

# Set Your Hope in Jesus (Psalm 2)

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Preacher: Brett Sanders

[ 0 : 00 ] Amen, amen. You may be seated. Children, we are ready for Children's Church at this time. You may make your way to the back with Miss Savannah, Mr. Justin back there. And again, I am so grateful that you are here today. I know that many of you had inconveniences with loss of power, difficulty getting home, getting out, different things going on. And like Clay said, he was out of power. And I don't know if he got a cold shower or no shower this morning. I haven't been close enough to him to find out.

But I am grateful. He said shower. Okay. And so I am grateful that we were all able to be here and just singing these praises to God because he's worthy no matter our circumstances. And so what a joy it is to be here. I want to start off with a question. Does anybody in here like to bake? Anybody like to bake? Okay. Several of you like to bake. I like to do some baking. I like to dabble a little bit there with baking, you know, making pound cakes and different things like that.

But it's always interesting to me that baking is so specific with everything. I mean, you have a recipe that you want to follow. And the recipe is very specific when it comes to the measurements that are going in there, the ingredients that are going in there.

And some of it I just don't completely understand. When it says a quarter of a teaspoon of something in this large cake, I'm thinking, how can that actually make a difference? You know, how can a quarter of a teaspoon of something or especially when it says a pinch of salt?

I put more than a pinch of salt on a French fry, much less than a whole cake is needing a pinch of salt. I don't understand those things, but they're they're very specific. And it's also very specific with the ingredients that go into a cake.

[ 1 : 45 ] For example, just because something looks the same doesn't mean that it's going to taste the same when you put it in there. If you run if it's if your cake is calling for two cups of sugar and you only have one cup of sugar, but you have something that looks just like sugar called salt.

That's not a good substitute there. That's not going you don't just put another cup of that in there. And so when we bake, it's very specific. I can remember the first time that I cooked a pound cake and it didn't turn out exactly like I had planned.

It was actually with Clint here. He was helping me bake this pound cake and he had all of one semester of home ec under his belt. And he thought he was an expert on baking pound cakes. And so we decided to get everything out to make this pound cake. And we were very precise in our measurements, put everything together. We're feeling very confident about this pound cake as it goes into the oven.

And, you know, with a cake, you don't want to check it early. You don't want to open the door because it might fall and all of these things. And so we were very patient. And then we opened the oven door and immediately we realized something's not right.

[ 2 : 52 ] Something is wrong with this cake. It doesn't look like it should look. It was far smaller than it should should appear. And so maybe we're thinking, OK, maybe we put the wrong flour in there.

Maybe we didn't put something else in there. And so let's see what it tastes like. And so we cut a slice of this cake and and start eating it. And again, immediately we realized something's not right with this cake.

It's far grittier than it should be for a pound cake. And and so we couldn't figure out what we did wrong. And so we brought in the expert mom to to see what we did wrong.

We should have brought her in far earlier than at this point. But we brought her in. We're like, what is wrong with this? And she quickly realized that instead of using flour, we used cornmeal. Now, it was the sweetest cornbread you have ever put in your mouth.

But it was not a pound cake. And so when it comes to baking things, when it comes to these things in our life, it's important that we follow the right ingredients. It's important that we follow the directions if you want the desired outcome.

[ 3 : 57 ] In a similar way, if we want a deep, intimate relationship with God, a life that produces joy, that gives our life meaning, then how we live matters.

Then what we give our lives to matter. What we give our life to is going to make a difference. Oftentimes we want all the benefits of knowing Jesus. Heaven sounds great. Who doesn't want heaven forever?

We want this joy in our lives each and every day. We want our lives to have meaning. We want all of these things. We want joy in our lives. All those things sound great. But then we want to live in a way that is no different than the rest of the world.

But if we want Jesus to be our strength, if we want Jesus to be our security, if we want Jesus to be our joy, then we must stop trying to find those things in this world.

We must stop trying to look to other things to be the source of our strength. We must stop looking to other things to be the source of our joy. We must stop looking at other things to be the source of our security and look at the only one who always delivers on what he promises.

[ 5 : 09 ] What we give our lives to makes a difference. Last week we began our study of the Psalms by looking at Psalm 1. Now Psalm 1, we were able to see that is a deeply personal Psalm that reminds us of the importance of focusing on what draws us closer to God.

Giving our lives to the things of God. The blessed person is the one who doesn't walk with the wicked but sets his heart, sets his mind on God. That delights in the law of the Lord.

Psalm 2 this week, as we're about to see, is linked so closely with Psalm 1. That sometimes they're even referred to as twin Psalms.

Psalm 1 begins with blessed is the man and Psalm 2 ends with blessed are all those who take refuge in him. Psalm 1 begins with blessing, Psalm 2 ends with blessing.

Michael Wilcox notes, he says, the private world of the first Psalm opens into the public world of the second. The personal is followed by the cosmic.

[ 6 : 14 ] One is domestic and the other is international. The two Psalms are deeply connected. In fact, they're so connected that we can't really separate them like we often do.

In fact, when I was preparing this, Evan asked me several times, he says, are you going to do Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 at the same time? I was like, no, you've seen how fast I go through a passage. We're going to split them up. But these two are deeply connected to one another. They're deeply intentional of being put side by side. In fact, the connection is so strong that I love how James Hamilton, he notes this. He says, Psalm 1 is strategically linked with Psalm 2 and together these two Psalms introduce the whole Psalter.

Last week we talked about how Psalm 1 is really an exposition of what is together or the remaining Psalms are an exposition of Psalm 1 and how it's the perfect introduction. But really when you look at these two together, both of these Psalms introduce the remaining Psalms that we find in this great book.

As you look throughout the Psalms, there are many Psalms, as you will see, that are clearly messianic in their structure. Meaning they clearly point us to Jesus. They clearly point us to the coming Messiah.

[ 7 : 30 ] And in fact, if you think about it, all of these Psalms, all the Psalms do this to an extent. But there's some Psalms that we get to that are very specific with this.

There's some Psalms that we find ourselves looking at and our minds immediately go to Jesus. This is one of those Psalms that we're going to see today.

When Psalm 2 was sung, the people of God were reminded of how God made a covenant with David and his descendants to be kings in order to enable them to fulfill the promise that was made to Abraham.

And that was to be a blessing to all nations. One commentator noted, We know from Acts that David is the author of this Psalm and that it is a royal Psalm, a Psalm of coronation.

But the weight of this Psalm points us far beyond strictly a earthly king and far beyond that to the ultimate king, the king of kings, the king who reigns over everything.

[ 8 : 48 ] And so with that in mind today, with this understanding that Psalm 2 is pointing us to Jesus, I want to invite you to open up God's word with me and listen as we read these words.

It says this, starting in verse 1, 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 courts from us.

He who sits on the throne laughs. 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.

In the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them into pieces like a potter's vessel. Now, therefore, O kings, be wise.

[10:05] 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. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

This passage is clearly pointing us to Jesus. That he is the anointed one. That he is the Messiah. That's talked about here.

With this messianic understanding in mind. That this is ultimately pointing us towards Jesus. There is a question that I hope we will be able to answer today.

It's a question that I hope that if you have never asked yourself before. That you will ask it today. But it's also a question that if you have asked this. And if you have given an answer. And if you have come to faith in Christ.

[10:59] It's a question that I think we must always continue to ask ourselves. Each and every day. And that it is this. What are we placing our hope in?

What are we placing our hope in? This is a question we must all ask ourselves at some point in our lives. But it's also this question that we must keep coming back to.

That we must keep coming back to as a foundation for living our lives. What is it that we're placing our hope in? And there are a few observations that I want to bring our attention to today.

That I think will give us some clarity in answering this question. And one of the things that we clearly see in this passage is this. The foolishness of placing our hope in the things or people of this world. The foolishness of placing our hope in the things or in the people of this world. You see the purpose of this psalm is to convince us.

[12:00] That it is foolish and futile to fight against Christ. This purpose of this psalm is reminding us of the foolishness and the futility of fighting against Christ.

In the first few verses we see this attempt to turn from Christ to the kings of this world. And we read this. And I want you to hear the confusion in David's mind as he writes these words.

He says, Here in this psalm, David is amazed that anyone would be so foolish as to try to set their minds against God.

It's like he's saying, Do they know they can't win? Don't they realize that it is vain to do this? Why are they raging? Why are they plotting against God?

Don't they know that it's pointless? Don't they know that one day every knee will bow in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and declare that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father?

[13:14] Don't they know this is the direction that everything is heading? And so he's saying, Don't they realize that it's pointless to do this? Don't they realize that it's foolish to turn from God?

The word translated as plot here in verse 1 is the same word that's translated as meditate in chapter 1 verse 2 where it says, where it talks about the wise meditate.

They utter, they speak about God's word. And then here, while the wicked, they meditate, they utter, they speak about rebellion. One meditates on God's law.

One constantly thinks about rebelling against God. This psalm was written at a specific time and place, but the scope of this psalm is far bigger than in its reach.

It doesn't take long to realize that the rebellion is not limited here to a specific country or a continent, but that all nations and all peoples are in this together.

[14:15] James Johnson, he speaks of it this way. He says, this rebellion is worldwide because it is rooted in the sin nature we all inherited from Adam. He says, if you trek five days into the jungle, you will meet people who are set against God.

If you ride the crowded subways of New York City, the people pushing by you are set against God. No matter where you go, no matter where you are, there are people who will find themselves in this category set against God.

And so what we see is the foolishness of this. But who specifically does this passage say that they are fighting against? It says, the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed.

The word translated here as anointed in Hebrew is Messiah. And the Greek translation is Christ.

And so what you begin to see is that those who are foolish are setting themselves against God and against Jesus.

They're setting themselves against that. And this is a battle that they can't win. It's foolish to think that we can do this on our own. It's foolish to think that we can live this life without God. It's foolish that we don't think that we think that we don't need God for our eternity.

[15:40] And so it's important that we see the wisdom here. Taking all of this into consideration, it is clear that the context of this psalm is far greater than the coordination of a single Jewish king.

To apply this psalm strictly to an earthly king, even if you were to apply it to King David himself, would be like trying to put shoulder pads from an NFL lineman onto a newborn baby.

It doesn't fit. It's far too big. It's far too great than this would allow. And so this psalm is far greater than simply being just for an earthly king.

This psalm has a much greater reach than that. What we have here is a psalm fitting of a king who rules the world. And there is only one who fits that description.

And that is King Jesus himself. And so when we say that it is foolish to place our hope in the things or people of this world, what we are saying, it is foolish to turn from Jesus.

[16:43] It's foolish to take our eyes off of him. So how does God respond to this affront to who he is? How does he respond to this foolish rebellion? Does he begin to gather his troops?

Does he begin to count the cost and say, you know what? Let's see, they have this many people and I've got this many, many angels here. It's going to be close. It's going to be, I'm going to have to count the cost.

Is that, is he worried that all of these people are speaking against him, that they're rebelling against him? No. It's said, this is the only place in scripture where it says that God laughs.

He laughs at this. And we, I mean, obviously we know throughout scripture and we obviously know in our lives that, that God has a sense of humor. Some of you remind me of that quite often when you talk about me as pastor of this church.

And to that, I just say, thank you, mom, for reminding me of my childhood. But, but we all understand this and we all see it throughout scripture. But this laughter here is, it's not a, a ha ha, this is funny laughter.

[17:41] This is a, this is a different kind of laughter. This is a different kind of laughter. This is, this is not a humorous laughter. Boyce notes how God responds to this rebellion.

He says this, he says, he does not even rise from where he is sitting. He simply laughs at these great imbeciles. He laughs at these great imbeciles.

It's a laugh of disdain. In this next verse, it says, 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.

He's saying, you can do all that you want, but I've already set my king in place. All the kings and the kingdoms of this world pale in comparison to Jesus.

Now, hopefully we can now clearly see that God, see the foolishness of trying to rebel against God and follow whatever they desire.

[18:47] But now I want us to turn our attention to what we should be following. We've seen the foolishness of turning against God, but now we see the wisdom and the blessing of placing our hope in Jesus.

The wisdom and the blessing of placing our hope in Jesus. It says this in verses 7 through 12. It says, I will tell of the decree.

The Lord said to me, you are my son. And today I have begotten you. Ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession.

You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them into pieces like a potter's vessel. Now, therefore, O kings, 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 will perish in the way for his wrath is quickly kindled.

[ 19 : 45 ] Blessed are all who take refuge in him. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. Just as the blessed man of Psalm 1 prospers despite the multitude of wicked who surround him.

So the anointed king of Psalm 2 conquers no matter how many kings foolishly oppose him. Verses 7 through 9 contain the words of God's anointed.

He says, I will tell you a decree. He's saying what I'm about to tell you is unchangeable. This is a decree. There's nothing that is going to change us because this is a decree and it carries weight with it.

What I'm about to tell you is a decree from God. He is saying what I'm about to tell you is unchangeable. And the unchangeable truth declared is that this Messiah is God's son.

If there was ever any doubt that this psalm is about Jesus, then these next few verses put to rest any doubts that we might have. It says, ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage.

[ 20 : 55 ] Spurgeon, he knows that the asking nature of this king highlights the priestly nature of him as well. Not only is he a king who rules, but he's a king who intercedes.

He's asking God. And so this shows that this king is not just a king, but it's a priestly king. Namely, Jesus Christ, who is Lord over everything. And he is our great high priest who makes that intercession on our behalf.

And so this is what we see. We see this is clearly pointing us to Jesus. And there's beauty that comes from this. And it also reminds us as the nations are his inheritance.

Revelation 7 reminds us that one day there will be people from every tribe, tongue, and nation around the throne saying, salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.

And so what we see is this is clearly pointing us to Jesus. And in the final three verses, we're reminded that the wise and the blessed take their refuge in God.

[ 22 : 05 ] We're reminded over and over again in scripture that God is our refuge. The chaos of verse 1 is contrasted with the refuge in verse 12.

In verse 1, it says the nations rage. The peoples are plotting against God. You see the chaos that is taking place at the beginning. And that stands in stark contrast to the final phrase in this passage where it says, blessed are all who take refuge in him.

The chaos of this world falls at the refuge of God. The chaos of this world pales in comparison to the peace that comes from God.

One of the most beautiful passages in scripture dealing with God being our refuge is found in Psalm 46. Where it opens with these words. And some of you will be able to finish this phrase before I even get to the end of it.

Where it says, God is our refuge and strength. A very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth gives way.

[ 23 : 11 ] Though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea. Though its waters roar and fall. Though the mountains tremble at its swelling. We are reminded that God is our refuge and strength.

A very present help in times of trouble. You see, it was these words that led Martin Luther to pen the words of one of his greatest hymns that he's ever written.

A mighty fortress is our God. A bulwark never failing. And so many of us remember that song. When many of us remember those words. A mighty fortress is our God.

A bulwark never failing. And I'm afraid as powerful as those words are. That they don't carry the same weight that they did several hundred years ago for us. Because who in here, if you're honest. Has ever once in your life used bulwark in a sentence. Not many of us have. And many of us don't understand what this is. But this bulwark is a strong defense.

[ 24 : 10 ] It's a strong defense against something. And many times it could be defending a castle or something like that. But it's also given, it's used in the context of a strong defense against the waves that are coming into a port.

Many times you'll see pictures of a large port where these ships are docking. And as these ships dock, they need a calm place to dock. They don't need the raging sea to be bumping against them and pushing them back and forth as they seek to dock.

They need something that is blocking that. And so that's a lot of times where this term is used as a bulwark that is blocking the sea that is coming in. And I have heard this many times, but it wasn't

until just a few months ago that I got to see this on a small scale.

My whole family went down to Jamaica for a wedding. And the place of the venue for the wedding had this beautiful beach that was in front of it. And it was beautiful because it was just incredibly calm right here.

Everywhere else that you went along this coast, the waves were just crashing into the coast. They were just crashing. There was no beach anywhere. It was just crashing into a cliff. And these big waves are coming in where you couldn't even swim.

[ 25 : 20 ] You were afraid to go out there in it very far or even get in it at all if you had little kids because of the crashing waves that were coming in. Except for this one location.

Because they had these rock walls that were built up that overlapped. And it allowed water to come in. But it protected it against all of the raging sea that was coming in.

So much so that it was almost like a pool that was right here. Where you weren't afraid at all to let the kids go down and play in it. And so this bulwark was preventing the sea from coming in.

And all of a sudden you had this nice calm spot where you could relax. Where you could take comfort. Where you could have this refuge in. The passage is reminding us that God is our refuge. And it is foolish to find it in anything else. A choice must be made in our lives. Are we going to give our lives to Jesus? Or are we going to rebel against Him by giving our lives to other things that never deliver on what they promise?

[ 26 : 26 ] And so the question we must all answer now is this. Am I going all in for Jesus? Am I giving my life? Am I going all in to follow Jesus?

Am I wholly committing my life? Not straddling the fence. But wholly commit to following Jesus and no one else. And you may say, Brent, that's asking a lot.

If you really are asking me to give up everything to follow Jesus, that's a lot. And it is. Until you realize how foolish it is to give your life to anything else.

It is a lot. Until you realize what you're giving your life to. It's like asking a man dying of thirst in the middle of the desert to take a sip of water.

Sure, he cannot take a sip, but it would be foolish not to. Jesus says it this way in a parable. He says, The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up.

[ 27 : 31 ] Then in his joy, he goes and sells all that he has and buys the field. He sells all that he has to buy this field.

Why? Because the treasure in the field was far greater than all of the treasure that he had.

Following Jesus, yes, it costs us everything, but he gives us so much more.

Now, it may not be in the form of money. It may not be in the form of an easy life. But what he gives us, eternal life with him, what he gives us with the satisfaction and the purpose of doing what we were called to do, is a far greater treasure than anything this world has to offer.

Jesus again says it this way right after that. He says, He realizes that this has the value.

There's greater value in this. If you were to ask me to give up everything I own in exchange for a million dollars, I would gladly say, Yes, show me where to sign. You can have my house. You can have my car.

[ 28 : 41 ] You can have everything else. You can have it for a million dollars. In fact, you could probably go far less than that, and I would sign it all over to you. Why? Because the value of that is far greater than the value of everything that I have.

And what we are reminded of when Jesus calls us to follow him, to go all in for him. Yes, it is costly, but it's worth it.

Because Jesus is worth it. Jim Elliott, one of the famous missionaries to Ecuador, who was speared to death by the very people he was seeking to minister to, was sharing with someone about his desire to go on the mission field.

And the person, meaning well, commenting on Jim's great intellect, that he was incredibly smart, and he said, You could die on the mission field. You could go there and die, and ultimately know that he would.

And he says, How much greater would it be for you to use that wisdom, your communication skills, your intellect, in a far greater way here to tell people to go, to share with people, to expound God's word?

[ 29 : 41 ] How much greater would it be to use it for that than to possibly go and die? And this is what Jim Elliott said. He said, He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

Think of the weight of those words. He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. Church, it is no foolish thing to place your hope and your trust in Jesus.

The things of this world never deliver on what they promise. And sometimes we have to find that out the hard way. The loneliest moment in this life is when you finally attain what it is that you believed would bring you ultimate fulfillment.

It is a lonely moment when you attain what it is that you thought would give your life meaning and purpose greater than anything else, only to realize that it doesn't.

The only one that always delivers on what he promises is Jesus Christ. And so ask yourself today, what are you placing your hope in? What are you giving your life to?

[ 30 : 50 ] For some of you, it may be today that you need to ask that for the very first time. You've come to church a long time. Maybe this is the first time you've ever been to church. I don't know. But you may need to ask that for the first time.

What is it that I'm giving my life to? And for some of you, it may be that you need to give your life to Jesus as the source of your hope for your salvation today. But for many of us, we still need to ask that question.

What am I placing my hope in? What am I looking to in this world to give my life meaning, purpose, security, joy, whatever the case may be? What is it that I'm giving my life to today?

So I want to ask you to genuinely ask that question today. And if God is speaking to you this morning, won't you respond as we pray? Father, we love you. We thank you for Jesus.

We thank you for the hope that we have in you because of what you accomplished on the cross.

And so, Lord, when we look at passages like this, that remind us, that give us a little glimpse of who you are and all that you've done for us.

[ 31 : 54 ] Lord, help these passages point us to you as the source of our hope. God, help us to not look to things or people in this world to give our life meaning and purpose, but help us to look to you, to place our trust in you as a source of our hope.

And so, Lord, I pray today that if there's somebody here that has never placed their hope and their trust in you, that today would be the day they do that. That today would be the day they genuinely ask that question.

What am I putting my hope in? And if we're putting our hope in anything other than the finished work of Jesus on the cross, then, Lord, open our eyes and help us to see that it's pointless until we give our life to you.

And so, Lord, if there's somebody here today that needs to accept you as their Lord and Savior, let today be the day they do that. But, God, I also pray that for all of us, that we would genuinely ask that question in our life.

What is it that I'm giving my life to? What is it that I'm looking to to have hope in this life? What am I placing my hope in in this world? And so, Lord, help us to ask that each and every day.

[ 33 : 08 ] And each and every day, make that conscious decision to realize that you and you alone are the only one that delivers on what you promise. And so, Lord, we thank you for that.

And we ask all these things in Jesus' precious name. Amen. I want to invite you to stand with me. We're going to sing the song of invitation this morning. And if God is speaking to you, won't you respond as we stand together and sing?