

## Introduction

Most great stories begin quietly, but their beginnings are never accidental. Think of *The Lord of the Rings*. A story filled with all kinds of adventure, but it doesn't open with a battle. It begins with a birthday party in the Shire.

And that beginning shapes everything that comes after it. Tolkien is opening the door. He's showing you the world you're entering and preparing you for the hero you'll need long before the danger arrives.

The Psalms begin the same way. Before you hear the cries of lament, the shouts of praise, the confessions of sin, and the songs of thanksgiving – before you step into the emotional landscape that has strengthened God's people for three thousand years – you walk through a doorway. And that doorway is Psalms 1 and 2.

These two psalms are the intentional introduction to the entire Psalter. They have no titles. No author listed. No historical setting to distract you. They simply stand together side by side like the front porch of a great house, asking you to pause before you enter.

For the next 148 psalms, you are going to encounter every spiritual emotion imaginable. You're going to see:

- Joy and sorrow
- Fear and confidence
- Confession and worship
- Despair and hope

But before any of that, God wants to orient you. He wants you to see the world correctly before you feel the world deeply.

That's why these two psalms matter so much. They tell you what kind of life is actually blessed. They tell you who actually rules the world. They aren't asking you to sing yet. They're asking you to think. They're asking you to steady your footing before the journey begins.

And when you read them together as they are meant to be read, these two quiet psalms reveal the foundation of the entire Psalter. In fact, they reveal the foundation of the entire gospel.

Here's the big idea that flows from them: **THE BLESSED LIFE PSALM 1 DESCRIBES IS ONLY FOUND IN THE RIGHTEOUS KING OF PSALM 2, AND THE ONLY WAY TO BE BLESSED IS TO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM.**

Everything else in the Psalter will build on that truth. Every prayer, every cry, every song, every moment of worship will assume what these two psalms establish at the very beginning. That life does not make sense without God's Word shaping you and God's King sheltering you.

### Body

Go ahead and turn with me to Psalm 1 and stand with me when you find it. As you're doing so, this morning we're going to walk through this entrance gate of the Psalms if you will the way it's designed, with these three points:

- The Blessed Man & His Character: Psalm 1
- The Righteous King & His Reign: Psalm 2:1-9
- The Gracious Invitation & Our Response 2:10-12

But all of that comes in the sermon itself. For now, the doorway of the Psalter stands open, and we hear the first words of its pages:

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*Read all of Psalms 1-2*

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Let's pray. You may be seated.

### 1. The Blessed Man & His Character – Psalm 1:1-6

Psalm 1 begins by setting a person in front of us. God wants us to see what a truly blessed life looks like. Not blessed in a shallow sense but blessed under the favor and happiness of God. A happy life, and the only way to truly find it.

And the psalm begins by telling us what this blessed person refuses to be shaped by. It's in the form of negation to really drive the point home here.

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*Read Psalms 1:1*

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You can see the progression here. Walk, stand, sit. It is a slow slide. You listen in passing. You plant your feet and start agreeing. Then you comfortably settle in and take a seat. It is the natural pull of the world. It is how the human heart drifts and settles into sin.

Now, an important point here. This verse is not describing a kind of pharisaic righteousness. It is not saying, separate yourself from bad people and try harder to be good. The Pharisees in Jesus' day tried something like that, and we know how that worked for them. They made up laws and laws but never addressed the human heart.

Psalm 1 is not praising self-made holiness or righteousness. It is describing a person who is being shaped by a completely different source. The difference is not that this person avoids sinners. The difference is that he clings to God.

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*Read Psalms 1:2*

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This is the heart of the whole psalm. The blessed man does not live by sheer discipline. He lives by delight. He loves the Word of God. He carries it with him. He mutters it to himself because it has become the voice that shapes his life. He rejects the world's formation. He delights in the law. He becomes rooted, fruitful, and enduring.

Many of you know how much I love the book *Desiring God* by John Piper. Here is where it's helpful. Piper says that obedience is not real obedience unless it flows from joy in God. You are not truly honoring God when you come to His Word out of cold duty. You honor Him when you want Him. When you treasure Him. That is what delight means.

Piper tells us in that book God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him. Psalm 1 is showing us a person who is satisfied in God. That is why he delights in the Word and meditates on it day and night.

Then verse 3 uses a simile to paint the picture:

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*Read Psalms 1:3*

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You can imagine that tree. Deep roots. Constant water. Fruit that comes when it should. Leaves that never dry out. That is what a life looks like when God is its source of joy. It is stable when everything else shakes. It endures when the heat rises. It bears fruit when others don't.

But not everyone lives that way.

*Read Psalms 1:4*

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Chaff is weightless. Looks like something but it's hollow. Defenseless against even the gentlest of breezes. Here today and gone tomorrow. That is the picture of the person who builds their life on anything other than the God.

Verses 5 and 6 conclude the psalm and tell us the outcome of the righteous and the wicked:

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*Read Psalms 1:5-6*

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Two paths. Two endings. No middle category. Like the rest of scripture this is binary. No halfway option.

But here is the tension we have to feel. The more we look at Psalm 1, the more we realize this blessed man is not us. We do not always reject the world's formation. We do not always delight in the Word. We do not always stand firm like this tree. Not even close. Psalm 1 should create a longing for righteousness we can't find in ourselves.

We are meant to feel that gap. We are meant to look at Psalm 1 and say, "I fall short of this!" There is only one person who fits Psalm 1 perfectly. Only one person who always delighted in the law of the Lord. Only one person who truly is the blessed man. That person is Jesus Christ.

Psalm 1 is not a call to do better like the Pharisees. It is a call to look for the One who did this perfectly. It is pointing beyond us. It is preparing us for a person. It was pointing again for the long awaited for messiah in the lineage of David. It was pointing towards Jesus the Christ.

And that person steps onto the stage in Psalm 2. The blessed man of Psalm 1 is the righteous King of Psalm 2. And the only way to live a blessed life is to take refuge in Him. And we see yet again that **THE BLESSED LIFE PSALM 1 DESCRIBES IS ONLY FOUND IN THE RIGHTEOUS KING OF PSALM 2, AND THE ONLY WAY TO BE BLESSED IS TO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM.**

**2. The Righteous King & His Reign – Psalm 2:1-9**

When we step from Psalm 1 into Psalm 2, the tone shifts. Psalm 1 is quiet, steady, personal. Psalm 2 explodes with noise. The nations are raging. Kings are plotting. The world is shaking on its axis. It feels chaotic. It feels tense. It feels like the headlines of the news today.

Psalms 1 showed us the character of the blessed man. Psalm 2 shows us the world that blessed man walks into.

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*Read Psalms 2:1*

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Right from the start, the psalmist shows us the insanity of human rebellion. We are meant to hear the noise of a world that has decided it will break free from God. But it's all in vain!

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*Read Psalms 2:2*

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This is not quiet unbelief. This is organized rebellion. The nations, the peoples, the kings, the rulers, every level of human authority joins in a single unified chorus. And the target of their rebellion is clear. They are raging against the Lord and His Anointed. They want nothing to do with His rule.

A quick note that the word plot here in verse 1 is the same Hebrew word translated meditate in Psalm 1 verse 2.<sup>1</sup> The blessed man meditates on God's Word. The rebel nations meditate on overthrowing God's King. In other words, everyone is meditating on something. The only question is whether we are meditating on God's Word or on how we kick him off his throne and take it for ourselves. And their cry is in verse 3.

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*Read Psalms 2:3*

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God is not threatened. He is not anxious. He is not pacing around like I do when I get nervous and stressed out. He laughs. Not a humorous laugh, but the laugh of a King who knows the rebellion cannot succeed. Christopher Ash in one of his commentaries on the Psalms calls this the, "terrifying laugh of heaven, not mockery that belittles, but mockery that judges."<sup>2</sup> The world shakes. God does not.

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<sup>1</sup> Research garnered from Christopher Ash's Commentary on the Psalms.

<sup>2</sup> From Christopher Ash's "Psalms for You" commentary.

*Read Psalms 2:5*

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And what does he say? What is this terrifying declaration? It's verse 6:

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*Read Psalms 2:6*

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God's answer to human rebellion is a King. God's response to raging nations is not to argue or negotiate. It is to enthrone His Son. The world gathers together to resist the rule of God.

Now the voice shifts. The Son begins to speak.

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*Read Psalms 2:7*

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This is covenant language. This is the echo of 2 Samuel 7. This is the announcement of the divine Son, the heir of David, the King who will rule the nations. The Father declares that the King is His own Son, the One who shares His character and His authority and His mission.

That language is not new. Every Israelite who knew the scriptures would have heard something familiar. This reaches all the way back to one of the most important promises in the Old Testament: the covenant God made with David in 2 Samuel 7.

In 2 Samuel 7, God promised David that He would raise up one of David's sons, and He said to that king, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to Me a Son." God promised David that a Son would sit on his throne forever. Not a temporary king. Not a fragile king. A forever king. A king whose rule would never break, never be replaced, never be overthrown.

That covenant became the heartbeat of Israel's hope. Every time a new king ascended the throne, the question was asked: Could this be the son God promised? Could this be the one who would rule forever?

But the kings kept failing. The kingdom eventually collapsed. And that promise seemed to hang in the air unanswered. Psalm 2 doesn't break the tension. It remains pregnant with future promise.

Here in Psalm 2 God looks at His anointed King and says, "You are My Son." In other words, this is the King David was promised. Every king in David's line was a

small and imperfect type of this King to come, but only Jesus finally fills out the silhouette Psalm 2 sketches. This is the One the whole Old Testament was waiting for.

And Psalm 2 tells us what the true Son will receive.

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*Read Psalms 2:8*

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This is the fulfillment of 2 Samuel 7. David's throne was local and temporary. Christ's throne is global and permanent. David had enemies he could not defeat. Christ will one day subdue all rebellion forever. We see that in verse 9:

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*Read Psalms 2:9*

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The inheritance of the nations in verse 8 leads directly into the authority of verse 9. The language is strong: rod of iron and shattered like a potter's vessel. The image isn't cruelty, it's certainty. It is God's way of saying that no rebellion will stand before His King.

When Christ returns, His rule will not be up for negotiation. Every authority, every kingdom, every rival power that lifts itself against Him will crumble with the ease of shattered pottery. This isn't a picture of a weak Messiah wringing His hands at the chaos of the world.

This is not the tame, toothless, tolerant Jesus imagined by liberal Christians. This is the risen Lord who reigns from heaven and who will one day return in glorious splendor and judgment.

Verse 9 is meant to sober us. It's meant to remind us that neutrality toward Christ is impossible. You are either bowing before the King, or you are resisting the King. And resistance is as futile as clay trying to fight iron.

So when Psalm 2 calls Him Son, it does not mean a sentimental relationship. It means the covenant King, the promised Messiah, the rightful ruler of the world. That is why this connection matters. It anchors Psalm 2 in the storyline of Scripture. It keeps you from thinking this psalm is about just any king. This is the

King. The true Son of David. The One God promised a thousand years before Jesus ever entered the world.

The blessed man is the promised King. **THE BLESSED LIFE PSALM 1 DESCRIBES IS ONLY FOUND IN THE RIGHTEOUS KING OF PSALM 2, AND THE ONLY WAY TO BE BLESSED IS TO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM.**

### 3. The Gracious Invitation & Our Response – Psalm 2:10-12

After all the noise of the nations and the certainty of God's King, Psalm 2 turns a corner. It stops describing the world, and it starts speaking to it. But it's also speaking to you and me.

Verse 10:

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*Read Psalms 2:10*

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This is no longer about ancient kings and foreign nations. This is about anyone with a heart that resists the rule of God. The psalm is inviting us to wisdom. To humility. To clarity about where we stand with the King God has installed.

Verse 11 tells us the wisdom we should pursue:

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*Read Psalms 2:11*

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That sounds like a strange combination. Serve with fear. Rejoice with trembling. But it captures the right heart posture. It means joyful surrender. Glad obedience. A kind of worship that knows God is holy and yet knows He welcomes us.

When I think of this, I think of Mr. Beaver in the Chronicles of Narnia. Susan is enquiring about Aslan, and whether or not he is safe. Here's what Mr. Beaver says:

*"Safe?" Said Mr. Beaver; "don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."*<sup>3</sup>

It is not a fear that drives you away. It is a fear that draws you near. It is the fear of realizing who this King really is. He is not optional. He is not a suggestion. He is the rightful ruler of the world and the lover of those who joyfully submit to Him. Then the first part of verse 12 brings the direst line in the whole psalm.

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*Read Psalms 2:12a-c*

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<sup>3</sup> From The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis



Kiss the Son. In ancient Israel, that was the kiss of allegiance. It is the picture of kneeling before the King and kissing his hand saying, "You are my Lord. My life belongs to You."

The warning is clear. To resist the King is to perish. To fight His rule is to lose. To turn away from Him is to stand against the One who owns the nations. This is a warning to repent and bow, because the King will not be mocked and His rule cannot be overturned. You will bow now in joy or bow later in judgment. Either way, every knee shall one day bow before the King.

But Psalm 2 does not end with warning. It ends where Psalm 1 began. It's the end of the inclusio. Look at the last part of verse 12:

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*Read Psalms 2:12d*

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Blessed. The same word that opened Psalm 1. Psalm 1 began by telling us about the blessed man. Psalm 2 ends by telling us how ordinary people who do not meet the righteousness of Psalm 1 can become blessed.

Do you see that? **THE BLESSED LIFE PSALM 1 DESCRIBES IS ONLY FOUND IN THE RIGHTEOUS KING OF PSALM 2, AND THE ONLY WAY TO BE BLESSED IS TO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM.**

Blessing does not come from us trying harder or relying on our own moral strength. It comes from submitting to the King God has put on the throne. The King who could crush us under His rod has instead opened His arms to receive us.

***Psalm 1 began with a picture of the blessed life we could never reach. Psalm 2 ends with a promise of blessing we can freely receive.***

And the doorway into the entire book of Psalms teaches us this one truth. The only way to be a blessed person is to seek refuge in the righteous King, Jesus Christ.

### Closing

Together these two psalms teach us one truth. **THE BLESSED LIFE PSALM 1 DESCRIBES IS ONLY FOUND IN THE RIGHTEOUS KING OF PSALM 2, AND THE ONLY WAY TO BE BLESSED IS TO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM.**

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him. Not blessed are those who try harder. Not blessed are those who clean themselves up. Not blessed are those who avoid

enough bad influences or muster enough spiritual discipline. Blessing comes only to those who take refuge in the King.

So the call of the text is simple. Bow your heart to Him. Trust His Word. Submit to His rule. Come under His protection. And when we do, this promise becomes ours.

***But here is the question we need to ask ourselves: have you taken refuge in Him?***

Not do you know things about Him. Not that you even know who he is. Not have you been around church. Not have you tried to be a better person. Have you taken refuge in Him? Have you bowed the knee to the King God has installed? Have you come to the only place of safety when judgment comes?

There is an illustration I heard once about a forest fire. After the fire passed, a ranger found the charred remains of a large bird at the base of a tree. When he nudged it, three small eaglets scurried out from underneath her wings.

Those little birds survived because someone else gave her life for them. She absorbed the fire. She chose to stay when she could have flew away. Her body became their refuge.

That is exactly what Christ has done for us and all who call upon his name. Scripture uses this same image again and again. Psalm 91 says He covers us with His wings. Ruth speaks of taking refuge under the wings of the Lord. Jesus Himself longed to gather His people under His wings. When we speak of taking refuge in Christ, we are not talking about sentimental comfort.

We are talking about a Savior who placed Himself between us and the fires of Hell. We are talking about a Savior who placed Himself between us and the holy wrath of God, between us and the judgment we deserve. Jesus stepped into judgment so we would not face it. Jesus gave His life as a ransom for many.

**THE BLESSED LIFE PSALM 1 DESCRIBES IS ONLY FOUND IN THE RIGHTEOUS KING OF PSALM 2, AND THE ONLY WAY TO BE BLESSED IS TO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM.**

Take refuge in the Son. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.

May we be found among them, amen? Amen.

Series: Standalone  
The Blessed Man and the Righteous King | Psalms 1-2  
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Let's pray.

**Benediction**

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face shine upon you as you delight in His Word. May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace as you take refuge in His Son, our righteous King. Amen? Amen.  
Go in peace.