

# **“The chaff that the wind blows away.”**

Psalm 1:3-4

February 2, 2025

## **Psalm 1:3-4 (PowerPoint)**

### Preface

We would like to continue our study from the words of Psalm 1, our theme verse.

If there is one common denominator for all mankind, it is the desire to be “happy.”

And the Bible is God’s way of saying, “Blessed are all people”.

The Bible tells us that we can never find happiness in any other way than that which is presented here.

Therefore, the Bible is a universal book, a textbook for life, and a guide for the soul that applies to everyone, regardless of time or place.

It contains the entirety of the circumstances, situations, and ways of life that people will face and experience in their lives.

It is a message that is appropriate for any age, and it speaks of eternal truths that will never go out of date.

It is not old-fashioned or outdated, and is the most timely and appropriate book today to express the nature and state of the world in a straightforward manner without hesitation.

Forty-one years ago, when I was in elementary school, I longed for a home video game console called the “Family Computer.” I begged my parents to buy one for me, but they wouldn’t, so I managed to ask my older sister, who was already working, to buy one for me. The family computer has now become an antique, but the words of the Bible, which were timely and appropriate even in the world 41 years ago, are as fresh and contemporary a message as ever in this day and age.

The reason is that it is dealing with a theme that will never change.

It is the Word of God, spoken by an eternal and unchanging Holy God, on the immutable theme of “Blessedness.”

Therefore, as we have seen, a blessed person is one who rejoices in the Lord’s instruction and meditates on it day and night.

I believe that when people feel joy, enjoyment, pleasure, and happiness, it is when they acquire or wear something new or novel. The Word of God is always a source of happiness that makes human beings, who are spiritual creatures, embrace newness and freshness.

I was deeply pleased to read the confession of one young man who started reading the Bible using the Bible reading chart that began in January: "I enjoy reading the Bible every day, and I can't wait to read it again tomorrow".

I was really happy and thought the person is enjoying the blessings that the Lord's teachings become joy.

In thinking about the blessings of always being fresh and new, God has given us nothing more than the Bible, and it is no exaggeration to say that the content of the Bible is condensed in Psalm 1.

## Part One

Last month, we were taught the following through the words of Psalm 1:1-2. "People make the mistake of trying to be happy by seeking happiness directly. We also tend to think of happiness as something that depends on our environment and circumstances. But ultimate happiness is nurtured in our relationship with the one true God and depends on the state of our soul or spirit, which is nurtured by that relationship."

If happiness is dependent on circumstances and conditions, how difficult it is to obtain and how unstable it is to continue.

It is the true blessing taught by the Lord who never slumbers, never sleeps, and always protects us like His eyes.

It is a true blessing that the Lord, who protects us like His eyes without slumber or sleep, which is stable and always present, unaffected by anything outside of us, such as our environment, conditions, or state.

The true blessing that God teaches is that it depends not on what is on the outside, but entirely on what kind of relationship my inner man has with the true God.

So why can't we, as a people, believe in this blessing that the Bible speaks of and continue to experience it all the time?

The Bible says, "It is because people are so ignorant about themselves that they are unable to see themselves as they really are."

In what sense are they ignorant and unable to see?

The Bible teaches us, “It is due to ignorance that we think we are right and others are wrong. We do not see the great sin in our own eyes, which are like a log sticks, but we often see and discover the little dust and sawdust in the eyes of others, and that is all we see.

Such a cleverly evil and true picture of our own filthy, dirty, cunning hypocrisy can never be realized without believing the Lord’s teaching, that is, the message the Bible tells us.

And to realize it, or to be made aware of it, is an essential part of the true “blessings” that God teaches.

For example, we tend to always point out the wrongs of others, not only in our daily lives, but also in the news in newspapers and in the press. We naturally tend to be on the side of pointing out the wrongs, rather than on the side of being pointed out, and we unconsciously regard ourselves as the one who is righteous.

The evil that is being talked about does not come to us as a personal matter.

But the Bible tells us, “That wickedness is your wickedness.” Through fragments of history, through the real experiences and lives of real people, the Bible tells us bluntly, “That evil fact and example is exactly yours, too.”

It not only points out the evil, but also shows salvation from that evil and contrasts those who accepted the salvation shown to them with those who did not.

And today’s scripture, Psalm 1:3-4, describes that contrast.

The blessed and righteous are compared to the tree, and the wicked are compared to the chaff.

The blessed are those who have accepted God’s salvation as it is presented to them, and the unblessed are those who have not.

## Part Two

David, who is believed to be the author of Psalm 1, spoke through the love of God the Holy Spirit.

“Listen to me. There are two kinds of people in the world. No, there are only two kinds of people in the world: the righteous, like the tree planted by the stream, and the wicked, like the chaff blown away by the wind.”

“You are either blessed or you are not, depending on which of these two you belong to.”

“He who walks in the ways of the wicked, who stands in the way of sinners, who sits in the seat of scoffers, is like chaff; and he who takes delight in the instruction of the Lord, and hums it day and night, is like a tree.”

It asks, “Then are you chaff or wood?”

In the previous message, we explored from the Bible’s Word that “the wicked” does not mean the so-called wicked, but is broader, all those who say, “There is no God,” “those who do not value, find, seek, and discard the Word of God.”

This means that the “righteous one” is not someone who is ethically and morally great or a person of virtue. Rather, it means that “there is a God,” “I believe in the one true Triune God,” “Christ is that God born as a man,” “I truly acknowledge that I am an unstoppable, bottomless, dirty, poor sinner in his presence,” “I adore the Word of God,” and “the Word of God is my treasure,” “I feel nothing but sorry before the Word of God, and at the same time can only say thank you.”

And Psalm 1 speaks seriously of the tremendous consequences of this difference between the “wicked” and the “righteous,” the tremendous difference.

It is not just a big difference, but a difference that is not even close.

Let me read it again.

### **Psalm 1:3-4 (PowerPoint)**

What we are comparing here is not a comparison of two trees.

We are not comparing the difference between a grapevine and an olive tree, a plum tree and a cherry tree, or between two trees of grapevines or two cherry trees.

We are comparing something that is not even a comparison at all.

It is wood and chaff.

Fundamentally, essentially, there is no comparison, and the very existence itself is completely different.

It is trying to emphasize that there is nothing, absolutely nothing, that can be said to be in common between the two.

That is, the difference between those who believe in the true God and those who do not, between those who believe in the Lord Jesus and those who do not, between those who adore the Word of God and those who do not.

We are supposed to be the same human beings, but we are totally and utterly divided in our differences, as if we are not the same kind of beings and creatures.

And then it asks us,

“How well do you recognize the difference?”

How well do we recognize the difference between those who believe in God and those who do not believe in God, between those who believe in Christ and those who do not believe in Christ?

If we can recognize this difference at the level of this Psalm 1, we will be compelled to tell them about Jesus.

It seems to me that in our daily lives in the world, even Christians can lose sight of this difference.

Satan and his demons try to cloud our eyes every day as if we are only concerned with superficial things like “We are all the same human kind,” “We are all the same,” “We eat the same way, drink the same way, and live the same way, so let’s all get along with each other.”

And once our eyes are clouded, they think it’s done.

Rather than the difference between believing or not believing only true God, and the Lord Jesus, we become to see and associate based on the superficial things --- how good or bad they are, how useful or useless they are, how weather like or don’t like the same hobbies or interests, how much they like or don’t like the same things, how much they benefit or don’t benefit, how much do they like or don’t like the same things, how much they benefit us or not, whether we like them or not, and so on. And we will be calm in the things that matter most to them, whether they believe in Christ or not.

The historical fact disguising equanimity, the pain, is the Japanese churches during World War II, which incorporated emperor worship into their worship programs, sang Kimigayo in worship services, and accepted shrine visits as part of Japanese culture.

And even today in modern Japan, we still feel the after-effects of these practices, and we may be pretending to be unconcerned about them.

Jesus once told us that He did not come to this place to make us pretend to be calm, but that He came to “cause a holy wind and waves” and “to change you into people who will not remain unchanged if you ride the waves caused by that wind.”

### **Matthew 10:26-39 (PowerPoint)**

How many there are around us in this land of Japan, in this land of Tsuchiura, in this land of Tsukuba, in this land of Ami, in this land of Kasumigaura, who have never heard about Jesus?

If those who are called Christians know the difference between those who believe in Christ and those who do not believe in Christ as well as the difference between wood and chaff, that would be the most heart-wrenching reason, the most important issue for prayer, and the most important mission, purpose, and goal here on earth before being raised to heaven.

However, we tend to lose sight of the fact that we are living in the world under the hand of Satan, who has given us the illusion of prosperity and glory in the eyes of others.

Therefore, we seek only what is comfortable to our ears from the Word of God, from churches, from pastors, and from fellow Christians, and we end up saying, “Speak what is comfortable to us, even if it is deceitful.”

Christians speak of comfort if the Bible speaks of comfort, healing if the Bible speaks of healing, salvation if the Bible speaks of salvation, guidance if the Bible speaks of guidance, and protection if the Bible speaks of protection.

At the same time, I believe that we must speak of sorrow if the Bible speaks of sorrow, of judgment if the Bible speaks of judgment, of God’s wrath if the Bible speaks of God’s wrath, of the end if the Bible speaks of the end, of rebuke if the Bible speaks of rebuke, of guilt and punishment if the Bible speaks of guilt and punishment. But aren’t we avoiding harsh and clear words, and only using comfortable words as God’s words?

So, before long, we may lose sight of the incomparably great difference between believing in the only true God and not believing

in the only true God, between believing in Christ and not believing in Christ, as if we cannot even tell the difference between wood and chaff, and we may end up blurring and diluting the difference.

### Part Three

The meaning of the word of God which the author of Psalm 1 is speaking is that there is no commonality between the believer in Christ and unbeliever in Christ, who are compared as the tree and the chaff.

The two are in complete contrast.

And I feel as if we are being asked, “How well do you understand this fact?”

The Apostle Paul’s prayer in the book of Ephesians, which we have looked at length, expresses this very well.

#### **Ephesians 1:18-19 (PowerPoint)**

He prays, “May you realize how serious and awesome it is that you believe in God and believe in Christ, and may you know how serious and awesome it is that you do not believe in God and you do not believe in Christ.”

He does not pray, “Please grant us some wish,” but rather, “Please help us to understand the enormous difference between believing in God and not believing in God.”

The difference between a believer in Christ and a non-believer in Christ is not as simple as working Monday through Friday and going to church on Sunday, the first day of the week to attend services, or drinking less alcohol, or quitting smoking, or doing charity work or volunteer work that you have not done before. It is not a difference of degree.

It is not the difference between being well-behaved and being un-behaved.

It is a fundamental difference in human nature.

There are many people who do not believe in Christ, but who live in a way that everyone can say is wonderful from an ethical and moral standpoint.

There are many people who, when judged morally and according to social conventions, can be considered good.

It seems that there are many people who live and are lived by good deeds.

But if that person does not believe in Christ, then he or she is essentially different from those who do believe in Christ.

For example, when the twin brothers Esau and Jacob, who appear in the Bible, are compared, Esau seems to be a more honest person and lives a more whole life than Jacob.

But the Bible says, "It was Jacob whom God loved".

One may judge a person on the surface, but God is the One who sees the heart, the heart of the person.

Of course, the way a person conducts himself or herself and the way he or she lives his or her life will also be questioned, but whether the basis for that conduct is self or God will be questioned.

The Lord God is the one who cares most about whether or not Jesus is at the root, the foundation, and the depths of a person's being, and that determines who a person is.

So David, the author of Psalm 1, compared this crucial difference to a tree planted by a stream and the chaff blown away by the wind.

In the New Testament, too, in a conversation with an influential man of the town named Nicodemus, Jesus said, "A Christian is not a man who adds, value to what he was before, but a man born again in God."

Nicodemus was an influential and powerful man in human society, so he thought that he could become a Christian with what he had cultivated or by adding something else to it, but this was not the case.

### **John 3:3 (PowerPoint)**

It is a Christian who must be born again, who has been made a completely different person.

Let us go to Second Corinthians.

### **2 Corinthians 5:17 (PowerPoint)**

He is a different person, not just slightly better than he was in the past, or able to do an inversion that he could not do.

He is a new creation.



The Christian is that the Divine One, who created heaven and earth and all things, has made something new that has never existed before.

I would like to look at one more passage.

### **Ephesians 2:1, 5 (PowerPoint).**

It says, “The difference between a Christian and a non-Christian is as great as death and life.”

It says, “He took those who were dead and finished with them and transferred them to those who are alive with new life.”

In Psalm 1, this difference is likened to the difference between a tree planted by a stream rich in life and the chaff without life.

### Conclusion

The Bible calls those who have believed in Jesus the righteous.

The Bible says, “Righteousness does not depend on what we do, but on whether or not we have believed in the Lord Jesus.”

Of course, our belief in Jesus will show in our deeds, but our deeds are not the basis for a righteousness or righteous person.

A person who is connected to God, a person who is connected to Christ, is like a tree planted by the stream, a righteous person.

That is, righteousness is where we place ourselves.

The person who places himself in his beliefs, in what he has mastered, in what he thinks is right, is not a righteous person, but chaff.

A righteous person is one who breaks his convictions, who can truly believe that what he has mastered is dust because of Christ, and who can always acknowledge before God the danger of his idea of rightness and poor in heart.

A righteous person is one who is connected to Christ.

“What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

“For Christ, who is seated at the right hand of God, has interceded for us in our misery, making us the overwhelming victors in God’s love, which renders everything, even death, man’s greatest enemy, powerless.”(Romans 7:24-8:37). The Bible calls the one who put themselves on this confession of the apostle of Paul.

Are we the righteous people the Bible says we are?  
Or are we the pseudo-righteous people the world claims us to be?  
Are we the righteous connected to Christ?  
Are we the chaff that is not connected to Christ?  
Are we blessed people for whom the Word of Christ is like a rich stream of water that makes us realize the enduring newness of the life that has been given to us?  
Or are we an evil persons, like chaff, who has placed ourselves in words other than the Word of Christ?

We wish to be persons who are not chaff, not bad persons, but trees planted by the stream, persons who resolve daily to walk as righteous and blessed persons, and to savor the taste of it.

Next week, we will consider the four characteristics of the chaff that is blown away by the wind.

Let's pray.

Benediction: Psalm 1:3-4