

Summer in the Psalms - Psalm 1

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[0:00] Amen. Amen. Well, good morning, church. Good morning, church. There we are. Well, I know it's strange to gather and not be in Zachariah.

! But we finished it. And we're actually going to begin a new series. We are in the Psalms for the rest of the summer. And as Scott had mentioned, we're going to start at the very beginning. And we're trusting that the Lord would sustain Scott and myself to be part of this series by the time we get to 150.

It could be 10 years. I don't know. We'll see. But good to be with you this morning. I want to encourage us to. I know summer is oftentimes, you know, a season where we're outside a lot. We're on vacation. We're moving around. And sometimes our soul can kind of wither in the process because we don't really spend time with the Lord in the Word.

And so we have been exhorting you all to spend time, if you don't have already a reading plan, to just read the Proverbs this summer. The Proverb of the day. There are 31 chapters, 31 days in most months. And just read the chapter of the day.

[1:19] So tomorrow, if you haven't been reading anything, Proverbs chapter 20. I want to encourage you with that. And I've been enjoying it. I've been doing that with some friends, with some guys I meet with and with my family.

And we've been having just really good discussion around the dinner table oftentimes about things that we're learning and a verse maybe that stuck out to us. And so just a good way to be in the Word together, even as a family.

We're in Psalm chapter 1 this morning. You can kind of turn there and let me pray for us. And then we will spend some time in the Word together. Let's pray.

Lord, we're reminded of just the promise that you've made. And Lord, we know that in the context, that's in terms of things that we need to repent of.

And Lord, we want to be a people that draw near to you this morning. If there's things that we need to repent of, we would. We wouldn't let the day go by without talking with you.

[2:35] And if we need to get right, we would. Lord, if we just need to hear from you and meditate on your Word this morning, Lord, that you would give us something that we could consider. And so, Lord, we do want to begin this week gathering, worshiping, hearing from you, drawing near to you, that we would be strengthened for the week ahead.

We love you, Jesus. It's in your name we pray. Amen. So, we are, as I said, beginning this series, examining the Psalms, beginning this morning.

A little bit of introduction to get us into the study. We know in the Old Testament there are 39 books. And there's actually quite a bit of symmetry in the Old Testament in terms of the way the books are ordered.

You have 17 historical books and 17 prophetic books. And then right smack in the middle of those are five, what I'm going to call experiential books.

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, songs. And I'm going to call them experiential because they're really the record of faith lived out.

[3:49] Living out the experience of God's people. Sort of what faith feels like to trust God.

And right in the middle, it's interesting, in your Bible, most English Bibles, the very center of the Bible is actually Psalm 118.

Maybe you didn't know that. And that's kind of interesting because it's flanked on both sides by the shortest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 117, which contains two verses.

And then on the other side, it is flanked by the longest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 119 with 176 verses. I'm already claiming Psalm 17 when we get there.

And Scott, I'm giving you, I'm gifting you Psalm 119. So can we work that out on the preaching schedule in about a decade? Okay. These experiential books, they really reach us at the deepest level of our emotions.

[4:56] Psalms in particular, I like to think of the Psalms as echoes of the soul. Just for instance, Psalm 6. I am weary with my groaning, my moaning. Every night I flood my bed with tears.

I drench my couch with weeping. And there you have this experience of loss. Being recorded. Or Psalm 42, Why are you cast down, O my soul?

And why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God. And here we have the experience of depression. And perhaps anxiety. Or Psalm 35, Contend, O Lord, with those who contend with me. And you have the psalmist here writing about somebody that has ill plans towards him or perhaps even an injustice. So the first question we need to answer this morning is what is a psalm?

Psalm. This comes from the verb zamar, which translates to sing. In noun form, mizmor. In the Hebrew, it's really, it's a melody.

[6:01] A melody. What is a melody? Well, a melody is a song. It's a poem to be sung. Perhaps to a stringed instrument. And in fact, 55 of the psalms are actually addressed to the chief musician.

Maybe you've never thought of the psalms this way. But you can actually think of them as song lyrics. This is God's curated playlist for us to consider who he is for the good of our soul.

And we are given the psalms to teach us really how to pray. Some people say, well, it's the prayer book. It is that, but it's more than that. Because it teaches us how to pray, how to worship, how to grieve, how to rejoice, how to repent, how to trust our God.

These are the songs that God has given to us. The gift of music was always given to lead us to praise and worship and to connect with Creator God.

There is a transcendent quality to music, even though much of the world uses it for other purposes, often to draw attention to the musician themselves.

[7:14] These songs are to direct our gaze at our God. That said, these are songs. We're going to study them together and the only gift you're receiving this morning from myself is that I'm not going to sing them to you.

Just wait, Scott. It could happen. Probably not. I think, Noah, you've got the best shot. All right.

Well, as we begin here, this is really the gateway into the book itself, Psalm 1.

I believe Psalm 1 is the key to really unlocking the Psalms and I would actually argue the Christian life itself because it paints for us two ways to live.

We can either live life under God's rule or we can cast it off. And what I love about the Psalms and this one in particular is just its simplicity as it speaks to the life that Jesus desires for us.

I like simple, especially after we finish Zechariah. So simple is good. Now, as far as authorship of the Psalms, we know that 73 of the 150 are attributed to David.

[8:36] 12 to Asaph. He's a prophet and a worship leader in David's day. 11 to the sons of Korah. And I think that one's actually probably my favorite description because I think of Korah and if you read, you know his story from number 16.

Korah was not content with his station in ministry. He wanted to do more than just help administrate the tabernacle. He wanted to be a priest and he was jealous of Moses and Aaron and their influence and ultimately, we know the story that the earth swallowed him and 250 disgruntles who served in the tabernacle.

And yet, this is what I love about the sons of Korah. Korah's descendants were very different than their father, their great-great-grandfather.

They became Korah leaders in David's day and I love the fact that these descendants of Korah were worshipers of God and they were not bound to the generations before them to live the same pattern.

I think there's a lesson there. I think there's an encouragement for us, especially if you are a first-generation believer. And I'm not going to ask people to raise their hands, but I know in our congregation we have a number of folks that they are a first-generation follower of Jesus.

[9:59] And that's beautiful. And what I love about the fact that you have these individuals that wrote these worship songs, Korah was not a great example and yet those that came from his lineage, they didn't follow his example.

And so I think there's something beautiful there that the gospel gives us an opportunity to live a very different life. There's a few others. Solomon writes a couple of the psalms.

Moses, probably the oldest psalm, not probably, it is, chapter 90 in the book. I like the fact that there's a guy by the name of Heman who wrote a psalm and actually if you look it just says He-Man. That's kind of interesting. And a few others and then about 50 of them are anonymous. And actually Psalm 1 is an anonymous one.

We don't know who the author of this first psalm is. The final word I'm going to give you on the introduction here for our study is there's a lot of Jesus in the psalms.

[11:02] And I think that's one of the most exciting parts of this study as we get to them. Most of these, we call them Messianic psalms, were written a thousand years before Christ's first advent.

And I just had to touch on this because this is sort of burned into my soul because 30 years ago when I was going through my pastoral ordination exam, my all-day exam, I actually got the question, Jay, could you name for us four Messianic psalms?

And I think I was able to name two. And so I have been waiting. I know the Messianic psalms. Like, I can give you the psalms, Psalm 2, 22, 69, 110, Psalm 8, Psalm 16, 40, 41, 45.

I've got them. I have been holding them. I've been waiting for this question for 30 years because I'm ready. Pastor Jay, do you know any Messianic psalms? I have been waiting 30 years and no one has asked.

So I'm just, I'm giving you that one for free. All right. Let's get into our study this morning looking at Psalm 1 beginning here in verse 1.

[12:13] Psalm 1. And the psalmist begins by saying, blessed is the man. Blessed is the man.

This is God's gateway to joy. You want joy this summer? You want joy this life?

Of course. Well, this is the key. And maybe you're saying, well, Jay, how do you know that this psalm is about joy? Because of this word the psalmist begins with.

Blessed. Blessed. This is not a stodgy word. This is not a stiff word, overly formal word. Although maybe you think it is.

You know stodgy words. Like if somebody says, hey, where do you live? And you respond, and you're like, whoa, whoa, whoa. You mean where do I reside? Like that would be stodgy. Blessed is not a stodgy word.

[13:18] This is a great word. The word used here from the Hebrew esher is used 26 times in the Psalms. It comes from the root Asher.

And we know Asher is who? The eighth son of Jacob. And we learn about him in Genesis 30, Leah. It says in Genesis 30, 13, Leah said, and we recall the family dynamic.

She's the sister with the sad eyes, unloved like her sister Rachel. And she writes, happy am I, for women have called me happy.

So she called his name Asher. And what's sort of ironic here is actually Leah didn't give birth, but it was her servant Zipla. But nonetheless, she thought this is a son in my sort of stream category. I get credit, so I'm going to name this boy Asher. Esher. Happiness. Happiness. So, this psalm is about happiness.

[14:23] But it's not temporary happiness. It's not a flimsy happiness. This isn't like, oh, it's payday. I'm happy. Or it's game day. Right?

I got noticed by a boy day happy. Or, I just completed my honey-do list. I'm so happy.

Gentlemen, that's short-lived. That is so temporary. That list will come back. It will never end. Do I get an amen? Amen. Okay.

Just checking. Just checking. Consider how blessed is used elsewhere. Psalm 32.1 writes it this way. Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven.

Whose sin is covered. That's the type of happiness we're talking about. That's not a flimsy happiness. Right? It's like the part of our life that we wish we could do over, but we can't do over.

[15:28] But in Christ, that's been erased. That chapter is gone. Psalm. Psalmist writes in 103, verse 12, as far as the east is from the west.

Scarlet letter has been erased. Forgiven. For real. How do you feel? I feel unbelievable. I can't believe that that's true.

That's like happiness that takes your breath away. That's soul happiness. That's joy. And that's what the psalmist is talking about here. It's what Horatio Spafford was talking about in it as well when he says, My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought.

My sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross. And I bear it no more. Praise the Lord.

And he has to say it again. Praise the Lord. Oh, my soul. No shame. The favor of God is now upon my life. And it's so, so very good.

[16:33] It's almost too good to be true. And yet it's so. That's joy. That's soul happiness. And that's what the psalmist is talking about here.

And it's fascinating. Psalm 1 is all about what? It's the path or lifestyle of joy.

And I think this psalm actually confronts bad theology in that perhaps you came to faith in Christ and you're thinking, oh, man, God wants me miserable. Well, this psalmist declares, no, not at all. God wants your joy. Do we know anybody in life that wants happiness? Everyone. So we have people that are chronic shoppers because they think they're going to get that next hit of joy by the next purchase that they make and then it's another thing for them to maintain or it breaks and it's just, it's never satisfied.

I had a conversation with an individual that I drove a bit ago and they were talking about divorce that they were looking to get.

[17:47] And in the context of the conversation, they're saying, yeah, I need to leave my spouse because I just want to be happy. People are looking for happiness.

I drive a lot of folks with Uber that live without restraining the flesh and they're out there trying to grab a hold of some happiness. Well, Psalm 1 confronts, I think, actually, the very first lie ever spoken.

Satan telling Eve that God was holding out on them. That God is somehow a straight jacket. God is a killjoy.

That actually happiness is found outside of his rule. Choices without God are so much better.

Again, you don't have to raise your hands.

You ever believe that? You ever thought like, yeah, I could just cast off God's rule in my life. Man, I could have a lot of fun. I could be really happy.

[19:00] And I think there are times, perhaps, in all of our lives where we believe that. And so this psalm, friends, we need. We need this psalm. We need this psalm more than we know.

And I think we need this psalm because there's a promise of joy in it that needs to roar in our hearts and our minds. Because we live in a world that's telling us what daily.

Cast off God's rule. Don't live under His rule. Joy is found elsewhere. And I think as we read this psalm where it says, blessed is the man.

It could be blessed is the woman. Blessed is the youth. Blessed is the child. Blessed is the child.

This is not a mousy utterance. This isn't like, oh, bless your heart.

Right? That's like, I mean, that's actually a pretty offensive thing when somebody says, bless your heart. They're basically saying, you're weak and needy and pathetic. I mean, that's sort of what's happening there.

[20:05] This is not what's happening here. The psalmist's not like, blessed. This is a large, this is a robust declaration here.

This is a cry actually of rescue. Of liberation. Right? Blessed. Blessed are you. If you believe this and if you act, blessed, happy you will be.

I think it's like a war cry. I shared with you, I think in the past, we, on the west side, had an afternoon where the kids were out, the girls were young and we were out in the backyard playing and then we had this bee swarm descend on our backyard and, you know, the queen, new queen showed up, old queen got booted, took some of her workers, really not the greatest, like, example.

Like, yeah, observe the ant but not the bee. That's bad leadership but it's just, it's what happens and so we had like 75 thousand perhaps bees swarming in our backyard and it descended like a cloud and it was like, it became dark all of a sudden and it was like, I, it was a very surreal thing because I'm like, I have no, what's going on and then I realized, oh, these are bees and my kids are out there playing and of course we're just like, what?

But then all of a sudden I yell, I'm just like, run! You know, get in the house! And like, because if they would have stayed out, they're thinking, well, this is kind of cool.

[21:39] It would be cool for about three seconds until they started getting just stung and I'm like, no, I want you to avoid that misery so I'm yelling at you, get in the house!

The psalmist is yelling at us this morning, friends, blessed! Believe me! Joy is found here! Well, how do we access this?

Well, first, what trail are we to avoid if we actually desire joy in this life?

Well, this is what it says. Verses 1 and 2 again. Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. First, this isn't about us going, okay, what is the moral thing to do and not do?

[22:47] This is actually talking about somebody coming to faith. They are now living under the rule of God in their life. So you can think of this as really a conversion experience here.

But assuming that the person has come to faith in Christ, they have trusted in Christ for salvation, joy is now found in a lifestyle of avoiding one path while continuing to choose the other.

this is for your joy. Do we have any hikers in the congregation? Don't raise your hands again. I know, it's all rhetorical. You guys look like a pretty fit, I mean, we're a pretty fit church.

I mean, we're not like a crossfit church, but we're pretty good. We're doing pretty good. And if you're a hiker, we went on a hike, we'll call it a mini hike, you know, it counted, there was enough miles in there, but we were over at Bowling Pitcher a couple weeks back and we were hiking and we had like in front of us kind of two trails that we could take.

And by the way, we're not like super smart hikers because it was like the afternoon, it was 90 degrees and I'm like, hey, who wants to hike? Oh, that sounds great, Dad. And so that's what we did. It's like 90, we're hiking and we had two options.

[24:04] There was two paths. There was one that took you down by, you know, the river, it was in the shade, there were trees, pretty. And then there was another path you could take out in the middle of dead grass, no trees, heat of the day, weeds.

And so I was in charge and because I love my family, I said, let's go to the dead grass trail and explore that for a while. It's kind of a bad choice.

But you sort of have this image here the psalmist is sort of painting for us here. There's two ways to go here. Two ways to access joy. And if we want joy, first, there's a trail that we probably ought not to walk on.

Walking in the counsel of the wicked, standing in the way of sinners, sitting in the seat of scoffers. Those things that we did before we knew the Lord, perhaps.

But the issue here at stake is one of entertaining and then participating in sin to varying degrees. And there is a progression of walking, then standing, then sitting.

[25:18] And I think it's this image, this picture of increasing involvement in sin. Don't walk in the counsel of the wicked.

With the guilty ones translates. This general term for evil. Maybe this is the one-time offense.

Walking. And then it progresses to the way of sinners.

Like standing in the way of sinners. Someone inclined to sin. And maybe here now we have this emphasis of pattern of evil. Standing. Linger. And if you continue on this trajectory of immersion into sin, you will then enter really this third category.

You will be sitting, planted with scoffers, mockers of God, boasters of sin. And you see this pattern now established a lifestyle of sin.

I drove a couple gentlemen Friday night, took them out, Ubered, picked them up, got in my car, taken them downtown. I'm like, hey, what are you guys doing tonight? They're like, we're going to go chase girls and cause trouble.

[26:22] They're just right out there. This is what we're aiming to do. These guys were late 30s. And what I had gathered as I heard them is like, these guys had been perfecting this lifestyle for a very long time.

Those are individuals, right? Sitting. Mockers of God. This was their normal rhythm in their free time. You know, we've been reading the Proverbs, many of us, this summer.

It actually echoes the warning of this psalm that sin, it can actually turn into a pattern in our lives if not dealt with, if not quickly repented of.

The psalmist writes in Psalm 4 here, verses 14 and 15, writer Proverbs says, do not enter the path of the wicked.

Do not walk in the way of the evil. Avoid it. Do not go on it. Turn away from it and pass on. It really echoes what we just read here in Psalm 1.

[27:28] Like, this can become a lifestyle. And I actually sent this text to some of the guys that I'm discipling right now, and I wrote this about this proverb.

I said, I love how sin is described as a path trail we often walk on. As we choose to indulge our flesh, we're entering a path. Not typically a one-time endeavor.

This is a good reminder for all of us to be draconian in our battle against sin so that we don't wake up one day realizing all the miles we've logged on a path not our own.

And one that promises joy, but in the end never delivers. I think the writer of Proverbs is just echoing what Psalm 1 is warning us against.

If sin is not dealt with, friends, sin becomes progressive in nature. I think Abraham's nephew Lot is a perfect example of this.

[28:41] Of just ever-increasing decisions that he made, compromises that he made in his life.

And what's shocking about Lot is he's actually described, and we will deal with this in the fall when we look at 2 Peter, but 2 Peter 2, I think it's 7 and 8, he's actually described as a righteous man.

Lot's a righteous man. And yet, he gets caught up in a scene that he should never have been a part of. And if you recall, Abraham splits their estate, gives Lot opportunity to pick the plot of land that he wants, and Lot chooses land near what?

Sodom and Gomorrah, cities known for their wickedness. It was also, however, a place of wealth, a lot of opportunity for the finer things in life, and Lot opted to move near that city or those cities.

But over time, Lot went from being near Sodom to actually living in it. And if you read the Old Testament, you see the progression in Genesis 13, 12, it talks about he moved his tent as far as Sodom.

That's Genesis 13. By the time you get to Genesis 14, it says Lot was dwelling in Sodom. And then by the time you get to Genesis 19, I think we have that, Genesis 19, 1, it says, two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom.

[30:09] He was now part of the establishment, perhaps a civic leader here. These had become his people.

And I think there was just this ever-increasing creep in his life of compromise to when the men of the city were about to ravage the guests, he does something unconscionable, unthinkable, and offers up his daughters?

It's a heinous scene, decision, but over time, Lot's compromises led him, I think, to losing himself. Unrecognizable from the man he once was. He became desensitized to wickedness, to worldliness. And when God judged Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot was able to escape with his two daughters, but he lost his wife who lost her life.

There were increasing compromises in his life, in his quest. I think his aspirations for comfort, for prosperity, and it cost his family deeply.

[31:24] And I think the psalmist's point here in Psalm 1 is, man, avoid sin. Like, all of it. Even the entertaining of it, there's actually no joy found in any of it.

You want to be blessed? You want to be joyful in this life? Friends, like, we know this psalm, we quote this psalm, but the question is for all of us, do we live this?

Do we believe this? I think one of the most tragic examples of this in modern Christianity is Ravi Zacharias.

He is credited with saying, sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.

Now, a number of preachers have used that phrase. Billy Sunday, others, but he's the one known for it. He quoted this, and yet, he proclaimed this all the while he was harboring secret sin.

[32:37] And I don't think Ravi began life going, I'm going to, like, harbor sin in my life. I think there was something that occurred. There was a compromise.

There was a walking to where he started to stand and ultimately sit. And it's tragic because I think he had a heart for the Lord and did a lot of good.

And yet, Psalm 39, 11, when you discipline a man with rebuke for sin, you consume like a moth what is dear to him. And the legacy of his life isn't what he would have desired.

Right? Because I think he had a heart to see Jesus glorified. But there's so much of like, man, he kind of ended in hypocrisy. And it's kind of heartbreaking.

So we can know this. We can quote this. But do we believe this? Do we live this? Friends, there's no joy found in that lifestyle regardless of whether you're dabbling in sin or you are immersed in it.

[33:48] don't be on that path. And in fact, when you came to faith in Christ, you're saying, I'm done with that. So don't return. What path are we to walk?

Are we to associate with? And what I love, friends, about this is this is for all of us to believe and to walk and guess what? We don't have to do it by ourselves.

And I think, even though this is not even an application of the sermon, it should be. I should have put it in. I'm making it one now. The best way for us to walk this path is to not do it alone.

And I'll tell you what, I have a dear friend who, well, not now because he's done, but he's a, he's a pastor, preacher over on the, on the East Coast. I grew up with him, went to college together, roommates.

He's a pastor today. We had a blast in college and we weren't chasing women. We weren't doing dumb things. We were like working with our youth group. We were evangelizing people in our dorm. We were giving Bibles away.

[34 : 49] We had a blast. But we had a blast because I think, in part because we weren't doing it alone. I think one of the, this, this Psalm, there's a clarion call for us to, man, be in relationship.

One of the burdens for us as a church is that everybody's in a discipleship relationship. You're investing and you're being invested in. People are pouring in and you are pouring into others. There's nothing better that will help you walk the path of joy than to do it with another brother or sister. Amen? Super practical. Well, what's the path to walk?

Verse 2 says this, His delight, her delight, is in the law of the Lord and on His law He meditates day and night.

Isn't that an interesting word, delight? His delight. What is delight? To find pleasure in. Just pause for a moment here.

[35 : 52] This is huge. It makes all the difference in pursuing the Lord in this life. Okay? Is it duty to walk in the counsel of the wicked?

Is that duty? Say no. No. Is it duty to stand in the path of sinners? No. Is it duty to be fully immersed in their sin?

No. Why do people do it? Because they imagine that it's going to be fun. That they're going to receive some sort of pleasure in it.

That it will somehow make them happy. duty. How do we battle sin in our life if we think that we're battling that with duty?

We've already lost. Because what we're actually setting up mentally is, man, I'm going to move from living a life in full color to going to black and white as I give up my sin.

[36 : 54] And actually, the psalmist is saying it's not that way. Because the psalmist is saying you know what? It's actually delight. It's delight. The psalmist is proclaiming to us that we are fighting pleasure with pleasure.

We're battling sin with the promise of greater joy. Your duty isn't to be in the law of the Lord. It's actually your and my delight.

The law of the Lord. His delight is in the law of the Lord. And you're thinking, law? Man, this sounds so burdensome and negative. The word actually law is Torah.

And it just means the instruction of God. It's good to live under the instruction of God. His descriptions, His explanations. Yeah, and His expectations for us. It's interesting here, law of the Lord, this word law, it's describing, right, the word is Torah, which are the first five books of the Old Testament.

And maybe you didn't know this, but the psalm is actually broken into five books as well. And I think what the psalmist is writing is delight in the psalms.

[38 : 14] Live in the psalms. Meditate, murmur, ponder, chew, dwell. The psalms are experiential in living under God's instruction.

Live the relationship that is so alive in the book of psalms. These are experiential books. It's joy to live under the rule of God in this life.

And so the question for all of us is do we believe that happiness is found there in living under the rule of God? Or do we actually believe that joy, that happiness is found in the reign of sin in our life? This is not you need more content issue. This is we need more faith. We actually need to believe. We need to believe. This is why we need this psalm to not be mousy in our lives.

Blessed. Oh, that's so quaint. No. Blessed happy. Let it roar. If you choose out to hang out in the midst of a bee swarm, misery's coming.

[39 : 26] Run! There's a better way to go. Blessed. Blessed. Blessed. And really, the conclusion of the psalmist here is happiness is found in surrender to God.

Surrender to the Father. It's really helpful to know who the Father is because He's actually a good Father. He's actually the best Father who wants good for you, wants joy for you.

Two paths. One of surrender versus one of defiance. It's pretty clear what path, what trail the world is walking.

Unfortunately, I think a lot of churches are beginning to move that direction. It's tragic. It's joyless.

And the psalms say, no, joy is actually found there to live under the rule of God.

It's so good to have ministry in the life of another. There's joy there. And what I love is the psalmist ends with really this contrasting image for us related to joy being produced by these two approaches to life.

[40:50] And maybe this is good for you visual learners out there. But we have two pictures. One, a life lived under the surrender of God's rule and one lived in defiance.

Let's look at verses 3 and 4. Psalmist writes, he, the one living under the rule of God, he's like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season.

And its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. Contrasting, the wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

So here it is. Tree planted versus chaff. You want a life of chaff? What's chaff?

It's like the husk of grain. It's separated on the threshing floor. In the winnowing process, it's just blown away. It's useless. It's discarded.

[42:00] It's good for nothing. It's forgotten. I was thinking about those two guys that I picked up Friday night.

Late 30s, they're still doing the same thing they were doing when they were probably 18. And it's just, they're going to go through their life and I've seen it because I've driven these folks. They're in their 40s.

They're in their 50s. They're still living the same lifestyle, still living in defiance towards their maker. At death, what do you have to show?

Your life's forgotten. Man, I knew how to party. Great. Proverbs 10, 7 says, the memory of the wicked will rot.

That's how you used your life. And really, the ultimate end in Psalm 1 describes these individuals, verses 5 and 6, therefore the wicked will not stand, and the intent here is they will not stand justified in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous, for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

[43:16] Those who reject the free offer of salvation through Christ in this life, that's the end. And the lifestyle that they're living demonstrates who they are. But there's a promise of joy for the man who delights in God, in his ways, in his word, and it's really this beautiful image that we're given.

It's this healthy tree. It's a beautiful tree, and it's like God's saying, man, this is blessed joy. We have this image of this healthy tree, right?

We planted a dogwood, a Cherokee chief, in our front yard a couple summers ago, and didn't have any blooms last year, but this summer, pretty great, beautiful.

If you've ever seen the dogwood on the south end of the property, it's the best tree we have at 4th. Right, Scott? Yeah. So, but you got to see it late spring, summer, like, it's beautiful, and I think it's this image here.

Yeah, even this healthy tree. It's going to be beautiful. It's going to be exquisite. Friends, our beauty, our joy emanates, increases from the rule of God in our lives.

[44:32] You are a better husband, you are a better wife, as you stay tethered to the Lord. I'm a better dad when I stay tethered to the Lord.

It actually says you're planted where? By streams of water. God's rule in our life as we live out the word. And it produces what? Fruit.

The tree is productive. Interesting. The key here isn't the type of tree, it's the location of the tree. By the streams of water. You are in relationship with your maker. And you're living under his rule. And it's producing something in your life. And the tree is producing fruit.

Who's the fruit for? Is the fruit for the tree? No. Trees don't eat their own fruit. That's weird. Okay? Calm down. Right? The fruit is for others to enjoy.

[45:35] The tree actually is a blessing to others. It's like a life where you're having ministry in the lives of other people because you're staying tethered to the Lord in this life.

You're walking with Him. You're enjoying Him. You're repenting of sin. You're living a life of abiding. Tree is productive. It's useful.

When we're not yielded to the Lord, no power. When there is secret sin in our life, we're miserable. We have nothing to share with the unbeliever. We don't have wisdom, in fact, to speak God's Word, counsel into the life of a brother or sister.

Joyless. The second effect here of living under God's rule in this life is what?

[46 : 37] that our leaf will not wither. As we're staying tethered to the Lord, and I think it's a wonderful promise here, friends, regardless of the trial in your life, there is a resilience to us because we're walking with God.

And I just think much of that comes from the right perspective as we delight in His Word. His Word brings us right perspective. As we're suffering, we're reminded, oh, wait, this is not our home.

Jesus went to prepare a place for us, right? We're experiencing pain, sickness, we're aging. I mean, Scott and myself, not at all.

We're just, but the rest of y'all, a whole bunch. 2 Corinthians 5, it's a tent. It's going to wear out. It's going to wear out.

Perspective. A life surrendered to God, to His Word, living under His rule is a life resilient to the most desperate things that come into our lives.

[47 : 41] Amen? Yeah. You get a cancer diagnosis. You lose a spouse.

You lose a child. You experience financial disaster. You are persecuted for your faith. Maybe you lose your job as a result.

There is still a resilience. Paul, he was beaten. He was in prison in Philippi. While he was in prison, after being beaten him and Silas, they're not in there despairing.

What were they in there doing? In their cell? Acts 16.25. About midnight, Paul and Silas, they were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

I just love that. I'm sure the prisoners are like, what? What? Love that. Those were men who delighted in the rule of God over their lives.

[48 : 52] Paul lived enough life without God's rule. It's like, guys, it was joyless. This is so much better. We're resilient.

I love the example. Richard Wurmbrand, he's actually a founder of Voice of the Martyrs, but for 14 years he was imprisoned under communism, tortured for preaching Jesus in communist Romania, and this is what he wrote.

He says, it was strictly forbidden to preach to other prisoners. It was understood that whoever was caught doing this received a severe beating. A number of us decided to pay the price for the privilege, for the privilege of preaching Jesus.

So we accepted their terms. It was a deal. We preached and they beat us. However, he also testified that Christ gave him joy in the midst of that.

In fact, he writes, alone in my cell, cold, hungry, in rags, I danced for joy every night. And I think, here's an individual that was delighting.

[50 : 12] Delighting in the Lord. Delighting in the rule of God over his life. Friends, if we're convinced, if we stay convinced that Psalm 1 is true, if we believe it, that joy will ever increase in our life, as we walk with the Lord, then joy will be present in our life till our final breath.

The issue for all of us here isn't that can we recite the Psalm? The issue for us is do we believe it? And do we believe the promise associated with it that there's joy found here?

Amen? Father, help us. We believe, but help our unbelief. Lord, we know that really repentance is our way off the path of sin, back on the path of life.

Lord, we're thankful that You are a God who is forbearing, who is patient. Lord, help us to believe that joy can be found in walking close to You in this life.

that that's not life in black and white, but there's joy there. That we would taste and see that You're good. You say, blessed is the man who takes refuge in You.

[51 : 40] Would You help us to believe that? And Lord, I pray that we would consider this promise of joy and Lord, if we are striving to do this alone, that maybe out of this morning, You will convict us to where we will consider how can we get close to another.

To a brother, to a sister, where we could walk with someone else, pursuing You, so that Lord, ministry would only increase in our lives.

Lord, what a gift to be in this together. The gift to be a church. The gift to be able to be an encouragement when faith is weak in another.

Lord, help us to believe this promise. The joy that blessed the promise would roar in our minds and our hearts. And Lord, we would experience something more of Your joy with the rest of the days of summer because we are walking close to You.

It's in Jesus' name we pray and all God's people said, Amen. Amen.