



Growth Group Curriculum Winter 2021

The Songs We Sing - Psalms in the New Year

Week 1 – January 10, 2021 - Psalm 2

Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at church. In this time of the virus and social distancing, please meet safely outside or online. If your growth group would like to meet online or if you are aware of needs that the church can help fill, please let us know at connect@ljpres.org. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.

Setting the Context

Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 (our lesson for today) really serve as an introduction to the book of Psalms. Psalm 1 begins with a blessing, “Blessed is the one who walks not in the ways of the wicked...” and Psalm 2 ends with a blessing, “Blessed are all who takes refuge in God.”

The two psalms can easily be read together since Psalm 1 starts with blessing and Psalm 2 ends with blessing. Psalm 1 tells us the importance of being dedicated to God’s word and Psalm 2 reminds us of the importance of living our lives under God’s rule. Taken together, these two psalms tell us that the blessed life consists of being committed to God’s word and allowing God to reign over our lives.

Psalm 2 is a coronation psalm about a new king. As this new king is getting ready to be installed, the nations begin to challenge the ways of this king, and more concerning, challenge and rebel against the ways of God. The Hebrew word for “anointed” in verse two, is the word Messiah. This king that is being talked about in Psalm 2 is not just any king. He is the one who will save, and he is God’s anointed.

While the nations are conspiring, God laughs. This seems to be a strange response because the laughter of God does not happen often in the Scriptures. God laughed because God knew that ultimately his plans would not be thwarted. God’s king would be installed in Jerusalem, which is also referred to as Mount Zion.

This king, who is also the Messiah, will be the true king. Psalm 2 is pointing us to Jesus. God’s son will rebuke and confront the rebellious nations. Yet, what was surprising was that this king did not come wearing a crown and bringing military strength. Instead, this king came and washed the disciples’ feet and taught his followers to care for the least of these. His “kingdom” looked much different than what many expected.

The psalm ends by calling the listeners to take refuge in God. We are not to place our ultimate trust in the rulers of this earth. Rather, verse 12 tells us that we are to kiss the son. We are to recognize the son for who he is and bow our knee to the son. God’s greatest desire is for our devotion and allegiance.



Exploring the Text

Read Psalm 2

1 Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles." 4 The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. 5 He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, 6 "I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain." 7 I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father. 8 Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. 9 You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery." 10 Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. 11 Serve the Lord with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling. 12 Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) Spend a little time catching up if your group did not meet in December. Share about what you did for Christmas and/or New Year's.
- 2) Verse 1 asks "why do the nations conspire and the people plot in vain?" How would you answer that question? What evidence do you see of rebellion against God, by the nations?
- 3) This psalm is about nations, their leaders and their refusal to recognize God as the true king. Yet, this psalm can also be about us and our own refusal to recognize the true king that has come in Jesus Christ. What does it mean to make Jesus "king" or "lord" of our lives?
- 4) Why do you think God laughs in verse 4? Do you find it surprising that God laughs?
- 5) What do you learn from this psalm about God's sovereignty? What does it mean for God to be sovereign? How does knowing God is sovereign help you face life's challenges?
- 6) What is the significance of the king being installed on Mount Zion- God's holy mountain? How does this connect back to verse 2 and God's anointed one?
- 7) Verse 11 talks about serving the Lord with fear. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." What does it mean to fear the Lord?
- 8) The psalmist tells us that we will be blessed if we take refuge in God. What does it look like for you to take refuge in God?