

Theme: To walk in God's Way while surrounded by those who reject it, God's people must learn to trust in His Sovereignty, knowing He rules all things and will fulfill His Word.

I. Intro - Pilgrims Progress

- A. One of the most popular books ever written
- B. John Bunyan began it in prison; published in 1677-78
- C. Translated into over 200 languages; never out of print
- D. A description of the conversion of Pilgrim and his journey on the way to the celestial city; many obstacles
- E. This has resonated with Christians down through the ages, for our journey on the Way is full of obstacles!

II. Obstacles On the Way

- A. Opposition from those around us
Blessed is **the man** who does not walk in the counsel of the **wicked** or stand in the way of **sinner**s or sit in the seat of **mockers**. Psalm 1:1
 - 1. The man - singular throughout Psalm 1
 - 2. Wicked, sinners, mockers - plural throughout Psalm 1 & 2
 - 3. This Psalm promises great blessings but it is realistic in its portrayal that the way is embraced by few and rejected by many.
 - 4. One of the great difficulties is that we will often be out of step with the culture around us.
 - 5. Note that they offer their "counsel/advice" and also "mock" God, His instruction, and those who are walking the way.

- B. Opposition from those with authority and power
Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? ² The **kings** of the earth take their stand and the **rulers** gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. ³ "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters." Psalm 2:1-3
 - 1. In Psalm 2 kings and rulers - those with authority and power - are singled out as being set against God, His Way, and His people.
 - 2. This opposition from those with earthly authority and power is seen throughout the Psalm
Therefore, you **kings**, be wise; be warned, you **rulers** of the earth. Psalm 2:10
 - a. Forms an inclusio with the beginning of the Psalm
 - b. Once again notice that these "kings" and "rulers" are plural - this is a very common experience.
 - c. Those who enjoy earthly power and authority are often radically set against God's authority and want to crush those who give first allegiance to God, His Kingdom, and His Word.
 - 3. A difference is that these kings and rulers have authority to officially punish and persecute those who embrace God, His Kingdom, and His Word.
- C. Psalm 1 and 2 give a clear call for God's people to walk in His way but are also very clear that to do this will mean facing great opposition.
 - 1. This is seen throughout Scripture and history
 - 2. Those embracing Christ and following the way should expect opposition as a normal experience
In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 2 Timothy 3:12

III. Our Comfort: God's Sovereignty

A. Psalm 1 - God Sovereignly blesses His people

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. ⁴ Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. ⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. ⁶ For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. Psalm 1:3-6

1. Those walking God's Way are blessed through all seasons. experiencing God's grace and favor!
2. Those rejecting God's Way are ultimately blown away like chaff and have no place in God's Presence.
3. This is because the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, and ensures that the way of the wicked will perish.

B. Psalm 2 - God Sovereignly rules over the nations

I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father. ⁸Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery." Psalm 2:7-9

1. The Psalm begins with kings and rulers in rebellion
2. The kings and rulers are addressed at the end too
3. At the heart is God's decree and promise to His Anointed/Son/King, Jesus
 - a. I have installed You as King over their objections

- b. Ask Me and I will give You the nations
- c. You will rule over all nations
- d. They can no more resist Your rule and will than a clay pot can resist a rod of iron!
- e. Note that verses 7-9 are quoted/alluded to all over the NT! This and Psalm 110 are some of the most referenced sections of the OT!

C. Psalm 1 and 2 give a clear picture of God's Sovereignty, as He overrules both the people and rulers who reject His way, and blesses His people and works out His plan for history.

IV. Applying the Word

A. Do I believe God is Sovereign over my life?

1. Psalm 1 and 2 promise us that we will face opposition to walking the Way
2. The book of Psalms is full of laments because of this very fact!
3. Unless you are antisocial, it will be impossible to walk the Way without embracing God's Sovereignty
4. Do I know that the blessing of knowing and walking with God is sweeter than all human praise?
5. Do I know that God's blessing can fill my life in the midst of being mocked, ridiculed, and hated?
6. Do not let your hearts be troubled, do not be anxious - God is watching over you!
7. Your Father sees and knows you and watches over your way to keep and bless you!

B. Do I believe God is Sovereign over nations and history?

1. Peer pressure is one thing, governmental policy another!
2. Christians have often suffered under hostile rulers
3. This is increasingly the case in the US - and will probably grow regardless of elections as The Way is hated by the culture at large
4. Do I know that God Sovereignly rules over the nations and that all will answer to Him?
5. Do I see that God rules over history - to walk the Way is "being on the right side of history"!
6. Psalm 1 & 2 plead with us to recognize the opposition we will face - and to find refuge in the Son and walk His Way!

C. The Table of Sovereign Comfort

1. This is a Table of comfort - for those who have found their refuge in the Son!
2. Our confession of faith in God's care for us
Knowing all of these things, what is your only comfort in life and death?
That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ; who, with his precious blood, has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that all things must work together for my salvation, and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready, from this day forth, to live unto him.

3. Consider the comfort of this Table of Comfort provided by our Sovereign Lord

- a. He loved you in the past by giving Himself
 - b. He loves you in the present by sustaining you
 - c. He loves you in the future - when He returns
 - d. He loves you in life, and He will love you through death itself
 - e. Nothing can separate us from God's Providential love and care!
4. Come to the Table of Sovereign Comfort

The Way: Trusting In God's Sovereignty

Psalm 1-2
May 30, 2021
Communion
Philippians 4:6-7

Teaching keywords: Sovereignty of God; Christian life; faith; anxiety and worry

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:6-7

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. ³ He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. ⁴ Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. ⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. ⁶ For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. (Psalm 1)

Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? ² The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. ³ “Let us break their chains,” they say, “and throw off their fetters.” ⁴ The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. ⁵ Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, ⁶ “I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.” ⁷ I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father. ⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹ You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.” ¹⁰ Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. ¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. ¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.
Psalms 1:1–2:12