

# 100 days of PSALMS



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF EDMOND

# AN INVITATION...

Summertime opens the door to new opportunities. Life slows down a bit. We may find ourselves with more time to connect with family. We may see friends and neighbors we haven't seen in a while.

Changing up our usual routine opens up time for intentional study of God's Word. This study can be flexible just like our summer schedules. You can study His Word individually or with others. The study doesn't have to be a formal thing... and it's ok if you don't finish, or if you can only get to a few lessons. Scripture teaches us in Isaiah 55 that God's Word does not return to Him empty, but it accomplishes His purposes. Any amount of time we spend in His Word is not wasted.

Our Psalms study guide is designed to help you think deeply about a particular Psalm. The lessons follow Pastor Eric's sermons, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, they will also add to your understanding of the Psalms.

Ask a friend or someone you see as part of your summer routine if they would like to talk through a couple of these lessons. You could even add it to your after dinner routine or call a friend for coffee a couple of times a month.

## **Why Study the Psalms?**

Many people are unfamiliar with the Psalms. Despite being right in the middle of the Bible and often quoted in the New Testament, many people gloss right over the Psalms. This is a grave mistake. The Psalms are full of real, raw faith. If we are honest about our relationship with God, we have all been where the authors of the Psalms found themselves. If we want intimacy with Jesus and want to experience the fullness of life Jesus intends, we will praise, pray, and give Jesus our pain.

The Psalms assure us God is with us in everything.

# PRAYER & 7 CORE PRACTICES

## Prayer

Holy Spirit, I know the entirety of Scripture is given by you and it is useful teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. We know that without you we are incomplete. In the next few moments, clear my mind and quiet my spirit; help me to hear your word. Soften my heart to receive it. I know that my Heavenly Father has a particular Word for me today from your Eternal Scripture that will reveal your character and draw me closer to you. Jesus, I ask this in your name. Amen.

1 SHARE who you are

2 CARE for one another

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3 READ and PRACTICE scripture

4 PRAY together

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5 INVEST in people

6 SERVE community

7 CREATE and SEND leaders

# Lesson 1

*"Blessed are all who take refuge in Him." Psalm 2:12*

One of the things we struggle with the most as people who believe in a just and loving God is the prevalence of evil in the world. We struggle with people in powerful positions who act seemingly with impunity toward God and His law. The second psalm assures us that the Lord remains on his throne, and that ultimately every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

## **Tin Horn Dictators with Delusions of Grandeur**

1. What does this passage promise that all plotting against the Lord turns out to be? (Psalm 2:1) Is this vain plotting confined to just working against the Lord or is it also working against others as well? Who? (Psalm 2:2) What does their plotting amount to? (Psalm 2:3) How is this similar to the original sin?

2. What is God's response to this plotting? Is God intimidated? Should His anointed be intimidated? What are the four responses that God makes to this plotting? (mockery, derision, wrath and fury, establishing His throne)

## **The King of Kings Set on His Throne**

1. Who is the Son whom the Lord has begotten? (John 3:16-17) Why is it important that Jesus is begotten as a fellow human being with us? (Romans 5:15-17)

2. What two things does God promise to those who ask Him in the name of His begotten? (Psalm 2:8 and 2:9) How does this promise alleviate and address some of our greatest concerns?

## **Good Followers Make Great Rulers**

1. What three habits do wise rulers practice? (Psalm 2:11-12) How do you practice these in your own life? What does God promise to all who take refuge in Him?

2. What fate awaits those who work against God, His anointed, and His purposes? Can you think of any biblical or historical examples of this? Can

you think of any examples from your own life?

## BONUS QUESTION & ACTION STEP

If David is the author of this psalm, upon what promise from God does he base this song of praise? Is there a bully in your life that you need to stand up to?

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# Lesson 2

*"The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes."*

*Psalm 19:7-8*

Psalm 19 begins with David citing the natural revelation of God's character. The beauty and majesty of His creation extends through all the earth and speaks to every person regardless of nation, tongue, or tribe. Just as beautiful and transcendent as His creation is His perfect law. David's prayer is that his heart and his life be brought in line with God's perfect will in the same way that all creation bends to His sovereign grace.

## **The God of All that Is Seen and Unseen**

1. How do the "heavens declare the glory of God" for you? (Psalm 19:1) Given that God is the author of creation, what does the beauty and utility of His world teach us about His character?

2. What three things does creation do to reveal God to us? (Psalm 19:3-6) Which one of these three things is most meaningful to you? How does the Holy Spirit accomplish the same for those who believe? (Romans 8:18-27)

## **The God Whose Perfect Law Is Liberty**

1. What four things does trusting in God's law do for us? (Psalm 19:7-9) Which of these four things speaks most to you? How does James' description of the law "as the perfect law of liberty" speak to what a love of the law does for us? (James 1:25)

2. Why should we desire the law more than gold and the sweet things of this life? (Psalm 19:10-11) What two things are promised to those who love God's law? How have you seen these promises borne out in your life?

## **Keeping a Clean Heart**

1. What does knowledge of the law help us to do? (James 1:23-24) Why are we not able to discern our own errors? Why do we need the law to help us do it? (Proverbs 21:2; Romans 7:18)

2. What three things does David ask the Lord to do for his heart? (Psalm

19:12-14) Why are these important? Can you think of anything else he should have asked God for?

## BONUS QUESTION & ACTION STEP

Compare and contrast David's threefold request with Psalm 51:10-12. How are these requests similar and different? Begin your prayers this week praying Psalm 19:12-14 for yourself and make note of what the Lord does in your life.

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# Lesson 3

*"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far away from saving me, from the words of my groaning?"*

*Psalms 22:1*

Many of us recognize the beginning of Psalm 22 as the chilling words Jesus uttered from the cross, "cry of dereliction." What follows in the Psalm is an archetypal biblical dichotomy; a brutal assessment of reality combined with an unwavering hope in God's power to restore, redeem, and renew. This Psalm that Jesus quotes describes the crucifixion and it is planted like a signpost in the middle of the Old Testament. It points to the One who was, who is, and is to come. To the great theological question, "Where is God when the innocent suffer?" God replies, "I suffer for you."

## **Where Are You?**

1. Have you ever cried out to God wondering where He is? What prompted that cry? What does the Bible teach us about the connection between our broken world and groaning? (Romans 8:22) Is groaning necessarily bad? What happens when we stop groaning?
2. What did Jesus' cry from the cross mean? (Matthew 27:46) Why is it so significant that Jesus joins us in our suffering? What does the Bible teach is the fruit of having faith while we suffer? (Romans 5:3-5) How does the cross point us to this directly?

## **The Power and Place of Trust**

1. In what three ways does David justify his trust in the Lord despite his terrible circumstances? (Psalm 22:3; Psalm 22:4; Psalm 22:9) Which one of these means the most to you? Why?
2. What does the Bible teach us about being "scorned and despised by the people?" (John 15:18-19) How is Psalm 22:6-8 reminiscent of the scene around the cross? (Mark 15:17-32)

## **The Power and Place of Praise**

1. What does David promise to God? (Psalm 22:22) Based on the rest of the Psalm, do you think David intends to praise God when his ordeal is over, or before? What does the Psalm teach that those who seek Him will

do? (Psalm 22:26)

2. What does the Bible teach about our cries of help to God? (Psalm 22:24, Luke 11:9-13) Are you reluctant to cry out to God? Why? Can any circumstance be too desperate for God to intervene? (Psalm 139:7-12)

## BONUS QUESTIONS & ACTION STEP

How many allusions to the cross do you see in Psalm 22? Is there a cry to God that you have been suppressing or hiding? Lay it at the foot of the cross this week and take note of what He does.

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# Lesson 4

*"Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth."  
Psalm 31:5a*

We say we have faith in God, but do we really trust Him? David's words convey his complete trust in God. Jesus used these words as He was dying on the cross and showed absolute dependence on God (Luke 23:46). Jesus' reference has endeared Psalm 31 to Christians and it appears to have been composed originally of two independent laments.

## **Deliverance from Danger**

1. David is threatened in some way by enemies. How do you picture David's "trap" (Psalm 31:1-5)?
2. What turn do verses 6-8 take? How is David's trust rewarded?
3. When have you felt "trapped" or stuck?

## **Deliverance from Sickness and Enemies**

1. David is now in "distress" (a form of the word "adversities" (Psalm 31:7) and pleads God's grace. What causes David's sorrow? What might have happened to trigger fluctuations in his feelings?
2. What feelings are expressed in Psalm 31:9-18 which are not present in Psalm 31:1-5? What new situation is David likely facing? This time, how does David break through in faith (Psalm 31:14-18) and praise (Psalm 31:19-24)? What words and acts prove this faith? How is God's goodness evident? To whom?

## **Thanksgiving for Deliverance**

1. In his gratitude the psalmist generalizes on his experience. He affirms that God's goodness and protective presence are available to all who commit themselves to Him and trust (Psalm 31:19-20). He then returns to his own experience in thanking God for his deliverance (Psalm 31:21-22). Finally, he calls upon all saints to love God and take courage (Psalm 31:22-24); compare Psalm 27:14 and Deut. 6:5.

What would you like your “famous last words” to be? Where are you feeling trapped”? What action from verses 19-24 do you most need to take: fear God, take refuge in God, call out to God, be faithful, place hope in God? How will you do this?

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# Lesson 5

*"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."*

*Psalm 51:10*

We can only locate a handful of psalms to a specific time, place, and circumstance. Psalm 51 is one of those. We know that David was inspired to write this powerful psalm after he was caught sinning by taking Bathsheba as his wife, deceiving her husband, and then ultimately arranging his death. It is a powerful psalm that serves as a model of repentance.

## **Our Ever-Present Sin**

1. How does it make us feel that our "sin is ever before us"? How do we fix that? (Psalm 51:2,7) Against whom do we always sin? (Psalm 51:4) What makes all sin an offense against God? (1 John 3:4)
2. What did Jesus mean when He said, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me?" (John 13:8) By what are we made clean? (1 John 1:7) Is there a sin from which you do not feel cleansed?

## **Crucifixion and Resurrection**

1. Does God sometimes break us to heal us? Have you ever been broken and knit back together stronger than before? How? What does David say our reaction to this should be? (Psalm 51:8) What do you take away from the following promise in Romans? "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and, if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him." (Romans 8:16-17)
2. Can you relate to this ancient quote: "Yesterday I was crucified with Him; today I am glorified with Him; yesterday I died with Him; today I am quickened by Him. Yesterday I was buried with Him. Today I rise with Him"? How? How does this quote relate to Hosea 6:2? Of what does Hosea 6:2 remind you?

## **A Clean Heart**

1. What does Psalm 51 suggest David desires more than anything else? (Psalm 51: 11-12) How will it be clear that he will be restored with God? (Psalm 51:13) What does David promise to do if God restores him? (verse

Psalm 51:15)

2. Given what we know about his life, do you think David was restored right away? Or was he restored and did not realize it? Have you ever yearned for God's grace and not received it? What got in the way? Is there anything in the way of you receiving Jesus' grace?

## BONUS QUESTIONS & ACTION STEP

What tragedy befell David following Nathan's call to repent? Is God calling you to repent in any way?

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# Lesson 6

*"... we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, His power, and the wonders He has done."*

*Psalm 78:4*

God's Wonders and Israel's Rebellion. This psalm is both a hymn dealing with the history of salvation and a mixed poem with multiple purposes:

- 1) to warn His people to avoid the sins of their forefathers;
- 2) to encourage them to commit themselves to God in faith;
- 3) to emphasize God's choice of Judah and the House of David;
- 4) to praise God for His marvelous deeds on behalf of His people.

## **The Teacher's Invitation to His People (Psalm 78:1-8)**

1. What does this believer want future believers to know and "not forget" about God?

## **The Rebellion of the Fathers (Psalm 78:9-20)**

1. Who does Ephraim come to symbolize as the sin list grows (Psalm 78:12-16)?
2. What difference should these past miracles make in their/our lives?
3. What test do they put to God (Psalm 78:18-20)? What test does God put to them (Exodus 16:16-20)?

## **The Manna and the Quail (Psalm 78:21-31)**

1. Why do they demand further proofs of God's covenant love?
2. Why does God save them only to kill them (Numbers 11:33-34)?

## **Sin in Spite of Grace (Psalm 78:32-39)**

What name would you give to the "game" Israel played with God? Explain why.

The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak? B) Flattery will get you anywhere? C) Lip service only? D) Insincerity? E) Let's buy some time? F) Good start, but no follow through? G) All head, no heart?

## **God's Mighty Acts from Egypt to Canaan (Psalm 78: 40-55)**

- 1. What is Israel urged to remember?
- 2. What plagues of Egypt underscore the psalmist’s point?

**Israel’s Early History in Canaan (Psalm 78:56-66)**

- 1. What events from the times of Joshua and Samuel are recalled?
- 2. Why does the psalmist say the LORD “abandoned” the “tabernacle of Shiloh” Psalm 78:60; 1 Sam 4:1-11)?
- 3. How did God put the Philistines “to everlasting shame” (Psalm 78:66; 1 Sam 5:6-11)?

**God’s Choice of Judah and David (Psalm 78:67-72)**

- 1. In the psalmist’s mind, why did God have the Temple built in Judah (Psalm 78: 67-69)?
- 2. What is Asaph’s message to Ephraim?

**BONUS QUESTIONS & ACTION STEP**

What God story can you remember in times of temptation, forgetfulness, and doubt you still face? How can you take a more active role in helping children/youth in your family, church, and neighborhood?

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# Lesson 7

*“For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”*

*Psalms 91:11-12*

If we are ever feeling down, picked upon, harassed, or cornered, we can turn to Psalm 91 for inspiration. The Holy Spirit fills Psalm 91 with promises of God’s protection and strength for those who make their home in Him. We don’t need the promises and trappings of this world to keep us safe and sustain us. Instead, God is worthy. He is our Lord and Deliverer, our Protector, our Refuge, and Strength. With Him at our side, whom shall we fear?

## **Gimme Shelter**

1. What two things does the psalm teach us is needed if we want to experience the comfort of the Lord’s protection? (Psalm 91:1, 2—abide in his shadow and confess our faith) What does abiding the shadow of the Lord look like to you? (John 15:4-7) How does confessing your faith impact your life today? (Romans 10:9-11)

2. What does Psalm 91:3 promise about unexpected events in our life? Is God ever surprised by events? Does He supply our needs in every situation? (Matthew 5:31-34) How has God provided for you in this way?

## **Street Fightin’ Man**

1. What four things does Psalm 91:5-6 promise we should not fear? Which of these four (metaphorically speaking) do you fear the most? Can you name a place where God fought for His people? (Exodus 14:24-25) What was the result? What will those who trust in the Lord see instead? (Psalm 91:7-8)

2. What do we need to do to draw near to the Lord? (Psalm 91:9) How do we make the Lord our “dwelling place”? (Proverbs 3:5) Why can evil harm us if we do not make the Lord our dwelling place?

## **Waiting on a Friend**

1. Who does God sometimes dispatch to help us in our hour of need?

(Psalm 91:11-12) Can you think of any times in Scripture where God used angels to do His work? (Acts 5:18-20, Acts 12:7- 11, Luke 24:42-45) Have you ever experienced the work of an angel?

2. Who is speaking in the last three verses of Psalm 91? What six promises does the Lord make to those who know Him and love His name? Which one means the most to you?

## BONUS QUESTIONS & ACTION STEP

Who tempted Jesus using words from this Psalm and what was Jesus' response? From where did Jesus draw His response? (Deuteronomy 6:16) Is there a fear you need to turn over to God by drawing closer to Him?

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# Lesson 8

*"Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."*

*Psalms 139: 23-24*

We are made by God; fearfully and wonderfully knit together in our mother's womb. Because we are made by God, He knows us intimately - better than we even know ourselves. There is no place we can go from God, no place we can hide- even in our thoughts, even we find ourselves in the darkest hell. David's prayer is that He would know the Lord, that the world would know His justice and righteousness and that the Lord would reveal to him any unknown sin.

## **What Part of 'Know' Don't You Understand?**

1. Does it fill you with fear or love that God knows you completely? (Psalm 139:1-4) What is David's reaction to God knowing Him so completely? (Psalm 139:6) What is our only response to our encounter with God's greatness? (Psalm 150)

2. Upon what act of God does David base His conviction that God knows him completely? (Psalm 139:13-15) How does this basic act fly in the face of so much of what we are taught to believe today? How can God's act of creation fill us with hope for the future? (Philippians 1:6)

## **Nowhere to Run**

1. Is there any place we can run where the Holy Spirit will not pursue us? (Psalm 139:7-12) What is our natural reaction to our sin? (Genesis 3:10) Is God intimidated, hopeless or powerless in any way with regard to the darkness of our sin? (John 1:1-5)

2. What is the strongest revelation of God's willingness to pursue us to the uttermost? (John 3:16) How does the cross show us God's willingness to descend to Sheol? (Matthew 27:45-46) How have you seen Jesus meet you in a dark place?

## **KNOW, GROW, SHOW**

1. In response to being fully known and loved, what three things does David ask the Lord? (Psalm 139:17-24, to know God more fully, to grow

His righteousness in the world, and to show him his unknown sin). Which one of these is your greatest passion? Greatest need? In what way are these three responses closely related? (Matthew 22:36-40)

2. If you asked God to search you and search your heart, to try you for any grievous way, what do you think He would reveal? (Psalm 139:23-24) What is preventing you from asking God to do this for you? Does the understanding that there is no place you can run from God impact your thinking about this?

## BONUS QUESTION & ACTION STEP

How do you think God's covenant with David (2 Samuel 7) impacted his ability to pray this Psalm? Read 2 Samuel 7:12-17 and consider how God's covenant with you is different or not at all.

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# Lesson 9

*"O LORD, what is man that you regard him, or the son of man that you think of him? Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow."*

*Psalm 144: 3-4*

Psalm 144 begins as a battle Psalm, with a great praise of God's ability and determination to protect and deliver those who He loves. David is amazed by the Lord's protection for him, a mere man. Boldly, he calls upon the Lord to further protect and provide for Him. He continues with a Psalm of praise before petitioning the Lord again for future blessings on his family.

## **Rock of Ages**

1. Why does David refer to the Lord as a rock in this battle metaphor? (Psalm 144:1, 2 Samuel 22:2) What does the Word teach about trusting in other fortresses besides the Lord? (Jeremiah 49:16) How is the Lord a rock and a fortress? (Psalm 144:1-2) Which one of these ways means the most to you?

2. Why was David so amazed at God's determination to be his rock? (Psalm 144:3) How can you answer David's question? (Genesis 1:27, John 3:16) How does David's question belie so our humanistic mindset? How does humanity's brief lifespan run counter to the Lord as our "rock"?

## **Promises, Promises**

1. To what event is David referring Psalm 144:5? (Exodus 19:16-20) Why do you think David refers to this event when He is referring to God's eternity, power, and sovereignty? Why does David call for God's arm to rescue him? (Hebrews 1:3)

2. From whom does David seek rescue? (Psalm 144:7-8) Why does David speak against liars and those who propagate falsehood? Who did Jesus call "the father of lies?" (John 8:44) What was his first lie? (Genesis 3:1-2)

## **Camelot**

1. How is David bold in asking the Lord for future blessings? (Psalm 144:12-14) Which of David's petitions resonate with you? What is the key to the Lord blessing our future? (Deuteronomy 28:2)

2. Who is blessed? (Psalm 144:15) Why does the Lord choose to bless some and not others? (Romans 9:21-24) How are some blessings based upon obedience and some upon grace?

## Bonus Question & Action Step

Which of the ten Psalms that we have studied was the most impactful in your life? Read one Psalm a day, writing down one verse from each.

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# Lesson 10

*"For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us."*

*Psalms 103:11*

Psalms 103 is a long praise detailing the Lord's character and love for His children, including the "benefits" of knowing the Lord. David ticks off numerous ways in which the Lord demonstrates His loving character to us. He contrasts our limited humanity with God's unlimited love, compassion, and care for us. He finally ends in a flurry of praise, which is our only legitimate response to the Lord's greatness.

## **Benefits and Privileges**

1. What does David teach is the key to remembering the benefits of the Lord? (Psalm 103:1-2) How do we "bless" the Lord? What role do praise and thanksgiving play in our relationship with Jesus Christ? What does praise do for us? (Psalm 43:4)
2. Name some benefits that come to us from remembering to bless the Lord. (Psalm 103:3-5) Which of these five benefits mean the most to you? Do you ever have a hard time remembering these benefits? How does the Holy Spirit help us to experience the benefits of Jesus Christ? How does the Word help us experience the benefits of Jesus Christ?

## **The Light of the World**

1. How does the Lord care for His world? (Psalm 103:6-7) Does God desire us to be on the side of the oppressed? (James 1:27) What is the standard that God gives to the world for how we are to live? (Psalm 103:7, 2 Timothy 3:16-17) How is God's Word grace?
2. Does God brood over our sin and seek to punish us? (Psalm 103:8-9) Does God tolerate sin? (Nahum 1:3) What is the purpose of God's discipline for our sin? (Hebrews 12:11) How does God remove our sin "as far as the east is from the west"? (Colossians 2:13-14)

## **A Realistic Assessment**

1. Does God love us because of our own greatness? (Psalm 103:14) Does

God choose whom He loves because of our good works or grand ambitions? (Luke 9:48-49) Why do we, who are “like grass”, seem so enamored with ourselves? How is this a shadow of God’s blessing? (Genesis 1:26-28)

2. What do we need to do for the assessment of our own greatness in order to have any truth to it all? To whose throne should we bow down? (Psalm 103:19) How do we bow down? What two habits do we practice? (Psalm 103:18, Psalm 103:20)

## BONUS QUESTIONS & ACTION STEP

Any thoughts on when David may have written this Psalm? Is there any place in your life where you need to offer God more praise? Can you list three ways you can praise God more?

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**NEW LIFE,**  
through **JESUS,**  
for **EDMOND**  
and the **WORLD.**