

When Life's A Mess, Turn To The Mess-iah * Psalm 2

Icebreaker:

Describe a time when your life felt like the above drawing?

The Study:

As we continue our new series in the Psalms – “Songs In The Key Of Life” – we want to zero in on a psalm that is quoted more than any other in the New Testament. Psalm 2 comes from a category of psalm often labeled as a “Prince-of-Peace” or “Royal” or “Messianic” psalm, because it points to God’s king. Most of these psalms are significant because they serve as prophecies of Christ. Additionally, Psalm 2 is important because of a very important spiritual lesson it teaches us about life.



1. How did the first Christians look at Psalm 2?

Read Acts 4:23-28, Acts 13:32-33; Revelation 12:5; 19:11,15

2. What did Jesus say about the Psalms? Read Luke 24:44.

3. Is biblical prophecy something you have paid much attention to in your faith-walk? How would knowing some of the Bible’s dozens of specific Messianic prophecies help you spiritually?

4. Psalm 2 is essential reading for the prophecy it gives, but also for the *message* it brings – that if you love Jesus, don’t expect the world to love you back. There are two kingdoms that are always clashing on the earth – the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God.

The word “world” in the Bible sometimes means something good (“*For God so loved the world...*”), but often times it’s code language for something very evil. How does the Bible describe this dark world?

Read James 4:4 and 1 John 2:15-17

5. Why do you think the “kings of the earth” hate the kingdom of God? And why can we say with confidence that if you love Jesus, the world is not likely to love you back?

6. In John 15:18-19, we see that Jesus actually prepared his disciples for the opposition they would encounter as his followers. Did anyone talk about this with you when you first became a Christian? Do you think this should be part of a “new Christian’s discipleship class”? Why or why not?

7. Before we get out there and do battle with the kingdom of the world, we offered three provisos to keep in mind. Discuss them.

Provisio #1: Reel in any conspiracy thinking.

a. What wrong with a little, good, ‘ole-fashioned conspiracy thinking? (Maybe define what you think it is first.)

b. On the website crossexamined.org, J. Warner Wallace (an atheist prosecutor turned Christian who now uses his investigation skills to defend Christianity), recently hosted a podcast called *“Principles For Evaluating Covid-19 Conspiracy Theories”*. Among them were these:

- Just because something is possible, doesn’t make it reasonable.
- Understand the motives for misbehavior: which comes down to 3 big ones – money, sex and power. If someone has something to gain in any of these areas, be suspicious.
- Don’t trust anything – however slick or authoritative it looks – until you have done your homework.
- Opportunistic is always the best explanation rather than diabolical.

Discuss these or add some of your own.

c. Instead of jumping on conspiracy bandwagons, what are we to do instead? Read Isaiah 8:11-13.

Provisio #2: Practice Romans 14 with each other.

Romans 14 is a practical “training manual” on how Christians can still get along with each other even when they have disagreements about things. There are several principles worth identifying.

Not everything is black and white. There are gray areas.

Verse 1: “[Don’t] quarrel over opinions.” (ESV); “disputable matters” (NIV); “doubtful things” (NKJV)

a. See if you can come up with 6-10 examples of gray areas (especially doctrinal ones).

b. Many Christians want to make everything black and white. Why do we do that?

We should respect the relationship the other person has with God.

Vss.3-4: “Let not [one despise the other] for God has welcomed him.

Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another?”

These days when someone disagrees with someone else, the instinct is to scream, belittle, name-call and accuse the other of the being the spawn of Satan. Too many Christians have joined right in. Why is this happening, and how can we reverse it?

We should respect the thought the other person has given to the matter.

Vs.5: “Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.”

We want to teach at Bridgeway the principle of “sound-bite training”, where you try to come up with 2-3 reasons for any belief you hold. Why might this idea be a good practice? (Give...oh, 2 to 3 reasons.)

Provisio #3: Be careful not to confuse the kingdom of men with the kingdom of God.

Pastor Bear tried to be an equal-opportunity-offender in his message, by giving to those on both right and left things to think about (and things to be angry at him about!)

We will do much more training in the near future about the relationship between faith and politics. Rather than discuss what was controversial in the message, discuss these quotes:

“The Gospel is not about right or left, but about right and wrong.”

“Political parties are shifting all the time, but the kingdom of God does not. ‘Righteousness and justice are the foundation of God’s throne,’ the Bible says, and no political party will ever represent the fullness of God’s righteousness and justice.”

“Politics is a good and godly pursuit. But above all, know that the #1 thing that a follower of Christ is called to do is share the gospel.”

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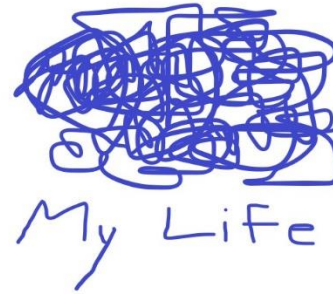
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