

Sunday, June 14, 2020—Planted by the Rivers of Water

### **Introduction**

- I have been giving a lot of thought to what I wanted to say this morning. In all my 20 years of ministry I have never experienced anything like what we have all been through in the last 3 months with the Corona Virus.
- I have tried my best as a Pastor to address the situation from the point of view of God's word. My Mid-Week Messages were geared toward addressing our current circumstances through the prism of history and the word of God.
- Through it all I have made many observations and pondered on many things some of which I will share many of which I am still thinking about and studying my way through. I would like to share the following with you this morning.
  - Facebook and Social Media are in many respects a waste of time and a hindrance to one's spiritual well-being and a renewed mind.
  - The only thing you can trust to give you the truth is a King James Bible rightly divided.
  - We need God now more than ever and our number one priority needs to be the cultivation of a personal relationship with the God of the universe based upon his written word, the indwelling Holy Spirit, and other members of the body of Christ.
- Galatians 1:4—"the present evil world"
- Ephesians 2:2—"the course of this world" is in full swing.
- II Thessalonians 2:7-8—"the mystery of iniquity"
- Colossians 3:2—as believers our affections need to be focused heavenward. We need to be rooted and grounded (Col. 2:7) in the bedrock of Christ while we fix our gaze heavenward for the realization of hope (I Thess. 1:10, 4:16; Col. 3:4) and the appearing of Christ.
- This morning I would like to use Psalm 1 to illustrate these points.

### **Psalms 1**

- Psalms 1:1—blessing and stability in your life is not going to come from walking with those who are in league with "the course of this world."

- Romans 12:2—*And be not conformed to this world*—this is a negative phrase; it is instructing believers what “not” to be. Paul does not want believers to be “conformed to this world.”
- The verb translated “conformed” appears one other time in the Greek text of the New Testament supporting the KJB. The Greek word carries the following meaning “to conform one's self (i.e. one's mind and character) to another's pattern.”
  - I Peter 1:14—“not fashioning yourselves according to”
- Romans 12:2—Paul does not want believers to be fashioning themselves according to the world. Believers are to be of a different character than the world.
- The Greek verb translated “conformed” is in the present tense and the imperative mood which means that Paul instructions are a present command. In the present, Paul does not want believers to be conformed to this world. The voice, however, is either middle or passive. This means that in terms of being conformed to this world one can either be actively engaged in the process or passively engaged in the process. The bottom line is this, conformity to the world is happening regardless of whether you are actively practicing or not.
- but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind—how are we to avoid conformity with the world? By being “transformed.” The Greek word translated “transformed” is the word *metamorphoō* which means “to change into another form.” This is where we get our English word metamorphosis which means:
  - The action or process of changing in form, shape, or substance
  - A complete change in the appearance, circumstances, condition, or character of a person
- We see this in the process whereby a caterpillar transforms into a butterfly. Conformity to the world is combated by transformation. One is going to either be conformed or transformed, there is no middle ground.
- Psalms 1:2—note the contrast “but” at the beginning of verse 2. The blessed man’s “delight is in the law of the Lord.” According to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* the English word “delight” means, “A high degree of pleasure, or satisfaction of mind; joy.”
- All the things humans are looking for and seeking after pleasure, stratification of mind, and joy are found in the law of the Lord i.e., the word of God and nowhere else.

- Mark well, however, in verse 2 that the blessed man meditates upon the word of God day and night. Webster defines the word verb meditate as follows:
  - To dwell on anything in thought; to contemplate; to study; to turn or revolve any subject in the mind; appropriately but not exclusively used of pious contemplation, or a consideration of the great truths of religion.
- Meditation gets a bad wrap in the Christian world because of its ties to Eastern Religion and Mysticism. That said, God’s word has much to say about meditation.
  - Meditation—Ps. 5:11, 19:14, 49:3, 104:34, 119:97, 99
  - Meditate—Gen. 24:63; Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2, 63:6, 77:12, 119:15, 23, 48, 78, 148; Is. 33:18; Luke 21:14; I Tim. 4:15
  - Mind the things of—Rom. 8:5
  - Minded—Rom. 8:6; Phil. 3:15; Titus 2:6; Jam. 1:8, 4:8
- Psalms 1:1-2—the blessed man delights in the word of God and meditates upon it day and night. Talk about the white noise of media.
  - Deuteronomy 11:18
- Psalms 1:3—note the simile at the beginning of verse 3. The man who delights in the law of God and meditates upon it day and night “shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.”
  - Colossians 2:7
- Next notice the practical results of being planted by the “rivers of water.”
  - Fruit is born and brought forth in its season.
    - Romans 6:22, 7:4
    - Galatians 5:22
    - Ephesians 5:9
  - Evergreen whose “leaf shall not wither.”
  - “Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”
    - Colossians 3:17, 23

- *The Tree Song* by Ken Medema
  - I saw a tree by the riverside one day as I walked along,  
Straight as an arrow,  
And pointing to the sky, growing tall and strong.  
How do you grow so tall and strong?" I said to the riverside tree.  
This is the song my tree friend sang to me.  
I have roots growing down to the water.  
I have leaves reaching up to the sunshine.  
And, the fruit that I bear is the sign of the life in me.  
I am shade from the hot summer sundown.  
I am nests for the birds of the heaven.  
I'm becoming what the maker of trees  
Has meant me to be: a strong, young, tree. . .
- Psalms 1:4—the ungodly aren't like the tree planted "by the rivers of water." They are like to chaff which the wind driveth away. They aren't root or ground so therefore they have no life.
  - Ephesians 4:14
- As evil men and seducers wax worse and worse (II Tim. 3:13) what are we choosing to meditate upon? The media in all its forms or the word of God? What is doing to bring joy and fruit in your life and stabilize you during hard times? The word of God.
- Philippians 3:10—Paul's desire was to "know" Christ. Hadn't Paul seen and spoken to the risen and glorified Christ? In what sense did Paul want to "know him?"
- The Greek word translated "know" in this verse is the *ginōskō*. Consider the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> meanings of this word, according to *Strong's Concordance*.
  - to learn to know, come to know, get a knowledge of perceive
  - to become acquainted with, to know
- Paul didn't just want to know stuff about God (*gnosis* or *epignōsis*) he wanted to know or become acquainted with Jesus Christ in the personal details of his own life.
- This is what we need now more than ever a personal relationship with the God of the universe who has made you his friend by reconciliation so that when the storms of life come we are like those trees in Palms 1 planted by the rivers of water.
- We need to be like the trees rooted and ground in Christ with arms reaching toward heaven in anticipation of the manifestation of the son of God.