

6/9/19 - Psalms 1-2 - "Rooted & Rebuilt"

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[0 : 00] Please pray with me. Father, we are grateful to be gathered under your word. It is an absolute privilege and honor to have this scripture in front of us, that we are freely studying this without fear of necessarily any immediate persecution right now.

But Father, focus our attention at this time as we experience your peace through your scripture. And Father, through your word, instill within us a way of living. Father, speak to us in our wickedness, but also in our blessedness.

But we know that it's only through Christ Jesus that we are considered blessed. Lord, let this be imprinted upon our minds this morning. We pray this in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

Psalms 1 reads, I'm going to read all the way through the end of Psalm 2. It says, Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord. And on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.

[1 : 15] In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. Psalm 2 continues, Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.

He who sits in the heavens laughs. The Lord holds them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury, saying, As for me, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.

I will tell of the decree. The Lord said to me, You are my son. Today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth will be your possession.

[2 : 26] You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them into pieces like a potter's vessel. Now, therefore, O king, be wise. Be warned, O rulers of the earth.

Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way. For his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

The first point this morning that I want to draw out is the line in the sand. Verse 1 says, Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.

Within this one verse in particular, it literally encapsulates three postures of the human experience. Humans being in motion.

We're always on the go. We run on Starbucks, and, you know, American runs on Dunkin'. We're always on the move. We're always headed in direction that's part of the human experience.

[3 : 32] But also, it talks about an established disposition of nor sits in the way of sinners. That we choose our allegiance. And also, the third disposition, the third posture, is a settled in, a certain comfortability.

That in the human experience, we like to be comfortable. We like to find comforts. The human desire is one that wants to be going in the right direction. We always want to be headed in the right direction.

We always want to represent the right side of history. And we are also ones who long for rest in the presence of good company. Within a single verse, these three postures are illustrated in a tense relationship with a people group on the basis of their lack of relation to God's law.

Some commentators see this verse in an artistic form, which it creates sort of a downward progression of terms. To walk, to stand, and then to sit.

Well, I do see that. And since Hebrew poetry is visually artistic in nature, I do see that. But I also want to see how we actually can see a certain emphasis of our posture and what it communicates about our attitudes.

[4 : 50] That as we're walking, it creates an attitude as we're walking that we have the choice and ability to choose whether we continue or to stop. We can actually, as we're walking, we can change direction very quickly.

When we're standing, it symbolizes a decision made that when we actually find the direction we're traveling, that we choose to stand in that direction and stand on that side of history.

And that we're pledging our allegiance, that we're casting our anchor into this side. But we also see an attitude of sitting symbolizing our comfortability and sometimes, church, being in the wrong place.

As this verse says, In contrast, this blessed man is not one who walks in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.

This is a man who has a sharp identity, and there is no question in his attitude which works in complete opposition to the wicked. It is observable in his conduct.

[6 : 00] It is verifiable in his speech, and it is testable when it's questioned. But what is his attitude precisely? Continue to read in verse 2.

It says, But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. In the Old Testament narratives, I can recall a man specifically who was like this.

His name was Joshua. The Lord actually said these words to Joshua in Joshua 1.8. The Lord said, This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it.

For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. This blessed man was not merely a feel-safe kind of person.

He wasn't just attending the Scriptures and meditating on the Lord's day and night to get his certain fill as might be selfishly driven to Scripture.

[7 : 06] Like, I'm feeling depressed. I need to go to God's Word. Well, that's not a bad inclination. That wasn't his motive. But he delighted in the law of the Lord.

There was a different attitude than just survival, but this was a place where, just like we can dream of our summer vacations being in the Caribbean, it's something where we just would love for ourselves to be at all times.

And that is his delight in the law of the Lord, the instruction of the Lord. And at this time period, as the author is speaking about, it's the first five books of Moses. And this man cannot, not only delighted in this message, but the delight caused him to meditate on it day in and day out, symbolizing every waking and sleeping moment.

There's a, in the author of Reformed Systematic Theology, something that a group of guys are reading right now, Joel Beakey says about the Bible, the Bible is a source of truth, like a fountain of pure water in a world where all other sources have been contaminated by harmful substances and the activity of corrupt humanity.

If we believe this, then we will drink deeply of the Holy Scriptures in as little as possible of the world of lies. This relationship with the written word of God is a complete intellectual engagement, that what we're reading, we're actually understanding.

[8 : 34] We're not reading like a Bible reading plan, just like a marathon throughout the year. Oh, I want to read the Bible in 90 days. Well, I want you to comprehend the Bible in 90 days. That's a different story.

That's a different topic. But to actually read, having an intellectual engagement with the text is something far more deeply rich and which will actually bring about this attitude of delight in the Scripture.

This was the key of this blessed man's walk. This was the position where he stood. This was the community of where he sat. The author continues with this idea as he brings about two metaphors into play with the tree and the chaff as we continue to read in verse 3.

Look down with me. You know, just coming off of the series in Colossians, if you're new with us this morning, we just finished a 15-message series in Colossians.

I would hope that if you have attended this series, at least up until this point, you kind of understand precisely what's being communicated here. That the growth in fruit produced through our lives is completely dependent upon where we are planted, where our roots are reaching, where we have walked, where we stand, and where we choose to sit.

[10 : 10] The effect is that then that we'll be prosperous in all that we do. And note, just a side note, this isn't saying that we'll be prosperous in all that we get.

It's a contentious point in some churches today, but it's actually prosperity in all that we do. As the Lord was even encouraging Joshua, in all that he does, in all that he conducts in his business of serving the Lord, he will prosper.

It's not saying, Joshua, you're going to get a big army. You're going to have all this stuff. You're going to be financially wealth. You're going to have the most sheep of all the livestock in the land. No.

In all that we do, not of what we get. Delighting in the law of the Lord, we will prosper us in what we do, not in what we get. This tree, which represents the blessed life in this passage, is not just a planted tree anywhere.

It's not just on a hard place, on a mountain. It's not planted in the sand. It's strategically planted near streams of water to provide the proper nutrients that it needs to grow and endure.

[11 : 17] Literally, the reference in this tree, in this passage, should actually speak very heavily on the significance of endurance.

Endurance in the Christian life. I think with like maybe \$20,000 to \$40,000, you can buy an actual like fully matured tree.

Like it comes at a cost. You can actually buy that, which is crazy, a crazy amount of money for a tree. And you're talking about an American culture that we can barely wait long enough for bananas to ripen on a countertop.

We are just so, we want things here and now. Maybe I'm the only one with the banana that can relate to this banana ripening thing.

No? Okay, maybe it's a thing. But if you could imagine, what it's talking about is there was a beginning of this tree being planted in this passage. And you could imagine the first probably, first decade of its sprouting, it's just the weak, feeble tree that can, honestly, we could step on and probably crack its early growing trunk.

[12 : 32] But what this passage is talking about is endurance. That when we are planting ourselves, when we're delighting in God's Word and it's feeding us the nutrients that's bringing us back to it out of our delight for the Scriptures, that this is an ongoing process of endurance and him mentioning tree in this passage is an artistic expression to point us to the endurance in our Christian walk.

That this is a long-term process. A tree doesn't reach a full, a maximum height like our crazy oak trees that we have in our backyard that scare the daylights out of me when storms come in.

When you get that massive size, those things have been there for hundreds of years. And the adoration, the delight that comes from this may take 50 plus years.

It might take a whole lifetime to get to this point, but we have to remain planted. Unlike the chaff as this contrasts, which in comparison at a moment's notice is blown away at the slightest gust of wind.

If anybody's familiar with what the verse is talking about, weed and chaff, you know, you shake the chaff out and so it separates naturally. It's an old farmer's trick to separate the two.

[13 : 46] And the chaff just blow away. And then you got, you know, the harvest of wheat. The chaff's destination is unknown in a literal sense. It could end up miles away.

It could end up a couple feet away. But in a biblical sense in this passage, the chaff is a representation of those who are wicked. And church, this contrast really does hurt because the wicked are compared to dead, rootless plants.

And their destruction is well known, biblically speaking, as verse 5 and 6 continue, therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous for the Lord knows the way of the righteous but the ways of the wicked will perish.

While the wicked may stand for some time on this earth, they might have their glory moments on this earth in living in rebellion to God and they might have certain titles and offices and they might actually have some success but their success is not rooted in the word and it will not endure through eternity.

There's a big difference between being a blessed man rooted in his word and being a wicked man blown away like chaff at a certain time in judgment. This person will not stand in judgment and they will not sit in the congregation of the righteous.

[15 : 05] The line in the sand in point one is drawn and the destination of those who walk in a way that is in opposition to what the Lord declares in their lives leads to hell.

As verse 6 speaks, the way of the wicked will perish. The way as we're talking about direction and emphasis on terms. Second point as we go into chapter 2 in Psalms is chained to the world or chained to the word.

Psalms chapter 2 continues, Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed saying, Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.

What we see here is a fallacy of breaking free, the wicked breaking free. The wicked speak in this passage. As I said in Hebrew poetry you see very emphases.

Well, each one of these paragraphs is actually broken up for a purpose because in each one of these paragraphs a different person is speaking. So let's focus on who's speaking here.

[16:17] The wicked are speaking in this passage. The way of the world has historically worked in complete opposition with the ways of the Lord.

We see this all throughout Scripture. We see it even in modern ages in China burning thousands and thousands of Bibles trying to get rid of this word that is actually prohibiting from wicked people from carrying out their own agendas.

They try to rip pages out of here to support their agendas. They are like these people. Let us burst their bonds apart. Let us cast away the cords from among us. Throw this thing away because it's hindering me from fulfilling what I desire to fulfill.

Those who are caught and entangled in their wickedness rage with fury like a stormy sea trying to resist God's government and structure.

The wicked, again, they set themselves in a certain manner apart from the Lord. They take counsel together and this is in complete opposition to the Lord. The wicked work in complete rebellion against God and if this passage is ringing true, they work against the Lord and, notice, and his anointed and it's capitalized anointed meaning Jesus.

[17:35] The fallacy of the world is a better way. The wickedness in this world will promise a better way. There are numerous supreme examples of this attitude playing out in Old Testament narratives like saying, let's try it this way.

Why not a little change? I have an idea, says the judges all throughout the times of Israel. Oh, I got an idea. Oh, we'll do it this way. Trust me. Look at these muscles.

I got it all figured out as they establish various kings and judges throughout all Israelite's history. You know, there was a time period when I was younger when I thought I had really good ideas and they actually ended up being not so good ideas.

One time in high school there was a health class that I attended and we were doing helmet safety and my big idea that I thought was a great idea was let me ride this scooter and ride it off of this creek bridge into the creek and we'll be practicing helmet safety and it will be really cool because all the friends will laugh and we'll be like cool hardcore guys so here comes Brent down this hill on his scooter and off this 10 foot bridge down into a creek and there I lay in the creek.

My head was protected but my ankle was severely injured and how stupid we can be in our ideas that we have.

[19:14] How stupid that the world can be trying to burst their bonds apart from this word of trying to do it their own way. Let's try it this way.

Why not change this? Why not take in God we trust off these coins? What does that even mean? It's been there for years. Yeah, whatever. Just do away with it. It means nothing. Nah. We're going in a new direction.

Let's do it this way. All secular and actually religious realms I believe have said this at one point in history or another to break the bonds secular and religious.

Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away the cords from us. But the Lord speaks in verse 4 in the next paragraph the Lord speaks he says in verse 4 he who sits in the heavens laughs the Lord holds them in derision meaning mockery he holds them in mockery then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury saying as for me I have set my king on Zion my holy hill.

But God is sovereign. We have heard that term and phrase spoken in various churches and things like that with various implications in different settings.

[20 : 35] We've heard time in and time out again that the Lord is still the Lord literally sovereign supreme authority over the world and its affairs regardless of the wickedness that may endure despite the rebellion and breaking free from him.

It is something difficult to think about but literally the rebellion of the wicked is something David poses as something that is humorous to the Lord. Like really? The author of this song is saying that the Lord is laughing at wickedness holds them to their mockery.

That moment that the wicked man thinks that they have the last word in the matter saying oh I got the Lord good in this one. Like this idea is actually better than all this garbage in here don't pay attention to that.

That the oh the world all of a sudden revolves around this person and his idea this brings about a very dark and terrifying moment that will come regardless of the temporal success in this moment.

The Lord will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury. And we see in this passage the Son speaking the direction of his wrath and fury points them actually to Jesus.

[21 : 50] And an illustration which is identified as my king on Zion is as verse 6 says my king on Zion my holy hill. Zion as seen in 1 Kings you got a lot of church words Zion is one of them that sometimes we're singing songs and talking about Zion and we don't know what we're singing about we're just singing to Zion everybody's clapping and singing.

Well Zion actually had a specific purpose and a role in 1 Kings 8 it was selected by David as a place of the ark and the seats of God's visible presence. This pointed forward at this time period to the coming King Jesus which David's kingship was actually a foreshadow of the uppercase King Jesus to come.

And David continues in this verse 7 he says I will tell of the degree the Lord said to me you are my son today I have decod in you ask of me and I will make your nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession.

And keeping in mind David's kingship being a shadow of the king to come we can see the development occurred actually taking place in 1 Samuel 7 where there was a promise established of the Davidic covenant in 1 Samuel 7 and we are actually going to talk more in length about that as the Psalms continue it is a very central point of the Psalms as well but the promise of the covenant was not only merely for David's earthly descendants in mind but it also pointed to the divine son Jesus whom David was also an ancestor David was used by the Lord to conquer as verse 9 highlights it says break them with a rod of iron and dash them into pieces like a potter's vessel and likewise Jesus was used by the Lord in the same exact fashion toward the wicked on the earth as we read in chapter 1 as well especially those through conquering sin on the cross that he has dashed sin into pieces he has broken sin with a rod of iron and notice how this is also not just a minor action the mention of rod of iron in this passage symbolizes the severity of what's being discussed here breaking with a rod of iron means severity it's drawing the severity toward the wicked and dashing them into pieces literally means is trying to highlight the destruction the utter destruction of the wicked we covered a lot this morning and there's a lot of content within these pages and we're going to continue to build upon these ideas but leading into the third point this morning

I want us to see the crossroads church there is no good news without an accurate comprehension of the bad news there is no good news if there isn't the bad news I think being in a New Testament church on this side of history we can often come to scripture and just start out with the good news everything is good news Jesus saved Jesus saved Jesus saved well guess what Jesus also breaks the sinner down with a rod of iron but he doesn't leave us that way how dare we ever find ourselves obtaining a righteousness of our own having faith without repentance in the church today living in Christ without dying to our fleshly desires and motives daily there is no dividing line between the blessed man and the wicked man as you can see the line in the sand drawn in chapter 1 there is no line in the sand the line has faded often in our culture today between the church and the world the blessedness and the wickedness the Bible says there is no one righteous no not one it is quite interesting how we can read this passage and identify with the blessed man so quickly like oh I got this

[26 : 05] I got this I'm doing good I'm delighted in the Lord I'm reading the scripture we could totally forget that we were once completely lost in complete rebellion toward God in the direction of our walk in the direction of the place of where we stood and where we once dwelled complete wickedness and rebellion to God there's a has anybody worked with clay it mentioned dashing to pieces the potter's vessel does anybody have any experience working with clay in high school or maybe some craft projects in the community well when you work with clay it's actually really fascinating and kind of odd at the same time just every little every minor motion applied amount of pressure can make a difference in making this clay so you have this clay this potter's vessel that this is talking about and as we are creating God's image and while we are created in a certain manner before we know Christ we are in a certain form and the unique thing about clay and working with clay is that you can reuse the scraps and make a new mold you can completely just ball it up and put it in with all the scraps that fell down on the floor and make something new when the reality of the gospel hits us when the breaking of sinners with a rod of iron and dashing the sinner's life into pieces this is true supremely without a doubt but this is only half the story but God in his goodness and his kindness and his mercy towards the sinner he sent

Jesus and through faith alone the broken potter's vessel though it has been completely shattered the Lord makes a new one out of the same material he rebuilds the potter's vessel he takes the broken pieces and then remolds it and shapes it into a new creation this is the gospel church this is the gospel and today as we come to a close in verse 10 it reads now therefore oh kings be wise be warned oh rulers of the earth serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling kiss the son lest he be angry and you perish in the way for his wrath is quickly kindled blessed are all who take refuge in him church sinners saints wherever you are this morning be wise through this passage in scripture be warned in this scripture serve the

Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling kiss the son which is meaning an act of submission submission it's culturally relevant to that time of kissing the son is an act of submission meaning submit to Christ submit to Christ be wise be warned serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling and kiss the son submit to Jesus Christ if you're a Christian gathered with us this morning well I can be assured many of us you know just surveying the faces are our Christians gathered today that have been broken have been shattered our rebellion against him and he is making something new now I encourage you to take seriously the use of this Bible as being a gauge and a measuring stick in how you conduct your life how you conduct your sanctification how you're doing when you walk out of these doors yeah it's one thing to clap and dance and do the motions within the church you know not everyone that comes to the Lord will say

Lord Lord didn't we do signs and wonders in your name and do this and that doesn't this verify that we actually had faith the Lord said in the sermon on the mount depart from me I never knew you if you are in this room and pledge your allegiance to Christ use this scripture when you leave this not just when you're in community but when you leave here when you're with the wicked world when you're with people when you're working at Perkins when you're working at Valaric when you're working at InfoCision when you're at your place of job being at YSU use this as a measuring stick consistently in the sanctification how are we doing in this where are we drawing the line in our lives is our identity and allegiance clearly with God without a shadow of doubt as the blessed man in chapter one who are we taking allegiance with and who do we sit with is that line faded kind of a faded you don't know where it begins where it ends or is it sharply defined in hopes to proclaim the gospel to the wicked world are we living on the side of those who are wicked are we playing games with one foot in the church and one foot out of the church kind of just balancing this juggling act between what God desires in your life and what the world desires in your life how are we doing with this how are we treating our spouses in this manner let your delight be in the law of the

Lord and on his law meditate on this day and night let the expression of salvation flow out of our lives to identify us with the planted tree and not the chaff in order to be useful in his church here and now at Youngstown Metro and with our families church we need more trees you gotta know what I'm saying at this point we need more trees in the church especially this church we won't be anything of productive use to the Lord if we are like the chaff and if you are not in Christ today and you have not set your faith in Christ if you read this passage and you know without a shadow of doubt that your life is working in complete opposition to the Lord let this word break you this morning whoever you may be let this word break you down to the bitter end stop your rebellion today and come to the Lord

[32 : 33] Jesus through your faith submit your life to him and watch him begin within you a new creation giving you a delight for his word a growing delight over the centuries that has been going on and church let us sing a new song of old the God of wrath and fury church wants to break us all of our rebellion and rebuild us planting us near streams of water and yielding the fruit and the growth which is completely from delighting upon this instruction that the word alone brings to our lives let this be the new song of old that we sing in our church today let's God we are so grateful that you loved us enough to call us to come to you a holy perfect righteous God that even you sat with sinners that you took time often in the New Testament as it's recorded with sinners but that is not where you pledged allegiance and it was clear by the manner of what you spoke when you were with sinners

Father let us not miss the point today of clearly defining the line of our allegiance with you that when people speak in our character on our behalf of our speech of our conduct whether it's our wives whether it's our children that they can say without a shadow of doubt that my father my mother my boss my co-worker is a Christian and they show it because their delight is in the law of the Lord and they make it known and aware let us be a church that delights in you let us be trees father that are planted and rooted in your word in your streams of water and praise in Jesus precious name amen