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 ARE THE 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.

THE TWO WAYS PSALM 1:1–6

PSALM 1 FUNCTIONS AS AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ENTIRE BOOK OF PSALMS.

In this first psalm, we're given two very distinct ways of life: the path of the righteous, and the way of the wicked.

- It's interesting that the psalm doesn't just give us two ways of believing or thinking but, rather, two fundamentally different ways of living.

WHAT A RIGHTEOUS PERSON DOESN'T DO (V. 1)

The Hebrew word *esher* means "blessed" or "happy": to be joyful, content, and at peace with the life we've been given.

- Happiness is found in *not* thinking like, behaving like, or belonging to the ways of the wicked, sinners, and mockers.
- The world has its own form of happiness, but it won't lead you to the blessed life.

WHAT A RIGHTEOUS PERSON *DOES* (V. 2)

A righteous person finds happiness, joy, and contentment through delighting in the Lord's instruction: God's Word and His guidance and truth for our lives.

- To "delight in" it is to meditate on it day and night! What do you think about most often? What gets you excited? Where does your mind drift when things get still?

HOW THE RIGHTEOUS ARE BLESSED (V. 3)

A tree planted beside flowing water is always being replenished, strengthened, and made alive; it's not stagnant.

- To delight in the Lord's instruction and meditate on His truth leads us to bear fruit.
- A righteous person doesn't wither away into spiritual death and complacency. God brings out of them good and wonderful fruit.

THE INSTABILITY OF WICKEDNESS (V. 4)

The righteous are stable and steady, like a tree with deep roots by a flowing stream, but the wicked are the exact opposite.

- Chaff is the light "shell" around a kernel of grain. It's so light it can be separated from the grain by throwing a scoopful into the wind and letting the wind drive away the chaff.
- The wicked lack substance and stability.

THE FUTURE OF THE WICKED (V. 5)

This is essentially a prophecy concerning a coming judgment.

- No matter how prosperous or successful the wicked may seem in this life, "in the judgment," the wicked won't be able to stand.
- They will have no share in the amazing future that awaits the righteous.
- We must always keep eternity in mind!

THE TWO WAYS (V. 6)

The righteous find peace and happiness in the knowledge that there is a loving God who is always watching over our ways to protect, guide, and preserve us.

- The way of the wicked, as popular, easy, and comfortable as it may seem, leads to ruin and destruction.
- Which way are you on?

THIS IS NOT THE WAY

The world's path to happiness is:

- Finding your own personal truth.
- Materialism and accumulation.
- Hedonism and sensual pleasure.
- Secular humanism and self-actualization.
- Escapism.
- All these things lack substance and stability, and in the end lead to destruction!

THIS IS THE WAY

God's path to happiness is:

- Delighting in God's Word and letting His truth be the lens through which we view all of reality!
- Not letting secular, ungodly mindsets dictate our choices, logic, or worldview.
- Not adopting lifestyles or behaviors that are contrary to God's Word.

WHY DO THE NATIONS RAGE? (PSALM 2:1–12)

WHY DO THE NATIONS RAGE?

The tone of this psalm is one of astonishment at the senseless rejection of God's authority and His ruler.

- Since the time of Babel, the kings of the earth and the rulers have continued to conspire against God and His authority.
- In this psalm, they're opposing both the LORD and His Anointed One (*mashiyach*).

WHO IS THE *MASHIYACH* (THE ANOINTED ONE)?

The "Anointed One" is the Christ. Since Jesus is the perfect representation of the Father (John 10:30), to oppose God the Father is to oppose Jesus (and vice versa).

- The great lie is that we as humans don't need God and certainly shouldn't have to consult Him or His authority in how we plan our lives. Autonomy is a myth.

"LET US TEAR OFF THEIR CHAINS AND ROPES."

A heart of opposition and rebellion against God leads a person to see God as nothing but a tyrant.

- Belief in God and His authority is seen as oppressive, limiting, and constricting.
- In this mindset, true freedom is to rid oneself of any notion of God and His accountability.
- This is why radical secularism opposes God.

HOW DOES GOD RESPOND?

God is certainly not threatened—in fact, He laughs (v. 4)!

- God sees it as comical and hilarious that created, finite humans could ever see themselves as so enlightened, intelligent, and progressive that they remove almighty God from His proper place.
- *"Claiming to be wise, they became fools"* (Romans 1:22).

GOD HAS GIVEN THE KINGDOM TO HIS SON.

Through the centuries, many have opposed God and His Kingdom in Jesus Christ.

- Yet each ruler and movement that has tried has come and gone, and the fame and glory of Jesus Christ is still being spread all over the earth.
- Despite the nations who rage against Him, Christ will rule and reign forevermore.

THE KING IS APPOINTED (VS. 7–8)

God declares to His anointed one: "You are my Son; today I have become your father [begotten you]."

- God is declaring His anointed king (the Messiah) to be His Son.
- This is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus, the eternal Son of God. It does not mean Jesus had a beginning or was created.
- It points to Jesus' identity and appointment as the promised Messiah (Acts 13:33;Hebrews 1:5).
- God's promise extends beyond just Israel—the Messiah will reign over every nation and the entire earth.
- Jesus is not simply another king; He is the King over all kings.

THE KING WILL REIGN (V. 9)

The "iron scepter" and "shattered pottery" are pictures of the Messiah's absolute authority and the coming judgment.

- No earthly kingdom, ruler, or power will ultimately stand before Him.
- Jesus will ultimately defeat everything that opposes God's Kingdom. He is both our Savior AND our King.

JESUS OFFERS FORGIVENESS AND REFUGE…

But He also demands our allegiance.

- What is wisdom, according to this psalm?
- "Serve the Lord with reverential awe and rejoice with trembling."
- "Pay homage to [kiss] the Son." This is not just language of submission and honor; it is an invitation to have a relationship of love and affection with God's Messiah.

ALL DEFIANCE, REBELLION, AND OPPOSITION AGAINST GOD IS FOOLISH AND POINTLESS.

There's a part of your sinful, broken nature that doesn't like the fact that you're not God.

- It's the part of you that wants to argue with His Word and ignore His presence on the earth.
- It's the part of you that wants to do what you want to do and gets angry at the suggestion that God wants different.

"ALL WHO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM ARE HAPPY"

In the end, you can see God's authority and dominance as one of two options:

- (1) Tyranny and slavery.
- (2) Refuge and protection.
- True happiness comes from knowing your place (*you're not God*) and finding your help and refuge in the one who is (*Jesus*).

"YOU WILL PERISH IN YOUR REBELLION"

Misery in life (*and destruction in the life to come*) comes about from rebelling against God's authority and having no place of refuge when danger, trouble, distress, and final judgment come.

- Autonomy and self-help sound empowering… that is, until the plane starts going down and the bullets start flying.

TWO WAYS OF LIVING (PSALM 1)

- The Way of the Righteous: A life rooted in God, shaped by His Word, and led by His wisdom and truth.
- The Way of the Wicked: A life rooted in self, shaped by culture, personal desires, and the world's definition of success.

TWO WAYS OF SEEING THE WORLD (PSALM 1)

- God's wisdom: Identity, peace, and joy come from God rather than achievement, status, approval, or possessions.
- The world's wisdom: Happiness and fulfillment come from success, personal freedom, autonomy, and getting what you want (no substance or stability).

TWO WAYS OF RESPONDING TO AUTHORITY (PS. 2)

- The Way of Rebellion: Seeing God's authority as oppressive tyranny and treating personal autonomy as the highest good.
- The Way of Loving Submission: Recognizing our place (we're not God and we need Him) and trusting in His authority and direction.

THE BIG PICTURE: TWO VISIONS OF LIFE

- The fundamental human impulse: "I want to determine for myself what is good, how I should live, and who should be in charge!"
- Psalm 2 shows us what this looks like on a societal level, but Psalm 1 shows where it starts: on an individual level.
- A society or nation that is rebellious against God is made up of rebellious individuals.

WHICH VISION AM I FOLLOWING?

- We often want God's blessing without wanting His authority (we want Jesus as a Savior and helper, but we resist Him as Lord).
- What's our source of truth, direction, and guidance? God's Word or our own desires?
- What do we *delight* in and meditate on day and night? What do you *really* believe the path to happiness looks like in this life?