

Psalm 2 - Immediate and Unconditional Surrender

Sign Title: Immediate and Unconditional Surrender

December 18, 2011

Good morning Faith family. Christmas is almost upon us. I hope you are able to take part of this season to enjoy Christ.

Fathers, I want to challenge you. It is your responsibility during this season to teach your children about Jesus. It is your responsibility to control the schedule, not be controlled by it. Fathers, be men, be good spiritual leaders of your home.

This Christmas season, we are studying Jesus from a different angle. We are seeing what the book of Psalms teaches about him. Earlier in the series, we learned the Psalms have a lot to say about Jesus. The book of Psalms is the most frequently quoted Old Testament book in the New Testament. This morning we are studying Psalm 2. As you turn there in your Bibles, let me tell you a story.

In February 1862, Ulysses Grant marched his army to Tennessee and surrounded Fort Donaldson. It was apparent Grant would win the ensuing battle. Inside Fort Donaldson, the Confederates held up under Gen. John B. Floyd. They launched a desperate counterattack that quickly fell apart. Realizing their defeat was inevitable, the Confederates sent word to Gen. Grant asking him for his terms of surrender. Grant replied with these famous words, "There are no terms except immediate and unconditional surrender." That is exactly what they did.

This morning, that is exactly what Psalm 2 tells us we must do. The only way to be reconciled to God and avoid the coming judgment is immediate and unconditional surrender to Jesus, the son of God.

Let me clarify some things before we look at the text. The Bible never asks sinners to invite Jesus into their heart. Inviting Christ into our hearts makes it sound like we are in charge, like we have options before us. It puts the decision to surrender to Jesus on the same level as deciding to have cream or sugar in your coffee. That is not biblical. The biblical picture is each one of us must repent of our sins, trust in Christ or face judgment. *We are not told to invite Christ into our hearts, we are commanded to repent of our sins, trust in Christ or face judgment.*

Psalm 2 is a Psalm that gives us a clear picture of Jesus not in his humility in the manger but in his authority after the resurrection. The message of the Psalm is simply this. Repent of your rebellion. Surrender to Christ or face the consequences.

Some of the Psalms we study in this series are difficult to outline. This one is easy. You can probably see the points broken apart as paragraphs in your Bible. They are: 1) The nations rage; 2) The Lord laughs; 3) The son describes the father's decision; 4) The rebels are warned.

The nations rage.

[Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?](#) The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us." Psalm 2:1–3 (ESV)

The picture is the rulers of the earth are all congregating, and they are raging against God and his anointed one. This rebellion is not just against God the father, it is also against his anointed one. Who is that? A little language background will help us. We covered this earlier in the series. In Hebrew, the word messiah means, anointed one. In Greek, the word christ means anointed one. Who are they raging against besides God the father? Jesus, the anointed son of God.

In verse 3 we find the rallying cry of everyone. "Let us break off our chains and throw off our fetters." That is the essence of rebellion. We want no authority over us. We want no limits. We want to be able to make the rules; we don't want to live under anyones authority.

Isn't this the essence of rebellion? This is how things start with Adam and Eve. They have one rule about one tree, but they rebelled and refused to follow it. Nobody was going to tell them what they can and cannot do. No limits. No rules. You get to the nation of Israel and they said nobody was going to tell them they couldn't worship other gods. Nobody was going to tell them they needed to take a day of rest. They liked making money and worshipping it. Nobody was going to tell them what to do with their money. They wanted to keep their tithes to themselves. It was just pure rebellion, all under the guise of freedom.

Even when you get to the book of Revelation, people are given multiples opportunities to repent after they face God's judgment for their sin. Instead of repenting and acknowledging God's right to rule over their lives, they insisted on rebelling against God, all in the name of freedom.

Ironically, freedom is not found in independence from God. Bondage and death are the result of rebellion against authority. Kids, as you grow up, your parents will tell you to eat your vegetables, to get your sleep, to study hard, to love Jesus more than anything. You want your freedom. You rebel and do your own thing. You stay up until 2 in the morning. You eat Reese's Peanut Butter Cups for breakfast and skip your vegetables. You play Xbox instead of study. Does that rebellion against your parents produce freedom and happiness? No. Were your parents' rules to frustrate you or to help you succeed? It is the same when it comes to rebellion against God. God says save your sexuality for marriage. Rebellion says be free and express yourself before marriage. In which of the two options is bondage and brokenness found? Freedom is not found in rebellion against God. It is found in living under the authority of God and his son.

Let me switch paths. We are looking for messianic teaching in the Psalms. We are looking for what the Psalms teach us about Christ. This entire Psalm is about Christ and how we relate to him. In Acts 4, Peter and John are preaching and battling with the religious leaders of their day, and when they face opposition to Christ, they see that opposition as Psalm 2 being fulfilled. In case there is any doubt that this applies to Jesus, Peter and John saw it as applying to Jesus.

...who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, " 'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed' — for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius

Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. Acts 4:25–28 (ESV)

When we share about Jesus, don't expect people will embrace Christ apart from a supernatural work of God in their heart. We learned that in Psalm 14. Everyone is naturally opposed to Jesus. Psalm 2 teaches us to expect opposition when preaching Christ. A great example of this is Tim Tebow, the quarterback for the Denver Broncos, an outspoken Christian. In 2010, the NCAA made a new rule that banned messages in eye paint. Why did they do that? In 2009, Tim Tebow wrote John 3:16 in his eye paint during a NCAA championship college game. The camera zoomed in on his face so everyone could read John 3:16 on their television screen. In the next few moments Google experienced 92 million searches for "John 3:16."

Just a few weeks ago Jake Plummer, the former Denver quarterback, talked about Tim Tebow in USA Today. While acknowledging his athletic skills he said he wished Tebow would stop talking about Jesus. Why does Tim get so much opposition to talking about Jesus? Why will people oppose and ridicule us when we tell them about Jesus? Psalm 2 tells us that the nations are in rebellion against God. Expect opposition.

I want to take a little aside in the text. Acts 4:28 also tells us the rebellion to kill Jesus was part of God's sovereign plan. The betrayal, the whole process with the Gentiles and the Jews was ordained by God. God sovereignly oversaw the events that led to Jesus' death. Why is this important? It turns many of our conceptions about God upside down. It helps us realize how much bigger God is than our thinking. It helps us realize how little we understand about God.

For example, would you agree that betrayal is evil? Would you agree murder is evil? While we know betrayal and murder are evil, we also know God willed Pilate and Herod to betray and murder his son. *“They did what your power and will decided beforehand should happen.”* They did exactly what God willed them to do. If you are like me, you are scratching your head wondering how this works. Theologians call this *concurrency*. Concurrency is when God seems to will two things that appear to contradict one another. It teaches us how mysterious and complex God is. We try to put him in a box to figure him out but it doesn’t work. God, by virtue of being God, will have a lot of mystery about him. Let me give you other examples of concurrency.

In Exodus, God said he would take the Egyptians and turn their hearts against his people. God took the Egyptians and made them hate his people. Then God punished Pharaoh and the Egyptians for punishing his people.

In Jeremiah, God warned his people to repent. Finally, God had enough. He warned them that he would summon his servant Nebuchadnezzar to punish them. Nebuchadnezzar was a power hungry butcher. He was the leader of the most powerful empire on Earth but God called him “my servant.” God’s servant was summoned to come in and trash his people because they were rebelling against God. As soon as Nebuchadnezzar punished God’s people, God told Nebuchadnezzar he was in trouble for touching his people, and God punished Nebuchadnezzar for doing what God ordained him to do.

How does this work? I don’t know. It is a source of serious brain cramps for Bible students.

The Lord laughs.

He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. 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." Psalm 2:4–6 (ESV)

The scene in heaven is quite different from that on Earth. God is laughing. Man is raging, rebelling and shaking his fist at God thinking he is on the path to freedom. God is laughing saying, "Who do you think you are?" If you are here this morning rebelling against God and you think God has no right to tell you what to do, you need to know God is laughing at you. You are a piece of dust trying to defy the infinite creator God. The odds are not in your favor.

God has made his decision about who will be the king of creation. He says he has set his king on Zion, his holy hill. Earlier in the series we learned Zion was the original hill Jerusalem was built upon. God will install his son Jesus as ruler over the earth and over all authorities. This is not a democracy. We don't get to vote. There is no discussion. God made his decision. Jesus is the king he installed over everything and everyone. Our job is to submit and honor Jesus. Who do we think we are to rebel against the son God has established as the ruler over creation?

On a pastoral note, some of you rebel against decisions God made about your life. God ordained your height, your looks, your parents and your intellect. Some of you are mad at God for not making you smarter. Some are you are mad at God for not making you taller. Some of you are mad at God for letting your car break down or allowing a tragedy in your life.

You think you have a right to tell God what he can and cannot do with your life. You question God's goodness and love for you. God says, "This is not a democracy." Just as he chose to set his son as king over creation, he has chosen the places and times where we will live. He chose our height, our intellect, our parents, our looks plus the adversity and blessings of our life. Submit to him in it. Stop rebelling against him.

The son describes the father's decision.

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 a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psalm 2:7-9 (ESV)

Now the son of God, the anointed one, describes the decision God the father made to install him as king over all of creation. "You are my son; today I have begotten you." Strange language here. The second person of the Trinity is already God's son, but yet he is begotten of God. What does that mean? Begotten is the term used for birthing. It is something created of like image and essence. We can only create things less than ourselves, like a desk or a research paper. A husband and wife can beget something equal to themselves, they beget children, of the same image and essence as themselves. This is referring to the incarnation. God the son is fused with human flesh and is born a man, yet, he is still completely and fully God. He didn't leave any of it behind. There is a nice collection of New Testament passages that pick this up and apply it to Jesus.

For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"?... Hebrews 1:5 (ESV)

...this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, “ ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you.’ Acts 13:33 (ESV)

Jesus is the son of God. God the father has given God the son the right to rule over creation and God the son will rule over it. When Jesus asks the nations to be made his inheritance, God the father will give it to him. That is the decree of God.

...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. Hebrews 1:2 (ESV)

When Jesus returns, he will not come as meek and mild. He will come to inflict God’s wrath upon those who are rebelling. Jesus shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel. Let me show you how this is picked up in the New Testament.

Revelation 19:15 describes the rider of the white horse, which is Jesus.

From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. Revelation 19:15 (ESV)

So the nations are raging, the Lord is laughing, the son describes the father’s decree that the nations will be his inheritance and he will break them and smash them to pieces. That is the state of affairs. So what are we to do about it? The rebellious are warned.

The rebels are warned.

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. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. Psalm 2:10–12 (ESV)

Who is talking here? It is the father talking, not the son. It is the father warning the rebellious people to surrender to the son because you don't want to see the consequences of rebelling against him. The father says *kiss the son*. This is not kissing like a married couple, this is kissing the feet. It means surrender to him and acknowledge his authority over you. So the image is the father is presenting his son as king of creation and telling us to submit to him or we will face the son who carries out the father's wrath and judgment.

Too often we think of Christ as the meek and mild dude. The Bible is filled with warnings that Jesus will not always be meek and mild. In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus warns us over and over about the judgment to come and that Jesus will be behind it.

Don't mistake this. These warnings are not given just to scare us. They are a gift. They are given to us out of love. Parents, why do you tell you kids not to stick their tongue in a light socket? Why do you tell them not to drink Drano? Do you give them warnings to to limit their freedom and ruin their day? No. You love them! Your warnings are a gift. Read the warning label or you face the consequences.

Sophie Regosin-Hodges was 14 months old when an overdose of Tylenol almost killed her. There are two types of Tylenol you give with an eye-dropper to children, Children's Tylenol and Infants' Tylenol. Unfortunately, some parents fail to read and heed the warnings on the bottle. Her mother gave her infant Tylenol according to the dosing instructions on children's Tylenol. The problem is Infant Tylenol is three times stronger than children's Tylenol. As a result of the

overdose, her mother almost killed her. Sophie survives today because of a liver transplant. Mom should have read and heeded the warnings on the bottle.

Friends, Psalm 2 is the warning label for everyone who chooses to rebel against Jesus, the son of God. Don't do it. The son's judgment will be terrifying. It is coming. The warning label of Psalm 2 is a gift. Jesus used frightening language to talk about judgment and eternal condemnation. He talked about flames that never go out. He talked about a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. It is a warning with real consequences.

Before we leave this text, I want to just give you two points of application that smack us in the face from this Psalm.

1. **God is sovereign over the nations.** God is large and in charge whether that is for the salvation of the elect or the damnation of the wicked. There is nothing outside of his control. Many Christians don't like to hear that. God's sovereignty shouldn't be a threat to God's people. It is only a threat to those who persist in sin and rebellion. When you are facing tough times, take refuge in the fact that even though life feels out of control, God is still in control. Every adversity we face is an opportunity to trust God and bring him glory through our trust.
2. **The only way to escape the coming judgment is to kiss the son.** Take refuge in him. Just as he will rule with a rod of iron and smash his opponents like pottery, he loves us and died in our places for our sins.

Ulysses Grant made his conditions for surrender clear. Immediate and unconditional surrender was the only option. Psalm 2 says the same is true for

each one of us. God laughs as we try to rebel again him and his son, that he installed as king over creation. The *only options* are immediate and unconditional surrender to him.

If this morning you have not surrendered your life to Christ and recognized he is in charge, today is the day to bow the knee and kiss the son. Recognize he will exercise his authority as king of the world and we begin by avoiding God's wrath by willingly acknowledging him as king over our life.

If you have known Christ for years, the message from Psalm 2 is the only way to freedom is found by surrender and delighting in him, not in rebellion against him.



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the EFCA. He enjoys reading, writing, time with his family and wrestling with his sons. His favorite topics of study are ancient rhetoric and preaching. Feel free to contact him at ktruck@gmail.com or visit his web at www.christ2Rculture.com

© Dr. Kurt Trucksess. You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided that: (1) you credit the author, (2) any modifications are clearly marked, (3) you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, (4) you include the web site address (<http://www.christ2Rculture.com>) on the copied resource.

