

"The Way of the Righteous"

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[0 : 01] Good morning, brothers and sisters. What a joyful day. Today we'll be looking at Psalm 1 as we take a break from our series in Revelation.

So let's go to the Lord in prayer before we begin. Father, help us. Show us the way of life. Father, help me. Help me to declare your words and to declare the glory of your great name. And by so doing, Lord, transform us into the image of Christ, our God and our King. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Amen. Allow me to tell you a story of a man who soared in godliness later in life.

[1 : 02] But if you hit the rewind button, you'd see his family upbringing was difficult. His mother was a Christian. His father was not.

His father often mistreated his mother. Even at a young age, this young man's mind was brilliant. He could persuasively argue a legal case on each side of the issue.

A great public speaker. And in his mind, he was much too smart for Christianity. Christians were ignorant and uneducated.

He left for the university to seek his fortune and fame. And when getting there, he did what many do. He threw off the faith, mocking the teaching that he learned from his mother.

Besides his proud heart, one paralyzing problem plagued him that he couldn't shake off. He was sex crazy.

[2 : 13] Something he couldn't control, no matter how hard he tried. He would write, I could not distinguish the white light of love from the fog of lust.

And for the next several years, his life went into a dark, downward spiral. Underneath all of his success, he was empty. Rotting from the inside out.

And sinking deeper into darkness, he would write, I was unhappy, proud in my self-pity, and incapable of rest in my exhaustion.

Later in his life, he was attracted to Christianity, but he was terrified about the prospect of giving up this sin that he loved. He would pray things like, Lord, save me. But not yet.

Not yet. But God has been called the hound of heaven, relentlessly pursuing him, tracking him down, seeking him when he was lost. It wasn't until he was in his 30s that God sovereignly intervened.

[3 : 18] While sitting in a garden, he heard children on the other side of a wall sing us a song. Take up and read. Take up and read. He picked up the scripture, and he read Romans 13, verse 13.

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires. And by grace, God transformed him.

He would write this famous line in his biography, You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.

This is the story of Augustine, who lived 1,500 years ago in North Africa. And God will make him a scholar, soaring in godliness.

Somebody needs to hear this. You're in a difficult battle, but there is hope for you. God can do more than all you can ask or think or imagine. You know, we sometimes believe the lie that slithered into the garden that God is the ultimate cosmic killjoy.

[4 : 27] You know, he says he's generous, but can you really trust him? Like a twisted father taking his son into the toy store before Christmas. You say, you see all this?

You'll have none of it. But listen to what Augustine would write. He experienced Psalm 1611.

You make known to me the path of life, and in your presence there is fullness of joy. I wonder if you can relate to Augustine's life.

Have you been there? Are you there now? Underneath all this excess? Feeling of emptiness. Outwardly prosperous, inwardly unable to rest.

An inner ache that you cannot shake off no matter how hard you try. You know, how do we go from emptiness to true, lasting joy?

[5 : 37] Well, let me invite you to turn to Psalm 1. It has much to teach us. And you can find Psalm 1 on page 418 of the Pew Bible. And if you're not familiar with the Bible, the big numbers are the chapter numbers, and the smaller numbers are the verse numbers.

Let's read Psalm 1 together. 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. He is 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. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked will not stand 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. This is God's word.

[6 : 56] Now, before we dive in, let me give you some context. Within the book of Psalms, you can see this is the lead-off hitter in the batting order. Intentionally so, many have noted Psalm 1 was placed as a preface to the entire book.

And the themes we find in this chapter are like golden threads that run through the rest of the Psalms. And you'll notice, as many commentators have noted, that Psalm 1 and 2 are a unit.

If you look down, you'll see the word blessed brackets the beginning of Psalm 1 and the end of Psalm 2. Psalm 2 ends with this line, Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Referring to the Messianic king in verse 6 of that chapter, which says, As for me, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill. And there are several other parallels.

But these two chapters are two gatekeepers at the entrance of a magnificent gateway that you must pass through as you enter into the book of Psalms. And Psalm 1 has been called a wisdom psalm.

[8 : 05] Like a master painter, the psalmist paints two portraits, one bright light and the other in a dark shadow. With bright light, there is the way of the wise, painting the portrait of an ideal person, a wise, blessed man, a way of contentment and soul-satisfying joy.

Contrast with the dark way of the wicked, a life of emptiness, of darkness, death now and hell later. The message emblazoned over the door of the temple to worship as you enter is this, there are two ways to live, and only two. And as you enter into the sanctuary, you are confronted with this question, which of these are you?

I beg you to consider that question with me this morning. The main theme is found in verse 6. It reads, For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Now this word knows is rich with intimacy. The Lord knows the righteous. The way a faithful husband knows his bride. The righteous are the apple of his eye.

[9 : 28] Pledging himself to her forever. Her name graven on the palms of his hands. And who are these righteous ones? Well, look down at the end of verse 5.

It's the congregation. Or what we would call the church. The ones whom God has called out for himself. In Christ, God gives us the righteousness we need by faith.

And it's a church standing by grace, clothed in Christ's righteousness. So friend, if you are in Christ, how marvelous.

He knows you. He cares for you. He sees you. He watches over you and is concerned with your welfare. He takes you under his wings.

He is a strong tower, a refuge, and a fortress in times of trouble. And not only for the present, but he knows their way. He is concerned with where you are going and your future.

[10 : 28] The Lord knows the righteous intimately. In stark contrast, the way of the wicked will perish. A way of darkness.

Like grass that withers away. Here one day, gone the next. God will take his lethal blade and cuts them down and cast them out into the eternal dungeon of darkness.

They will perish. There are only two ways. We all tend to think there is a third way. You know, we have Republicans and Democrats, and then there are independents.

Neutral third parties who say, you know, all religions are pretty much teaching the same thing. The psalmist is telling you and me, no, there is no middle ground.

There are only two ways. You know who taught this more than anyone? Jesus. In the passage that Bonnie read, in the greatest sermon ever preached, Jesus is unpacking Psalm 1 and his Sermon on the Mount.

[11 : 39] Jesus would say, there are two kinds of foundations. One built on sand and another built on the rock. And when the storm comes, only one of them will stand.

But not only that, there are two kinds of trees and two kinds of fruits, two gates, two destinations, only two ways. An easy way. An easy way. And a hard way.

Jesus would say, choose the hard way. Choose the gate to life, no matter the cost. He puts it like this in Matthew 7, verse 13. Enter by the narrow gate.

For the gate is wide, and the way is easy. It leads to destruction. And those who enter by it are many. On the other hand, the gate is narrow, and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

There are only two ways. And so, we'll look at this text in two parts. Point number one is the tree, and point number two is the chaff. The tree and then the chaff.

[12 : 45] In verse one, this tree is the blessed man. This ideal person. Like the Sermon on the Mount, this begins with a beatitude. Blessed.

Now what does that word mean? Normally when we see the word blessed, someone's hashtagging a photo of their morning coffee overlooking the sunrise. Well, the word blessed has been translated as divinely happy.

It is how the Queen of Sheba would describe the glory of Solomon's palace in 1 Kings, saying, your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard. Happy are your men.

Happy are your servants who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom. This is the same word. word divinely happy. And it's as if the psalmist circles, highlights, and then underlines this reality.

Because the word blessed is in the plural. This is like heaven is opening up, pouring out blessing upon blessing upon blessing on this person. As Paul would say in Ephesians 1, this person has been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

[13 : 54] You know, but our word happy doesn't really do capture the meaning. It doesn't do the word justice, does it? Because all of our happiness so often is like a fragile leaf that blows away when the winds of trial begin to blow.

Rather, this word is what Paul would write as he sat in a prison cell awaiting execution. He writes, rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I say rejoice. This word describes that kind of joy.

One that cannot be taken away from you. You could be in a dark dungeon, but the Lord can put a crown of rejoicing on your head. You're often called the greatest intellect ever produced on American soil.

Jonathan Edwards, after 23 years of faithful ministry, was maligned, slandered, and thrown out of his church. Although shocked, he was unshaken.

One observer wrote this, he appeared like a man of God whose happiness was out of the reach of his enemies. Oh, to have that kind of soul-satisfying joy, contentment, and peace, joy that is high even when circumstances are low.

[15 : 09] How do we obtain this unshakable joy? Well, that's what Psalm 1 wants to teach you and me. The psalmist puts it in the negative, then the positive, and then he gives a metaphor.

And this negative and positive are the heads and tails of finding this joy. So let's start with the negative. Verse 1, to have this height of joy, you need to avoid the way of the crowd.

It reads like this, 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. Notice he doesn't begin by saying, blessed is the man or woman who seeks after their own happiness.

That's not the way. That's not the way. Rather, it's indirect. It first involves not doing something. But someone might object, Tyler, isn't that legalism?

Rules? Are we under grace? Well, friend, you're right. This doesn't save us. That would misunderstand cause and effect. We are saved by trusting in Christ alone.

[16 : 16] But this is the path of sanctification and obedience. God calls you and I to walk in holiness. When God raises you up to new life, he puts a reserve sticker on your soul and he sets

you apart.

And holiness leads divine happiness. So think of it this way. If you were driving around New Haven, how long do you think you'll last if we fail to follow the laws that were put in place for our protection and flourishing?

No lane markers? No traffic lights? People decided to drive on whichever side of the road they chose. Blinkers are out of the question.

Some of you are shuddering. You wouldn't last long. You would get into a car wreck. Put in another way, this is a firewall preventing viruses from infecting the software of your soul.

Now, the psalmist doesn't say never speak or dialogue to the wicked. If that were the case, none of us would have hope. Look again, it says, by God's grace, don't walk in their counsel. The wicked have counsel for you.

[17:27] Did you know that? Advice for life that appears wise and coherent. Your joy is contingent upon your discernment. sin always comes like a Judas with a kiss, flattering words, but it means to destroy you, hiding the dagger.

The counsel might taste sweet, but it's poisonous. Don't buy what they're selling. Don't buy the lie. They say, you know, you're missing out. Christian, what you were doing is so hard.

Come join us on the easy way. It's so wonderful and exciting, you're missing out. This comes in a thousand forms. Counsel that says life is about acquiring wealth and entertainment, money, fulfilling your own desires.

But I think for us in this church, we know life doesn't consist of how much paper we have in our wallets. I think for us, the counsel of the wicked says, live for the paper that's on your wall.

Degrees, diplomas, awards, and accolades. Being at the top of your field, climbing the ladder, career accomplishments, gain the respect of your peers at all costs.

[18:40] Now, friends, graduates, by all means, strive for excellence. Be a good steward of the training you received here. But the lie is that the quality of your work is the measure of your worth.

It's not a desire for something, it's a consuming desire to be something in the world's eyes. It's a form of self-worship.

The problem is, you get the recognition, but you're happy for just a moment. It never lasts. They don't tell you where that life leads. You're busy, but empty, seeking rest and never finding any. You know, pride promises a palace, but it's a mirage in the desert. You end up living in a spiritual rat hole. Now, pride always loses what it seeks to gain. And this type of thinking slithers into the church as well.

Friends, only God can give us these things. The desire to be something. He is our treasure. The measure of our worth is a measure of the Father's love for you.

[19:49] He would give His only Son for you. If you are in Christ, your life does have meaning. live for His applause, not the world's.

Now, one of the questions people typically have is if this is a downward spiral in verse 1 or is the psalmist saying the very same things. You'll notice there's a progression to movement, walking, standing, and then sitting.

You see a progression in ungodliness. It gets ratcheted up. After picking up the counsel of the wicked or their worldview, now you stand in the way of sinners. It doesn't mean you are opposing them by standing in their way.

What it means is you stand where they stand. Your colleagues are gossiping, and now you join in. You're standing with them. If that continues long enough, the downward spiral continues.

You'll find yourself in the third line. You sit in the seat of scoffers. To sit in the seat of scoffers is to openly ridicule the ways of God. The London pastor, Charles Spurgeon, calls them doctors of damnation with a degree in vice.

[20:57] Those who mock, scoff, and sneer at God and His people. You'll find many scoffers today. You know, people who say, you know, those stupid, bigoted, ignorant Christians over there.

Political pundits, professors, even some of the church pews. We're not exempt. Rarely, if ever, will you find one that has contentment and joy. As Jesus would say, wisdom is justified by all her children.

So that's a negative. Then he puts it positively. Look down, he says, but his delight is in the law of the Lord. And on his law, he meditates day and night. The psalmist doesn't say, blessed are those who obey the law.

It's blessed are those who delight in it. It's not enough not to do something. The measure isn't what you know or what you avoid, it's what you love.

The picture here is delighting in a treasure. On just Sunday mornings? No, he meditates on it day and night. In a world of trouble, his soul is resting and delighting.

[22 : 08] Not empty religious rituals, he knows the reality. Now, this is confusing at first glance. I mean, who delights in laws?

Do you delight in 28 U.S. Code section 1332? I don't think so. None of us do. I think it helps to understand that the word law here is the Hebrew word Torah.

So it's not only the commandments, but it's the promises, the teachings, the instructions. The law paints the lawgiver's portrait. The law was a window into the lawgiver.

And this man is delighting in God. This is a God who speaks and this man loves to listen. Now, Psalm 19 begins by saying, the heavens declare the glory of God.

But you know what's even better than that? Verse 7, the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. friend, there is no way around this.

[23 : 14] To have joy, you must be a student of the scripture. And certainly, this implies scripture memorization. You must meditate on the word day and night. This is what you were created for.

And meditation has been called the gateway from the head to the heart. The more you meditate on the word, the more your joy and your amazement will increase. There's an old axiom that says, this book will keep you away from sin or sin will keep you away from this book.

It is true. It is true. Now, when we heard the word meditation, don't think of Eastern mysticism, you know, telling you to empty your mind. This is the exact opposite.

Christian meditation is filling your mind with the truth. To think and reflect on God's truth like a priceless diamond. It's like going into the mine and bringing the gold out and viewing it in the sunlight and its dazzling array of beauty.

Oh, this church would have a reputation of not how nicely we are dressed, not how much money we have, not our politics, but people say this church delights in God's word.

[24 : 27] Like the people in Ezra's day who said, bring us the book, bring us the book. Would that be our cry? This is a solid ground to plant our feet.

In an insane world, the scriptures make sense. It's like being in the wilderness and you commune with God, conversing with Him in a beautiful garden of Eden. This book addresses life's greatest questions.

As Rob Dunlop likes to say, this book asks better questions. This book is alive. Psalm 119, the word is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life.

Do you find comfort from the word in your affliction? Let me ask you, what do you do when you are anxious and feel alone?

When you wake up in the middle of the night and your heart is just sinking? You can't even breathe. Anxiety has you in its death grip. Do you meditate on the word then?

[25 : 34] Maybe you have someone read it to you. In that moment, do you recall Psalm 23? Lord, you are my shepherd. God, your care is all around me. You will hold me up.

You will never deceive me. You lead me in paths of righteousness. I will not fear even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. And you are always with me. You will never forsake me, God.

You might have grown up in the church and you can recite Psalm 23 at this podium with perfect diction. But here's the more important question, friends. Do you know the shepherd?

Do you know the shepherd? Can you say with Jack Lauer in his baptism testimony that he's not only a savior, he's my savior. God is the goal. And the psalmist doesn't tell us the way of the righteous.

He illustrates it in verse 3. And verse 3 is a metaphor of this ideal person. And the image is of a tree. And this tree that has roots that soak up the water and it's bearing abundant fruit.

[26 : 41] The land around might be dry and barren. The winds are hot. The sun is beating down on the tree. But verse 3, the leaf is green and does not wither.

This is a person whose roots go deep into God. The tree is not only stable in the storm, but he is satisfied, drawing upon a hidden source of strength, these streams of water.

He's drinking from the fountain of life and he's bearing abundant fruit. And the tree doesn't get there by accident. The tree is planted by another. These are the Lord's trees.

Trees that are distinct from their surroundings. D.L. Moody once said, the Lord's trees are evergreens. When tragedy strikes, God's trees are evergreens. Their leaf does not wither. God's word is there giving you life. Your preferred candidate loses the election. Your leaf does not wither. Work and parenting is just out of control and exhausting. [27 : 49] Your leaf does not wither. Global pandemic, your leaf does not wither. Now, this is not to minimize difficulties or the absence of sorrows.

Keep reading the Psalms. It's saying no matter what the conditions are outside, the tree is brimming with life. Verse 3 ends up, whatever it does, it prospers. This is not teaching the prosperity gospel, that God will make you healthy, wealthy, and rich.

Don't buy that lie either. The point is, this is a prosperous tree. Its leaves are green even in years of drought. It's bringing forth fruit.

At the end of World War II, the Matthews were missionaries, unable to escape communist China. The government cut off all their funds and refused to grant their exit visa.

Afraid to contact their Christian friends for fear of getting them into trouble, they suffered from starvation, isolation, and persecution.

[28 : 54] They lived in desperate conditions. They lived in a small room with one stool as its piece of furniture. And once a day, they were allowed to use a small stove to boil a little bit of rice for dinner.

And the only fuel they had was animal refuse they collected from the streets. Years after their experience, they wrote a book and they titled it Green Leaf in Drought Time.

All of the communists cut off their funds. They could not cut off the true source of strength that kept them sweet and cheerful and joyful throughout their trials. Friends, is it possible that we can have green leaves when all of life's joys dry up?

Some of you are like, oh, come on, that's exaggerated. That never happens. Well, go edify yourself maybe this week and listen to Richard Wurmbandt on YouTube. Fourteen years of torture in Eastern Europe and maybe the worst of it was three years of solitary confinement.

Incomplete darkness as a form of psychological torture. Wurmbandt describes this as a time of joy.

[30 : 14] He wrote, because they drugged him, he couldn't even recite the Lord's prayer. And all he could say was, Jesus, I love you. Jesus, I love you. And he felt as if he was the bride in the presence of the bridegroom.

Complete joy. Friend, is it really possible to have a source of strength that the deadly drought cannot reach? Yes. But it depends on where your roots are.

If you put your trust in Christ, he can make the waste places green as the garden of Eden. God is enough in trials. That is the way of the righteous. Trust is laying your burden down and putting it upon Christ.

He will not only bear your sins, he will bear your burdens. Now, I think some of us can read a passage like this and feel really discouraged. Because you are in a season where you don't really see much fruit in your life.

But notice it says it yields its fruit in its season. So not every fruit appears at the same time. Some of us might be in dry seasons, others in fruit-bearing seasons.

[31 : 23] The point is if you continue trusting and abiding in Christ, the grace of the Holy Spirit will appear in your life. Bearing the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and self-control.

Jesus said, I am the vine and you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. Keep abiding in Christ, friends. Take the long-term view.

You will bear fruit at the right time, in the right season. This is the portrait of the way of the wise.

Then the psalmist turns a corner and paints a picture of the way of the wicked in verses four and five.

Point number one is a tree, point number two is the chaff. Look at verse four again. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

Everything that's been said about the righteous, the wicked, are the exact opposite. Delighting in God's law, not so the wicked. It's like a tree bearing abundant fruit, not so the wicked.

[32 : 28] Prospering, not so the wicked. Who are these wicked the psalmist speaks of? Well, in Psalm two, the wicked are those who do not honor the Son.

In verse 12, it says, kiss the Son lest he be angry and you perish in the way. It is anyone who is opposed to Jesus' reign. The wicked are those who trust in their own way.

They don't trust in God. And here he uses the dark imagery of chaff. Now, what is chaff? The picture is one of the grain harvest. In those days when food is prepared, you go out into the field and collect the sheaves.

And the soft grain had hard shells. And so what you would do to separate them, you threw the sheaves on the threshing floor, and it would be trampled to separate out the parts. And then you brought in the winnowing fork, and you threw the pieces high into the air.

The wind would blow the chaff away, and only the grain would remain. The chaff are weightless, and a strong wind blows them away. You can think of a tumbleweed in those old western films.

[33 : 36] It is dry, it withers, it is empty and blown around with no depth. There are no roots like the godly. Always doing what is popular, always chasing the latest fashion trends, tossed to and fro by every cultural and theological trend.

And chaff is not only weightless, chaff is worthless. You can't do anything with it. Jesus would say, this is salt that's lost, it's saltiness. It's not good for anything, you throw it out.

John the Baptist picks up the imagery of chaff in Matthew 3. Speaking of Jesus, he says, the winnowing fork is in his hands, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn.

But the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire. A picture of utter destruction. Chaff has a collision course with divine wrath.

In Psalm 73, the author there is troubled at the prosperity of the wicked. In the first 16 verses, he asks, why are they so healthy and wealthy, always at ease, increasing in riches?

[34 : 49] He admits in verse 3, I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. But then the whole chapter takes a turn in verse 16. Things changed when the worshiper came into the house of the Lord.

He writes in verse 16, when I thought how to understand this, it seemed like a worrisome task. Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then I discerned their ends.

Truly you set them in slippery places, you make them fall to ruin. Maybe he read verses 5 and 6 of Psalm 1, where we are given a window into the wicked's future.

Therefore, the wicked will not stand 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. They stand now, but they will not be able to stand when it matters the most.

They will not stand in the last judgment. Now, you and I might be tempted to think that this refers to people out there, but look again. This was spoken in the house of worship.

[35 : 58] He is speaking to us here in this room. The chaff are mixed in with the congregation now, but one day they will not be. The chaff are those who make empty professions of faith.

In other words, God will put an end to religious hypocrisy. That's why John the Baptist uses this imagery of chaff against the religious Pharisees of his day. not all who are in Israel are the true Israel.

And Jesus made clear, not everyone in the visible church who make professions of faith are part of my people, the invisible church. This is a call to sober self-examination.

Which am I? Which are you? This is a portrait of the masterpiece. It's the Mona Lisa. Its eyes are on all of us in this room. Do you resemble the chaff or the tree?

Do you resemble the sinless, blessed man who never walked in the counsel of the wicked? Or the weightless chaff the Lord will drive away in judgment? Here's the bad news.

[37 : 09] If we truly assess their lives, we have no claim to say we are blessed men and women. How often is our service to God half-hearted?

If our own righteousness was money, if you looked at it closely, you'd find it's monopoly money. It's not real. Going to church feels like a new layer of paint on the same old building.

But here's the best news. Jesus can transform chaff. Look at the last verse of Psalm 2. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.

the king described in Psalm 2 as the blessed man of Psalm 1. This chapter is a description of Jesus. If you find your refuge in Him, He can make you blessed.

You see, we need refuge, friends. We need refuge from what our sins deserve. You see, God is a majestic sovereign whom we owe perfect obedience.

[38 : 14] obedience. He created you and me in His image. And He has authority over us. And because of His holiness, His eyes are too pure to look upon evil and not punish it.

Not because He is harsh, but because He is good. Standing on our own merits, the wind of God's wrath will drive us away. You stand now, but you will not be able to stand in that final judgment. We are by nature, chaff. But here is the good news, friends. Hear me. In His great love, the Father would send the Lord Jesus, fully God and fully man.

He was the blessed man. This ideal King who truly delighted and meditated on God's law. Every single thought was a perfect God glorifying thought.

Perfect in love and wisdom. He never walked in the counsel of the wicked. Not even for a millisecond. But despite never sinning, He goes to a cross.

[39 : 17] The sinless one was treated as if He were chaff. Treated as if He had wicked desires. Willingly putting Himself under the curse that you and I deserve. Crust beneath the weight of God's wrath.

He did this for all who would have returned from their sin and put their trust in Christ alone. Nailed to a tree so that you, friend, could be a tree planted by streams of water. And on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead.

In His one hand, Jesus takes the curse that you and I deserve. And with His other hand, He gives the blessings that He deserved forever secured by the resurrection. He is the King that we can find refuge.

Friend, if you are not a Christian, you could have been on the path of the wicked your whole life, a billion miles away from God. But there is hope for you. But you must run to the cross.

Do not go the easy way that leads to destruction. Enter by the narrow gate. It is hard. You must die to yourself, and only a few find it. But Jesus stands saying, come to me, and I will give you rest.

[40 : 26] There is hope. Put your burden upon Christ. There is a hand, what can make you whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

There is a way to go from emptiness to joy, but you must put your weight upon Christ and give him everything. To close, there was a missionary from the South Sea Island in John Patton.

And John Patton translated the scripture for the natives. When he came to the word believed, he searched for a word that the natives would understand. But he couldn't find the right word.

And one day, as Patton was working, a message arrived. The messenger had to run from the other side of the island, and he was out of breath. He sank down into a chair in Patton's room, leaned back, and relaxed.

Startled and thrilled, Patton realized a connection. What are you doing? Give me a word for that. Patton used it to translate the word belief. A word that meant to put your weight on another and then relax.

[41 : 35] That is what you must do to put your weight upon Christ. What you will find, what will you find if you do that? Everything your soul has been looking for. Blessed are all and take refuge in him.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, we pray that you work in our hearts. Help us to be trees planted by streams of water.

Oh Lord, help us to glorify you, we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.