

Psalm 2

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[0:00] Well, it's very good to see all of you this evening. I'm glad that you could join us.! We, I think, have found out who the ride or dies are. You're the real ones.

Or we just know now who has steep driveways and who doesn't. I'm not sure which. We're really glad that you could be here with us this evening. We've been a bit off of our preaching schedule. Last week, Caleb Anderson was meant to preach. He'll come back and he will preach the sermon that he had prepared just before they leave. I decided, kind of an 11th hour decision, to do something a little different for today as well.

And so, Lord willing, we'll get back to our exposition of John next week. But I was thinking just about these last two weeks and how really frail we are as human people.

Just as the creation. It does not really take that much to bring our society to a screeching halt. To be sure, it's troublesome.

[1:03] There's real issues. Power outages and loss of heat and water lines freezing. These are all terribly inconvenient things. But just how really quickly and really easily our sovereign God can snap his fingers and things just stop.

So, I was musing about this a bit in the negative. This tight little temperature range that we survive within. And then thinking about it much in the positive.

I'm very grateful that we know this God that controls all things. Purposes beyond our total comprehension. But certainly we know for his glory.

I've mentioned before that my work as a pastor now for the past 17 plus years can be summarized in my working to answer four questions.

They are, what is the Bible? What is the gospel? What is the church? And who is God?

[2:11] A lot to be said about each of these questions. Big and broad answers to be given to all of them. And all of them are under assault by our culture.

I think that far too many professing Christians are being shaken in our time when they ought to be immovable.

Our concerns in the world seem to be far too often the very same concerns of the lost world around us.

I want us to be immovable. Regardless of the circumstances of our day, whatever may be going on. Wars and rumors of wars. Tragic weather.

But we will not be immovable unless we can rightly answer that final question. Who is God?

[3:08] And we are going to explore this question for all of this life and for all of the life to come. Which is a reality I love to think about.

We are going to be constantly discovering who God is for all of eternity. But our God has told us much of himself. Everything we need to know of him.

And so we want to do the best we can to learn as much as we can in this life. So to do that this evening together.

I'm going to pick up a bit of a sermon I've preached before. A little dusting off and changing for today. So join me if you will in Psalm 2. Psalm 2.

Let me lead us in a prayer before I read it. Our Father and our God, thank you for your word. Thank you that we have it in such abundant access that we can take time this evening to sit together and think about what you have said for our good and for your glory.

[4:16] We ask humbly that you would help us to understand it. Use my feeble preparation, our feeble understanding, our small minds to gain a greater grasp of who you are to us.

Help us to see this, especially in the personal work of Jesus Christ by the power of your spirit. And it's to this end that we pray. Amen.

Psalm 2.

Psalm 3.

As we consider the present state of the world in which we live, we see widespread and seemingly unbridled rebellion.

[6:14] This takes place in all kinds of degrees, all kinds of forms. All we have to do to see the rebellion is tune into our world concerning this rebellion to our favorite TV or radio, social media outlet.

It is just everywhere. It's a rebellion that spans all culture and political vantage points. What is the Christian meant to speak, seek, and speak of all those things?

What are we supposed to think about these things? How are we to bear up when everything seems to be falling apart around us? It's just unraveling around us.

I think that Psalm 2 speaks poignantly into our world concerning its rebellion and tells us that God is powerfully at work to end the rebellion of the world.

The uprising that began with Adam and Eve will not be allowed to persist forever. Praise God. For those not in Christ, this is terrible news.

[7:22] For those found in Christ, Psalm 2 is a psalm of hope and of encouragement. I hope this evening that it will be the latter for you.

We'll take a look at this text briefly in the following outline. Number one, the world rebels. Number two, God the Father answers. Number three, God the Son declares.

And number four, God the Spirit invites. I listened to a podcast recently with pastors where a pastor of preaching at Southern said, you should never give the outline in advance of your sermon.

And I went, oh, well. And then I decided to do it anyway. Number one. Number one, the world rebels. Psalm 2 begins with a rhetorical question.

I imagine the psalmist frustrated, right? He's shaking his head. He's wagging it back and forth as he asks, why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

[8:29] He has noticed that the world over, people have a rebellion problem. Undoubtedly, this is true. True.

And he goes on in his disbelief. The kings of the earth set themselves. This is evidence of his rhetorical question. They set themselves.

And the rulers, they take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.

The nations, the peoples, the kings and the rulers of the earth do not want to be placed under any authority. They view the authority of God as an authority that ought to be cast off.

They want to be unbound to go their own way. They believe their own way is better than the way of the Creator. And the psalmist tells us that all the peoples of the world are rebelling against the Lord and against his anointed.

[9:37] They do not want to be placed under the authority of who? God and Jesus Christ. The early church understood Jesus to be the anointed of Psalm 2.

So if there's a question raised in your mind at that point, I want to settle it for you. Listen to the response of the church to the news that Peter and John had been arrested and then released in Acts chapter 4.

And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, Why did the Gentiles rage and the peoples plot in vain?

The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his anointed. For truly in the city they were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan have predestined to take place.

It's very clearly there. They're connecting this. They understand the anointed of Psalm 2 to be the Lord Jesus Christ. And just as an aside, oh, that we would pray prayers like that in adversity.

[11:00] Rebellion against God and his Christ did not end with the persecution of the early church. Much of the New Testament is written to Christians who were suffering because the world was rebelling against God and his Christ.

Near the end of his reign, the Roman emperor Diocletian set up two massive pillars in Spain declaring victory over Jesus Christ. The inscription on the pillars read, Diocletian, Jovian, Maximian, Hercules, Caesareus Augusti.

Boy, does he think a lot of himself. For having adopted Gallerius in the East. For having everywhere abolished the superstition of Christ.

For having extended the worship of the gods, lowercase gods. And this rebellion against God and his Christ continues to this day.

We can witness it all around us. Many forms, many measures. And we should make no mistake that it is rebellion against God and his Christ.

[12:12] And as God's people, it is reasonable that we will be seen as enemies of those rebelling against the Lord. The early church expected to suffer for the name of Christ and rejoiced when the suffering came.

Acts chapter 5. When they, the Sanhedrin, had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus and let them go.

Then they left the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. And every day in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.

Unshakeable people. Why? Because they have an immovable God. They recognize the rebellion of the world against God will be one day made right.

So that was first. The world rebels. Secondly, God the Father answers. The rebellion of the world does not go unanswered.

[13:26] God the Father answers the rebellion of the world. And note how he responds. Verse 4 says, He who sits in the heavens laughs.

He laughs. The Lord holds them in derision or you can think mockery. He laughs and he makes fun of the rebellion of the world.

The world and everything in it belongs to God. Psalm 24, verse 1 and 2. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. The world and those who dwell therein.

For he has founded upon the seas and established it upon the rivers. Isaiah chapter 40 and verse 15. Verse 15. Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket and are accounted as the dust on the scales.

Behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust. Belongs to him and is insignificant in comparison to him.

[14:32] God reigns over all things and all peoples with absolute sovereignty. Absolute sovereignty.

To the degree that he finds the rebellion of the world laughable. Mockable. Do you find yourself troubled at the rebellion of the world?

I think all of us, if we're honest, would say, yes, at times I do. If you belong to God, you need to know this evening that God finds the world's rebellion amusing.

That isn't to say that he thinks lightly of the wickedness of humanity. But the idea that humanity can set aside God's rule is what is so laughable.

The rebellious think that they can escape the authority of God, but he reigns with absolute authority. He will make all things right.

[15:42] Nothing has ever or will ever escape his grasp of control. In fact, he orders all things according to his will.

Not a single thing not according to his will. So God the Father answers the rebellion of the world with laughter, with mockery, but he also speaks.

Verse 5 says that he speaks to them in his wrath. He does not take lightly the sinfulness of man. He laughs at it, but then he speaks to them in his wrath and terrifies them in his fury, saying...

This is so noteworthy. What does he say in his wrath towards the rebellion of mankind? He says, as for me, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.

After he laughs, he speaks. And what he says should receive our highest attention. He says it furiously. What does he say?

[16:56] That he has anointed King Jesus to reign. That is his response to the rebellion of the world. When you think of Jesus, where do you most regularly place him in your mind?

What do you picture in your mind when you think of Jesus? Is he the humble servant? Is he the suffering Savior? Is he the reigning King?

He is all of these, right? All of these things are true of him. And an awareness of his person, his complete person, and his accomplished work will enable you in the day of trouble.

To also laugh. To mock the rebellion of the world. Because you know that King Jesus reigns over everything.

So the world rebels, and God the Father answers. But then the voice of the psalm changes. And so my third point, God the Son declares.

[18:07] It's at this point, verse 7, that Jesus says three things that God the Father said of him.

The first you see in verse 7. And it's his identity. It says, I will tell of the decree. The Lord said to me, you are my son.

Today I have begotten you. Now what does it mean that Jesus is begotten? We could spend a lot of time on this.

Simply begotten means to proceed from. We spent some time on this at the beginning of John's Gospel. But it's important to note that this word in Psalm 2 is not the same word translated in John's Gospel, only begotten.

I know you Hebrew and Greek people, I know this was written in Hebrew and the Greek, right? But the Septuagint version of it in Greek. Not the same word translated in John's Gospel, only begotten.

[19:10] Psalm 2-7 is cited three times in the New Testament, which is very helpful to give us understanding as to what this word means in this context.

So let me read them to you quickly, but try to listen. Hebrews chapter 1, verses 3-5 says of Jesus, He is the radiance of the glory of God in the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power.

After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name He has inherited, is more excellent than theirs.

So, He's completed the work. After He made the purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. And then verse 5 says, For to which of the angels did God ever say, You are my Son, today I have begotten you.

Or again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son. So there it is. Psalm 2 and verse 7. Then later in Hebrews, chapter 5 and verse 5, So also Christ did not exalt Himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by Him who said to Him, You are my Son, today I have begotten you.

[20:31] Then in Acts, chapter 13, Paul speaking in the synagogue at Antioch, beginning in verse 30. There it says, But God raised Him from the dead.

And for many days He appeared to those who had come up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who were now as witnesses to the people. And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this He has fulfilled to us, their children, by raising Jesus, as also it has been written in the second Psalm, You are my Son, today I have begotten you.

And as for the fact He was raised from the dead, no more to return corruption, He has spoken in this way, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. Notice that in each of these texts, the resurrection of Christ is either explicit in the case of Acts, chapter 13, verse 30 to 34, or it's heavily implicit in the cases of Hebrews, chapter 1, 3 through 5, and chapter 5, verse 5.

So begotten in this case, by way of sparing you further details, means to bring forth, to proceed from, and refers to the bringing forth of Jesus from the grave, from His resurrection, like this high moment in His work.

When Jesus declares His identity in Psalm, chapter 2, and verse 7, the Lord said to me, you are my Son, today I have begotten you. He is speaking to the future reality of His resurrected life, and therefore, His sacrificial death, and all that it accomplished.

[22:17] Sure promises, yes and amen, in Jesus. So He speaks to His identity. He also speaks to His destiny. What will we become?

Ask of me, verse 8 says, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. God has promised to give to Jesus every corner of the creation, and all the peoples of it to rule over forever.

Philippians chapter 2, verse 8, and following, being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This is the destiny of Christ, to rule over all things, all peoples.

So that was chapter 2, verse 8-11 of Philippians, and then in verse 12, Paul says, Therefore, my beloved.

[23:36] So in light of this reality, this humbling of Christ to come and die on a cross, and in light of the reality that He has now been exalted, therefore, and it was our scripture reading from earlier, so it's on the bulletin that was handed out to you, my 11th hour, quick put together bulletin.

Look with me, if you will, at verses 12-18. In light of the reality that Jesus Christ humbled Himself to become a servant, to die on the cross, and is now exalted by God.

What are we supposed to do? How are we supposed to live in light of that reality? Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work, for His good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise, you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

[25:14] Notice that our response to Jesus' forever reign, His exaltation, should be good works, verse 12, accompanied by good attitudes, verse 14, that we should read and know and treasure God's word, verse 16, and that we should be found happy and rejoicing, verse 18.

As you contemplate the troubled age in which we live, does the reign of Jesus Christ affect you in this way?

It should. It should. Therefore, my beloved, in light of this wonderful truth, this is how we ought to live.

So, Christ's destiny, but also thirdly, Christ's authority. Verse 9 says, You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

God has given to Jesus His anointed the authority to judge the nations for their rebellion. That's the context of Psalm 2, remember. However, before the final judgment comes, Jesus is calling all men everywhere to repent.

[26:44] We'll see this in the Psalm, but let me take you elsewhere for just a moment. Ephesians chapter 2, in verse 17. Jesus came and preached peace to you who are far off and peace to those who are near.

Avoid this judgment, this enmity with God, right? This being broken with a rod of iron and dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Avoid that because Jesus has preached peace. He's invited you to come to Him. Repent and believe in His person and work to have peace with God.

Those who do not repent and believe in the person and work of Jesus Christ will face the judgment of Christ. If you're not in Christ this evening, this should make you tremble.

Revelation chapter 19, verse 11 and following, that I saw heaven open and behold, a white horse. The one sitting on it is called faithful and true and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

[27:54] His eyes are like a flame of fire and on His head are many diadems and He has a name written that no one knows but Himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood and the name by which He is called is the Word of God.

And the armies of heaven arrayed in fine linen white and pure were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations and He will rule them with a rod of iron.

He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. Note Christ's authority in this text against rebellion against Him.

Number four, God the Spirit invites. Now the text does not expressly state that this is the Spirit of God speaking. You could say that it's an invitation of Jesus Himself but we know that the Scriptures are inspired and that people come to repent and believe through the work of God the Spirit and the voice changes in the psalm once again.

I think it's entirely fair to see our triune God in this text. So verse 10 says, Kissing the Son is an act of humility and restoration.

[29:33] Lest you be angry and you perish in the way. For His wrath is quickly kindled. blessed are all who take refuge in Him.

Because of the coming judgment of Christ, God the Spirit calls all people everywhere to put down their rebellion and take refuge in Jesus.

Recognizing that He reigns. So be wise, be warned. If you have not repented and believed in Christ, do so. Do so today.

Kiss the Son. Swear your allegiance to Him because I do not. We do not want you to perish when His wrath comes. The world rebels.

God the Father answers. God the Son declares. God the Spirit invites. God the Father will not tolerate the rebellion of the world forever.

[30:34] one day God the Son will return and judge the nations. But in the meantime they are working mercifully by God the Spirit to call people to be saved and to enter into everlasting comfort and joy and peace.

Rebellion against Him will never afford you that. If you have not already, repent and believe in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

if you are in Christ beloved, the reality of who our God is should make you immovable. We should have such confidence despite the circumstances of our day because our God is immovable and His promises therefore are sure.

They are absolute. It will happen. And so we wait patiently for that day. Let's pray together. Let's pray together.