THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 14TH–15TH // PSALMS GREATEST HITS

A UNIQUE PIECE OF THE BIBLE

The largest book of the Bible.

- Psalm 119 is the largest chapter in the Bible, and Psalm 117 is the shortest.
- It was written over 900–1,000 years by more authors than any other book (7+).
- Most quoted OT book in NT.
- Most messianic prophecies, along with Isaiah.

WHAT IS PSALMS?

Psalms literally means *the plucking of strings.* Psalms are songs meant to be accompanied by a stringed instrument (harp or lyre).

- Psalms served as a hymnbook for God's people. The Hebrews called it "The Book of Praises" because it **assisted people in proper theological worship.**

THE DIVERSE GROUP OF AUTHORS

Many assume **David** wrote all the psalms, but he is only credited with 75 of the 150.

- **Asaph** wrote 12; the **Sons of Korah** wrote 10; **Solomon** wrote two; **Moses, Heman,** and **Ethan** each wrote one; and 48 of the psalms are **anonymous**, though **Ezra** is thought to have written some of those.

THE OVERARCHING PURPOSE OF PSALMS

Psalms is a journey of ups and downs, pain and strength. It gives us advice, theology, and the hope of a Savior. **No matter where we are, there's a psalm that speaks to our situation.**

- **Psalms is a great example of the practical wisdom and encouragement the Bible offers.**

OPPOSING PATHS (PSALM 1)

A GOD-CENTERED LIFE

If we choose to make Jesus the center of our lives, we find true peace and contentment. The anonymous author tells us some practical ways to ensure we walk with God.

- We must not **"walk in the advice of the wicked…stand in the pathway with sinners** or **sit in the company of mockers."**

IN REAL-WORLD TERMINOLOGY

True Christians walk in opposition to the philosophies and values of the world. Our culture places humanity and self over God and creates its own moral standards.

- **When we place ourselves under the influence of culture, we start to "stand" on the same broken ideologies.**

INSTEAD…DELIGHT IS IN THE LORD'S INSTRUCTION"

Instead of adopting the ways of a world that always fails and leads people to chaos, if we **"meditate" on the things of God** (the Bible, prayer), we will be **spiritually fed and healthy,** like a tree "**planted** beside flowing streams."

- **We must wisely choose what we invest in and who invests in us.**

"WHATEVER HE DOES PROSPERS"?

When we are "planted" in Jesus, we bear "fruit" that impacts us and others (Galatians 5). We bear this fruit as needed by God, and it will not fade away. We also live a life of prosperity.

- **Biblical prosperity** isn't material wealth. It is **peace, wholeness, growth,** and **stability,** but also **provision** according to God's wisdom.

THE PATH OF DESTRUCTION

"The wicked are not like this." Instead, people who follow the path of the world change and shift with culture and have no stability. In other words, **the target of morality changes with emotions and society becomes unstable.**

- **Without an anchor, values shift and change, and lives get destroyed.**

"THE WAY OF THE WICKED LEADS TO RUIN"

"Therefore the wicked will not stand up in the judgment." God loves all people and doesn't desire Hell for anyone (2 Peter 3:9), but **a life of sin and self is a choice to not be with God.**

- **The "righteous" aren't perfect, but we lean on Jesus and He shows us grace and "watches over [our] way."**

THROWING OFF CHAINS (PSALM 2:1–6)

THE HEART OF SIN AND EVIL

At the core of sin (and the chaos and consequences that come with it) is rebellion against God and the life He instructs us to live.

- David tells us that people "plot" and "conspire" against the "Anointed One" by **trying to throw off the "chains" and "ropes" of God's authority. This will end "in vain."**

"THE ONE ENTHRONED IN HEAVEN LAUGHS"

Verses 4–6 show an interesting side of God. He is quick to forgive and restore, but arrogance directed at Him sparks His anger, and the audacity to oppose Him makes Him laugh.

- God is love, but He is also the King. **We often forget our place, and we would be wise to remember He is the Creator.**

THERE IS NO LOVE WITHOUT JUSTICE

Sin invokes anger and terror from God because sin destroys souls. God is love, but **without justice and punishment of evil, true love cannot exist.** This is why He "installed my king [Jesus] on Zion."

- This passage seems to foreshadow the 1,000-year reign in Revelation 20:1–10.

HOMAGE (PSALM 2:7–12)

THE VOICE OF JESUS

In v. 7, we hear the voice of Christ saying that He will submit to and carry out the plan and purpose of the Father throughout the earth.

- Jesus the Son isn't created by God the Father or inferior to Him. This verse is alluding to the incarnation (Hebrews 1) and His resurrection (Acts 13).

"BREAK THEM WITH AN IRON SCEPTER"?

This is referring to the absolute victory Christ will have over those who rebel against Him. The comparison is like an artist who has the ability to shatter the pottery they created.

- **If we live in relationship with Jesus, we don't fear God's wrath because we will never experience it** (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

"BE WISE"

The Word tells us what to do: "be wise; **receive instruction…serve** the Lord with [**reverence**], and **rejoice with trembling.**"

- If we are smart, we will **humble ourselves and listen to the Word and to conviction.** We will also **serve the Lord by how we live and be thankful as we respect God.**

BACK TO THE TWO PATHS

If we choose self over Spirit, we will "perish in [our] rebellion" because **our ways are broken and God will not tolerate evil.** On the other hand**, if we "pay homage to the Son" and "take refuge " in Him, we will be "happy."**

- *Happy* means *blessed.* **In submission to God, we live in the provision of God.**

WHAT WE SUBJECT OURSELVES TO MATTERS

- Who we spend time with and take advice from is very important (1 Corinthians 15:33).
- **What influences our decision-making?** Where do we find "truth" and guidance?
- Do we seek **biblical prosperity?** Do we long for the things of God? Is that enough for us?

WHAT WE TRULY LOVE WILL BE REVEALED

- Revelation 20:11–15 tells us there will be books of our lives that Jesus will reference to judge our eternity. **If we have loved the things of the world, there will be eternal ramifications** (Revelation 21:8).
- Do we lean on **Jesus**, love **righteousness**, and stay **anchored to His Word**?

SELF VS. SPIRIT

- Matthew 16:25 says, "whoever loses [their] life because of Me will find it." This isn't literal death but **the choice to follow God over self.**
- Do we view faith as liberation or shackles? Do we neglect or manipulate Scripture for selfish gain? **Whose will do we seek and whose dreams do we pursue?**

TAKING AN HONEST LOOK AT THE WORLD

- We all struggle with this tension, but what will help us is to take **an honest look at how our selfishness impacts us and others and how the philosophies of the world have panned out over time.**
- **Will we humble ourselves and seek what is right according to our Creator?**