation; the (real) CAUSE of Godø õblessingö.

That is the õcounselö (the direction) from which God DELIVERS those whom He has õblessedö. **They** õwalk not in the counsel of the *ungodlyö*.

Look back at Psalm 1: 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.**"

The SECOND way God has DELIVERED õthe blessedö man from the õungodlyö is by DELIVERING him from õthe way of sinnersö. **God** has DELIVERED him from THAT õwayö. **What** is the õWAY of sinnersö?

It is a õwayö that seems right, but ends in death. **Look** at Proverbs 16: 25 "**There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.**"

It is the õwayö of the õmanyö, as opposed to the õfewö.

Look at Matthew 7: 13-14 "**Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:**
14 **Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**"

God graciously DELIVERS õthe blessedö from the õway of sinnersö. **He** DELIVERS him from the õwayö of works to the õwayö of (true) grace.

Look back at Psalm 1: 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.**”

The THIRD way God has DELIVERED the õblessedö man from the õungodlyö is by DELIVERING him from the õthe seat of the scornfulö. **Who** are the õscornfulö?

The õscornfulö are those who have SETTLED on õthe way of sinnersö under õthe counsel of the ungodlyö. **They** are not irreligious men. **They** are, rather, those who REJECT the religion of TRUE õgraceö (salvation by Christ ALONE; based on His imputed Righteousness ALONE).

And, it is the õseatö of the scornful. A **seat** is where you settle down. **It’s** the place you have decided to stay; to take your stand. **The** õscornfulö are those who have SETTLED on salvation based (at least in part) on SOMETHING found IN themselves (rather than) on Christ ALONE. **They** have REJECTED (true) Grace.

They are those who PREFER õdarknessö to õthe lightö. Look at John 3: 18 “**He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**”

The one believing on HIM whom God has õlifted upö on the Cross, in the Resurrection, and in the Gospel is not õcondemnedö.

Look at John 3: 19 “**And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**”

“**The** scornfulö PREFER the õdarknessö. **And**, they do so because they have made õlies their refugeö.

Look at Isaiah 28: 14-15 “**Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.**

15 Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.”

(Outline). **So**, the õblessedö man is the DELIVERED man. **God** has DELIVERED him from õthe counsel of the ungodly, the way of sinners and the seat of the scornfulö.

SECOND, the õblessedö man is the DELIGHTED man.

Look at Psalm 1: 2 “**But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.**”

The õblessedö man is the DELIGHTED man. **He** DELIGHTS in the law of the Lord. **The** main difference here between the õblessedö and the õungodlyö is WHY the õblessedö DELIGHTS in the law.

Lost men, unregenerate sinners, (the õungodlyö) õdelightö in the law of God. **But**, their õdelightö in the law is for the WRONG reason. **By** nature we see the law as a MEANS of acceptance with God. **If you DO**, God will bless you. **If you TRY**, God will accept you. **If you** õdo the best you canö, you will find favor with God.

By far the majority of those who profess to be Christians make faith (believing) a law. How so? They make *faith* a law by making it a CONDITION for salvation. **If God** will NOT bless you or accept you or save you UNTIL you believe, then believing is a CONDITION. **It is** something a sinner MUST DO in order to be saved.

That, my friend, is a deed of law. **If you** DO something and that something you DID is ANY part of the CAUSE of God blessing, accepting or saving you, then, that SOMETHING has EARNED you salvation. **You** did. **You** obeyed. **And**, God rewarded your obedience.

These are WRONG ideas taught by misguided men. **And**, these WRONG ideas cause lost sinners to delight in the law for the WRONG reason. **The** Apostle Paul declared his DELIGHT in the law for the WRONG reason.

Look at Romans 7: 8-9 **“But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. 9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.”**

The hope of sinners is not OUR obedience to the law, but Christ's obedience unto death.

Look at Galatians 4: 4-5 **“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,**

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

Along with, Romans 10: 4 **“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”**

Christ is the end; He is the fulfillment of the law FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Jeremiah 17: 7 says **“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.”** **And**, Paul states that hope in Romans 7.

Look at Romans 7:24 **“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”**

Who will deliver a sinner from an inability to measure up to the law's demand for perfection, as well as, the demand of Justice for eternal punishment? **Who** will deliver a sinner from a desire to find some measure of confidence in HIS/HER obedience?

Look at Romans 7: 25 **“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.”**

If a sinner is blessed, accepted, or saved, it is NOT because the sinner has DONE (anything), but, rather, because Christ has done EVERYTHING. **We** are accepted in the beloved. **Salvation** is of the Lord. (beginning to end).

The blessed man is the DELIGHTED man. **He** DELIGHTS in the law of God. **He** DELIGHTS in that law as he sees it honored and magnified in the doing and dying of Christ. **He** DELIGHTS in the Righteousness Christ worked out for His people. **He** DELIGHTS in the God who justifies the ungodly based on Christ's Righteousness imputed ALONE.

(Outline). **So**, the õblessedö man is the DELIVERED man. **He is** the DELIGHTED man. And, THIRDLY, he is the DETERMINED man.

Look at Psalm 1: 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.”

The õblessedö man will bring forth his õfruitö. **His** leaf will not õwitherö. **And**, whatsoever he does, will (w/o fail) õprosperö. **Why** is that CERTAIN? **It is** CERTAIN because God has DETERMINED it to be so. **The** prosperity of the õblessedö man has been DETERMINED by God. **It is** not something the sinner has DETERMINED, but what God has DETERMINED for him.

He is not talking about physical prosperity. **The** õblessedö man may or may not õprosperö in this world. **But**, his (eternal) end is final glory. **His** (eternal) prosperity is CERTAIN, because God DETERMINED his end from the beginning.

Look at Isaiah 3: 10 “Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.”

Who are õthe righteous? **They** are those whom God has õmade righteousö (II Cor 5: 21). **They** are those DECLARED õrighteousö based on the imputed righteousness of Christ ALONE. **By** the Grace and Mercy of God and by the work of the Spirit within, õthe righteousö are those who (in time) look to Christ ALONE. **They** õbelieve in Him whom God has sentö. **They** õdo righteousnessö (i.e. find their hope and abide in Christ.).

Look at Hebrews 10: 39 “But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

They CANNOT õdraw backö (fall away), because they are being KEPT by the grace of God unto final glory.

Look at Phillipians 1: 3 and 6 “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:”

The õgood work begunö is God bringing õthe blessedö to Christ, õsealingö them in Christ and DELIVERING them from õthe ungodlyö; from those OPPOSED to Christ. **He** causes them to DELIGHT in His law as they see it fulfilled in Christ. **He** has DETERMINED their end and is bringing them to that end.

The õungodlyö are not left out here. **God** addresses them as well. **Remember** who they are! **The** õungodlyö are those who INSIST that a sinner is not saved UNTIL they do something. **They** are those who INSIST that there is more to salvation than Christø obedience unto death ALONE.

Look at Psalm 1: 4 “The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

They will NOT prosper. **They** are compared to õchaffö. **“Chaff”** is what is left after the grain has been separated from it. **It has** no SUBSTANCE. **It is** just a shell.

Look at Psalm 1: 5 “Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

“**Congregation**” is gathering. **When** the righteous are gathered (in final judgment), the ungodly won't be among them. There will be a FINAL separation.

The end of both is already DETERMINED.

Look at Psalm 1: 6 “For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

The way of the righteous is final glory. The Lord knows their way (i.e. He DETERMINED their way) before the world began.

The way of the ungodly is eternal death, also, DETERMINED by God beforehand. It is the DETERMINED end of those who refuse to be DELIVERED by the Gospel from the counsel of the ungodly, the way of sinners, the seat of the scornful.

The 25th chapter of Matthew's Gospel is describing the same ungodly sinners as this Psalm we have looked at. Look at Matthew 25: 46 “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

The command of the Gospel to all who hear it is: Be DELIVERED from the ungodly, their counsel, their way, their scorn.

I urge all who are listening: Seek to be DELIVERED from the ungodly. Be taught of God. Be DELIVERED to the Gospel. Find all your hope in Christ ALONE.

Seek to be found among those whom God IDENTIFIES as The blessed man.

By Mark Pannell