

A Battle of Sovereignty

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[0 : 00] All right, if you got your Bible, go to Psalm chapter 2.

Psalm chapter 2, if you were in Psalm 1 last week, you have a really far way to go. Just one chapter over to Psalm chapter 2. We're continuing in our series that we started last week called Summer in the Psalms.

And while you're turning there, let me just say thank you for your singing. I absolutely love the way that you engage and sing and worship. You know, sometimes I forget because we've been doing this for so long.

We had a lot of guests and visitors with us. Last week was talking to some people after our Sunday service. And they said, you know, at first when I kind of saw the lyric video come on, I wasn't quite sure about it.

But by the time we were kind of all done with the service, like, I get it. Like, I enjoyed it. And, you know, again, we kind of do things a little differently here. But you know what?

[1 : 14] We've kind of removed a lot of the distractions so that we can just focus on the content of the song and just singing to God and all of that. So just thank you for the way you've adapted to doing things differently here at Faith Family.

And I love our time of worship together. So thank you for your singing. Again, we started a series last week called Summer in the Psalms because a few weeks ago we finished up a series on anxiety and worry and depression.

And so we wanted to kind of do something between now and the next big series. And so the Psalms are a good place for us to spend our attention for the remainder of our summer.

And by the way, I don't do this very often, but I'm going to throw this out there. And it comes with no guarantee, okay? With no guarantee, if there is a specific psalm that you would like for me to preach on, let me know.

You can email that to me or you can just come and talk to me and just say, I would really love for you to preach on this psalm. Again, it is no guarantee. I'm not making any promises. Normally, I do not take requests when it comes to preaching.

[2 : 22] But if there is a psalm that the Lord is leading you in and he leads me as well, that would be a great thing. So let me know if that's the case for you. Well, let's get after it. Psalm chapter 2 is where we're going to be this evening.

And if you are able to stand, please do so as we honor the reading of God's Word. Psalm 2 says, He who sits in the heavens laughs.

And the Lord holds them in derision. And 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 and the ends of the earth your possession.

You shall break them with the rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Now, therefore, O kings, be wise and be warned, O rulers of the earth.

[3 : 48] 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. And blessed are all who take refuge in him. Oh, I love the Psalms. Pray with me. And let's ask God to teach us tonight. Lord, thank you for this time set aside during our week to look to your Word as we gather as a congregation to hear from you.

Lord, we believe that you speak to us through the preaching of your Word. And I pray, God, tonight you would speak to us and that you would capture our attention of your great sovereignty and glory and majesty.

That we would bow the knee to you and no other. That we would see Christ as King and King of kings and Lord of lords of our life and of all the nations.

[4 : 50] And I pray this in his name and God's people said, Amen. You can be seated. It's a story that I'm certain almost everyone in the room is familiar with.

It was written in 1900, put to film in 1939. It's a story of a young girl and her adventurous journey to meet the great wizard.

Anybody know what I'm talking about? I'm referring to the classic story, The Wizard of Oz. Do you remember this story? Dorothy is taken by a tornado from her black and white farm in Kansas all the way to the multicolored city of Oz.

And do you remember what her one wish was? She had one wish. Her wish was to go back to Kansas because after all, there's no place like home.

Yeah, very good. But in order for her to get that wish fulfilled, Dorothy is told that she's going to have to take a journey to the emerald city.

[5 : 55] For there in the city she'll meet a great wizard and he will be able to solve her problem. He will be able to grant her wish. And along the journey, Dorothy is joined by another cast of characters.

You remember who they are. But they have a problem like Dorothy as well that they need the wizard to solve. They need the wizard to fix. And along the journey, she meets up with a scarecrow. And he needs a brain. And the tin man who needs a heart. And the lion who needs courage. You have seen the film. All right. And together, off they go down the yellow brick road to meet the wizard.

And there's a very interesting discovery that's made upon arriving at the emerald city. You see, when they first encounter the wizard, you remember what happens? They're met with lights and smoke and this thundering voice.

And they are frightened at the very presence of the great wizard. Until Dorothy's dog, do you remember his name? Toto, very good. Pulls back the curtain.

[7 : 06] And then all of a sudden, there's this great revelation. That is, the wizard isn't a great wizard with power. The wizard is just an old man pulling levers behind the curtain.

And then all of a sudden, it becomes clear to everyone. Do you remember the discovery that is made at the end of the story, at the end of the film? What they discovered is this.

They didn't need the wizard after all. As they begin to reflect on their journey, they realize that during the journey, the scarecrow had displayed the ability to think.

The tin man had displayed compassion. The lion had demonstrated great bravery. In other words, everything they thought they needed from the wizard, they already had.

Consequently, listen to me, faith family. Their need for a higher power only kept them from experiencing the true power.

[8 : 13] Power within themselves. Now listen to me, faith family. It is not my desire to ruin one of your favorite stories. Or maybe it is.

Because there is a reason why the Wizard of Oz became an American classic. It's because it resonates deeply with an idol that Americans worship.

It's personal autonomy. That is, why worship a wizard when you can be your own? Why bow before a king when you can be king?

I mean, after all, wouldn't life be perfect if you were king? I'm gonna be the main event like no king was before.

I'm brushing up, I'm looking down, I'm working on my work. Oh, isn't this far rather an inspiring thing? Oh, I just can't wait to be king.

[9 : 14] You've gone for a long way to go, Yak Master, if you think. No one's saying do this. Now when I said that, I... No one's saying be there. Well, I meant what. No one's saying stop that. No one's saying see here.

Now see here. We don't run around all day. Well, that's definitely our... We don't do it all my way. Doesn't that sound perfect?

I mean, listen to those lyrics again. By the way, that'll be humming throughout your brain the rest of the night, and you're welcome for that. No one's saying do this.

No one's saying be there. No one's saying stop that. No one's saying see here. You're free to run around all day, and most importantly, free to do it all my way.

I've traveled each and every highway, and more, much more than this.

[10:17] I did it my way. So hopefully that gets the Lion King out of your head now. All right, so have I used enough cultural references at this point in the sermon?

Listen, whether we want to admit it or not, we have a desire for personal autonomy, a desire for personal power. We want to be in control, and that is not just a theme that is consistent in our own life.

That is a theme that has been consistent throughout the history of humanity. I could give you 50 examples. I don't have time for 50 examples. Let me just give you a few.

Why have there been so many wars throughout the history of humanity? There is a desire to reign over other people. There is a desire to conquer others.

There is a desire to expand power. Why does every nation, ours and others, fight politically? It's because we want to dominate the other party.

[11:16] We want to be in control and to be able to make all the decisions. I mean, listen to the language of the so-called social issues that are debated in our day, like abortion or transgender or human sexuality.

The argument goes, it's my body. I have the authority to do what I want. I want to be able to have control over my life. Why do you think the number one topic that people hate hearing about in church is financial giving?

I don't want to listen to anybody tell me what to do with my money. It's mine! And you're not going to tell me what to do with it. Or why religious leaders will do anything they can to protect their religious institution.

They want to exercise control and authority on others. This is the world we live in. Amen? Bon Jovi said, it's my life. Bobby Brown said, it's my prerogative.

Bob Marley said, stand up for your rights. Burger King says, have it your way. The largest section in Barnes & Noble is self-esteem. And stamped on every American psyche is a declaration of independence.

[12:25] We, the people. And that desire for control of our lives, that desire for personal autonomy, is exactly what is described in the opening verses of Psalm chapter 2.

Look at verse 1. Why are the nations raging? Why are the people plotting in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed.

Why are they doing all this? Here's why. Because listen to what they're saying. Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.

Psalm 2 begins with nations raging and people plotting. Rulers assembled together. And why is this taking place? Why are they all gathered? The text says they want to exercise power over God and His anointed King.

In other words, they want to be in control. They don't want to listen to God. They don't want to listen to God's anointed King. They want to reign and be in control.

[13:46] Now, historically, Psalm 2 was used as an installation psalm for the Davidic king. And it was to remind the people of God that political powers and other nations would always be trying to rise up against Yahweh and His people.

But what I'm suggesting is what is described in the first three verses of Psalm 2 is not just true of nations throughout the history of humanity. It's true for every single one of us.

It goes like this. Notice this on the screen. It's not, I mean, most of us don't want to rule nations. But all of us want to rule our own lives.

It's why, for instance, you don't like anybody to tell you what to do. You want to determine what's right or wrong. You want to start your own business.

That way you don't have to answer to anybody. Be honest. We are like that kid on the roller coaster. We freak out when it feels like life is outside of our control.

[14:51] All of us, in one way or the other, wants what's described here in the first three verses. We want to be on the throne. We want to be in control. We want to be the sovereign one.

And that desire for personal autonomy goes back to both falls. What I mean by both falls is the fall of Satan as well as the fall of humanity.

Satan fell because of what? Pride. Satan wanted dominion. He wanted the desire to rule over God. In fact, Jesus even does this with the Pharisees when they're trying to rule over people and

exercise authority and take advantage of others.

And Jesus says, you are of your father, the devil. You're just like him. You want the authority all for yourself. You want to rule and reign.

I've shared before about an article I came across in the Chicago Tribune about a man named Jamie. Jamie was in a custody battle for his children. And his ex-wives did not want him to have any custody because he was a Satanist.

[16:00] Jamie had an upside down cross that formed a T in the word Satan that he had tattooed on his leg. And Jamie insisted, listen, I don't worship the devil.

I don't even believe in a devil. That's not even what we believe as Satanists. In fact, in his custody battle, he had a leader in the church of Satan come and give witness at the hearing.

And this is what the witness said. Quote, Satanism is the world's first carnal religion. It doesn't have anything to do with a real devil.

Satanists aren't devil worshipers. We simply see Satan as a symbol of pride, liberty, and individualism. Close quote.

Faith family, you would be hard-pressed to find a better definition of Satanism than that. Now, we believe in a real Satan because the Bible teaches a real Satan. But that's exactly what Satanism is.

[16:58] We think about Satanism. We think about, like, cutting the heads off chicken and drinking blood in a dimly lit room with candles. Some kind of that kind of Satanism. Listen, Satanism is simply the desire to rule over God.

Satanism is simply the desire of wanting to be on the throne of our own lives. It's that need to exalt self and be sovereign in the place of God.

And that was the reason for the fall of Satan. But not just the fall of Satan, the fall of humanity. Do you remember back in the garden, Adam and Eve? What was the reason for the fall? I want to do what I want to do.

I want to eat what I want to eat. I know God said do this, but I don't want to be under his reign. I don't want to be under his authority.

I want to do what I want to do. I want to rule my life. And that's been happening ever since. Judges 21-25 says, In those days there was no king in Israel, And everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

[18:11] The psalmist begins by saying, Why is the world in such chaos? Why is there so much crisis out there? Why is there so much raging and back and forth? It's because no one wants to submit to God.

Everyone wants to be their own God. And that's why the nations rage. Amen? So what is God's response? As he looks down upon our individual lives as well as nations, And he sees the raging taking place of trying to get authority for ourselves.

Is he nervous? Is he afraid? Oh my goodness, there's so many of them. What if they all gang up against me? Is he hiding in the corner?

Well, verse 4 gives us God's response. He who sits in the heavens, say it, laughs. That is God's response at all the nations conspiring against him.

He who sits in the heavens laughs. And why does God laugh? Is it comical? Does he find our rebellion funny? No. God does not find our rebellion towards him funny.

[19:24] So what does it mean that he laughs? It means that he does not see us as a threat whatsoever.

In other words, notice this here on the screen. It's not, God laughs not because our pride is funny, But because our pride is futile.

Amen? God laughs. The heavens laugh because you cannot stand against God and win.

God shares his sovereignty with no one. There is no one in control like the Lord our God. And to think otherwise is foolish.

That is the response of heaven. Listen, you may love a good comeback story. You may cheer for the underdog. But when it comes to the sovereign reign of God, The thought that you can outthink him, overpower him, or outsmart him is a cosmic joke.

[20:28] He always has been. And he always will be sovereign over all things. That is why the music that we sang tonight was all about God-centeredness.

About his glory. How great he is. How all creatures will one day bow. For he is the sovereign one.

Now, God's sovereignty, rightly understood, will have a couple of responses for us. Look at verse 5. 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.

The first response that humanity should have to the sovereignty of God is we should see it as a threat to our own sovereignty. Here's what I mean.

To those who want to be king, to those who want to be sovereign over their own lives, let it be known that God doesn't share his glory with anyone. And there's a threat.

[21 : 35] Listen, when you pray, Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven, you are praying that God would have a regime change in your life.

God, I don't want to be king, and I don't want to be about my kingdom. You are king, you are sovereign, and I want to be about your ways, not mine. That is the proper response to the sovereignty of God.

Notice this here on the screen, faith family. To believe in the sovereignty of God means we wake up every day, not with the desire to be king, but with the desire to serve the king.

Now let's just stop right there, because that's the whole sermon right here. How do you wake up?

What is your desire when you look at your day? I want to go out and I want to be king, and I want to conquer for myself, and I want to make much of me.

Or do you wake up and say, Listen, I'm not sovereign. I have no authority or power. I exist to serve a king, not try to be a king.

[22 : 42] And I tell you, that alone would radically change the way we approach our day. As to whether or not we are raging and being tossed around in the world trying our best to gain power for ourselves or recognize that all power belongs to Him.

And I'm fine with that. The second thing the sovereignty of God should do to us in terms of our response is it should comfort us. It should first threaten us by reminding us that we are not king, and then it should comfort us.

This is what Jonathan Edwards called sweet sovereignty. Sweet sovereignty. Faith family, the truth of the matter is that it is a good thing that you're not king.

You should have blown me off the stage. You screamed amen so loud. Let me try that again. It's a good thing that you're not king. It's a good thing I'm not king.

I figured that would get a louder response. I get that, right? Listen, life is far better in His hands than yours. Which means no matter what's going on in our culture, no matter what's going on in politics, no matter what's going on at work, no matter what's going on in our personal lives, we can take comfort if we believe this psalm in the sovereign reign of God.

[24 : 07] Notice this here on the screen. No matter the chaos of life, heaven is always calm. See, the... Lord, help me. The raging is happening because everybody's trying to be their own sovereign.

The calm comes when we realize there's only one sovereign. And that's the comfort. That's the comfort of this psalm.

And again, it allows us to be able to look at our lives in a totally different way because now we, again, serve the king, not try to be the king. So where then are we to put our hope?

What with the nations raging on the outside? And this world is crazy. Amen? This world is in crisis.

This world has been in crisis ever since Genesis chapter 3. And so with the nations raging on the outside and our own hearts raging on the inside as we desire to rule and reign ourselves, where are we to turn for hope?

Verse 7. 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.

[25 : 20] And the ends of the earth your possession. Now, what God is doing here, let me first put this in context. Remember, Psalm 2 is given for the installation of the Davidic king.

So God is saying this. Okay, everybody with me? The nations are going to rage. And people are going to plot. Because no one wants to serve Yahweh. No one wants to bow the knee to God. And no one wants to listen to his anointed king. But I'm telling you, heaven laughs at the idea that anyone is sovereign other than Yahweh.

And so while the nations are raging, and while your heart is raging, here is where you find your victory. Here is where you find your hope.

In the anointed king of God. God's anointed has been placed on his holy hill. Look to God's anointed king, and he will guide you through the raging of life.

[26 : 27] It goes back to 2 Samuel 7. When God gave the promise of the Davidic kingship, the Davidic line. Go back to 2 Samuel 7 and verse 12.

Remember when David wanted to build God a temple, and God said, Listen, you're not going to do something for me. I'm going to do something for you. Through your offspring is coming this kingdom, this throne.

When your days are fulfilled, and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body. And I will establish his kingdom.

He will build a house for my name. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. That's the Davidic promise.

So here's what's going down. Psalm 2 is saying the nation's going to rage. Everybody wants to be in control. God is sovereign and in control. And so when you feel like life has gone out of control, and you're trying to find hope and victory, look to the Davidic king.

[27 : 37] The problem is, throughout the Old Testament, the Davidic kings didn't live up to the promises. All of the kings in one way or another, most of them were flat out evil, but all of them were sinners.

And so there continues to be this, well, where is this Davidic king that will give us hope in the midst of crisis? Victory in the midst of chaos.

When we come to the New Testament, we find out who the fulfillment of that Davidic king is, promised here and spoken of in Psalm 2. Look at Matthew 3, verse 16.

This is where the teacher in me gets excited. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water. And behold, the heavens were opened to him. And he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him.

And behold, a voice from heaven said, This is my son. That's Psalm 2 language.

[28 : 48] And look at Acts chapter 13, verse 32. And we bring you the good news of what God promised to the fathers. This he fulfilled to us, their children, by raising Jesus.

As also it is written in the what? Be more excited. Second Psalm. We're seeing how Scripture connects together. In the second Psalm, You are my son.

Today I have begotten you. In other words, God's promised victory comes to us through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

As the nations are raging, as this world is off trying to be its own king, to try to be its own sovereign, and the world seems out of control, God is sovereign in the heavens.

And where are we to look specifically? His anointed king, the Lord Jesus. The one who destroyed the works of the devil, 1 John.

[29 : 50] The one who ascended on high and led the host of captives, Ephesians 4. The one who is given a name that is above every name, Philippians 2. The one to whom all authority in heaven and on earth was given, Matthew 28.

The one who will one day return and put all of his enemies under his feet, Revelation 12. That is the anointed king of God. Jesus is our promised victory in a world that has lost its mind.

The hope we have, even in our own lives, is to look to Christ. People want to rule their lives. Such an idea is laughable to God.

And we must turn and surrender to the king of God, the anointed one, Jesus Christ. So what is our proper response in this psalm as we close verse 10?

This is the warning given to the kings. But not just to the kings, given to everyone who's trying to be their own sovereign and rule their own life.

[30 : 57] 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 perish in the way. For his wrath is quickly kindled. But look, blessed are all who take refuge in him.

The response of this psalm is the response of anyone when you realize you're in the presence of the king. It's the response of humility.

God tells these nations, he tells these people who are wanting to be their own sovereign, use your brain. Be wise. Wake up to the reality that you are not sovereign in this world.

Be warned. That is, respond. Take this psalm seriously. What should we do? We should surrender our lives to God.

[32 : 08] That is, kiss the son. Submit to him. Humble yourselves before him. In the ancient Near East, when a king was captured, he would, his, his, when a king would capture others, those that had been captured would kiss the feet of the conquering king.

Faith family, this is how you become a Christian. Because repentance and faith is an act of surrender. Amen? Repentance and faith is you essentially saying, I don't want to be king anymore. I don't want to rule anymore. When it comes to my life, I give up God. I surrender. I kiss the feet of Jesus.

It is an act of faith and repentance. Faith family, Jesus isn't interested in being your life coach. He is your eternal king.

He's not here to give you tips on how to have a better life. He's here to give you the blessed life of verse 12 which takes place when?

[33 : 18] When you surrender and take refuge under his rule and reign. The gospel message is that there is a king and we have resisted his reign.

But if we will surrender our kingdom, he will receive us into his. And there is no better news than that on planet earth.

And lastly, not only kiss the son but take refuge in him. Jesus, if Jesus is going to rule your life, you have to trust him with your life.

What that means is this. I hope this is visible for you and practical for you. In the chaos of the world, in the crisis of life, in all the ups and downs of everything you're going through daily and weekly, what it means that Jesus is God's anointed king is that when we trust him, when we take refuge in him, then we are able to experience peace.

Even if we don't understand all that's going on. Let me give you an example of that and then I'm done. In Acts chapter 4, the apostles had been persecuted because of their faith and because of their preaching of the gospel.

[34 : 34] their life was full of uncertainty. They had no idea how things were going to turn out. They had no idea what was going to happen to them and I want you to listen to what gave them comfort in the chaos of life, in the raging of the nations.

What was the thing that gave them peace through it all? Acts chapter 4 and verse 23. When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and elders had said to them.

When they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, why do the nations rage?

Why do the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves and rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his anointed.

Listen, what gave the apostles comfort, refuge in their chaos, in their crisis, when the nations were raging all around them?

[35 : 54] Psalm 2. The promise of God's sovereignty in his anointed king. Will you sing Psalm 2 in your chaos?

In your crisis? In the mess of life, will you come to the sovereign one and kiss his feet and take refuge under his reign?

That, my friends, is where hope is found in the raging of this world. Every one of us is going to have the temptation every day at some point with misplaced sovereignty to exalt ourself rather than submit to God.

And that temptation isn't new. That was the temptation that led to the fall of Satan. That was the temptation that led to the fall of humanity. and that's the temptation that leads to the fall of nation after nation and people after people.

Amen? But listen. There is one who was tempted in that same way but refused to bow.

[37 : 11] Matthew chapter 4. Jesus was taken into the wilderness and he was tempted. And what was Jesus tempted with? Listen. Personal autonomy.

Satanism. Look at all the kingdoms that could be yours. Look at all the power that you could have. Think about how much authority could be given to you and Jesus guess what?

Guess what? Here's the sweet deal. You can have all of that without going through the cross. why trust in a wizard when you can be one?

Why submit to your father when you could be your own king? But praise God Jesus didn't drift from his Calvary road and at the end of it all received a name that is above every name.

And I'm telling you faith family a day is coming where at that name every knee will bow. and all God's people said amen.

[38 : 25] Amen. Let's pray. Lord God we thank you for Psalm 2 because as it was in Israel's day it is in ours the nation's rage. We turn on the news and in 30 seconds we're discouraged.

It is story after story politics after politics nations upon nations people upon people protest among protest and on and on and on the nation's rage the streets are filled with people declaring they are king.

and the one who sits on the throne in heaven laughs at such an idea that we for a moment could be sovereign over anything.

You have appointed a king it is not our name it is the name of Jesus and we must come to understand that our life exists not to build our kingdom but to build his and to take refuge in him to humbly kiss his feet as the sovereign one over our lives.

so God I pray that tonight our practical application would be that you would breathe calm and peace in our lives as we surrender to our king that if we came in here tonight discouraged about the raging of the world that we would leave with the peace of God to breathe that into us bow our hearts bend our knees before our king we love you we worship you we recognize you tonight as the only one who reigns on the throne help us see that peace won't come when we control our lives peace comes when we realize you do and we submit to that and not only submit to that we learn to delight in that so Lord as we take these few moments and we pray to you and we reflect on what you've taught us in Psalm 2 may this just be a time where we bow before our king and declare how great you are repent of our selfish pride and surrender to you and we

[41 : 28] Thank you.