



THE PSALMS
TRAIN US IN
HONEST
PRAYER.

—EUGENE PETERSON

A GUIDE TO PRAYING THE PSALMS

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night.

Psalms 1:1-2

Eugene Peterson wrote, “The Psalms train us in honest prayer.” If we’re going to be a people that learn to bring our whole selves to God in honest prayer to be formed into the people He created us to be, we need to learn to “Pray the Psalms.”

To use this guide, we recommend picking just one Psalm for each day. You might pick a Psalm based on how you’re feeling at the time and what type of Psalm may be helpful (see the descriptions of types and genres below).

Start with a simple prayer asking God to speak to you through His Word. It may be something like this: “God, reveal yourself to me through your Word. I long to see you.”

Next, Read the Psalm, if you can out loud, and imagine this is your prayer to God. Read it again slowly, listening to God. Take time to jot down what God might be revealing through praying this Psalm. Write down one phrase that stood out which you can pray throughout the day.



PSALMS OF ORIENTATION

These Psalms orient us to what is true and real. They place the world in perspective. We start who God is and what He has done.

SONGS OF WISDOM

Praying the Wisdom Psalms reminds us of who God is and what it looks like to live the “blessed” life as he designed it to be lived.

1, 10, 12*, 15, 19, 25*, 33*, 36, 37, 49, 73, 78, 84*, 91, 111* 112*, 119, 125*, 127*, 128*, 133*, 139*

SONGS OF THE KING

Praying the Royal Psalms reminds us that God is sovereign and rules over all. In the end, God will ensure that His King reigns.

2, 18*, 20, 21, 23, 24, 29, 45, 46, 47, 50, 68*, 72, 81, 89, 93, 94*, 95*, 96, 97, 98*, 99, 100, 101, 110, 122*, 132*, 144



PSALMS OF DISORIENTATION

These Psalms reflect the realities of when life is disorienting and we find ourselves feeling hurt, lost, angry, and in great need of God’s help.

SONGS OF RETRIBUTION

Praying the Imprecatory Psalms helps us be honest about the anger and pain we've experienced because of the evil in this world. It also gives us a process for how to cry out for justice and a pathway for true justice and liberation.

35, 58, 59*, 69*, 79*, 129*, 137, 139*, 140*, 141*

SONGS OF LAMENT

Praying the Psalms of Lament helps us cry out to God for help...for rescue from our sin, ourselves, and our enemies.

They teach us to be honest about the darkness we really feel and give words for how to look to our Father for help.

3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12*, 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 25*, 26, 27, 28, 31*, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59*, 60, 61, 62*, 63, 64, 69*, 70, 71, 74, 77, 79*, 80, 82, 83, 85, 86, 88, 90, 94*, 102, 108, 109, 120*, 121*, 123*, 126*, 130*, 140*, 141*, 142, 143



PSALMS OF RE-ORIENTATION

These Psalms reorient us to what is true of God and ourselves and give us words to praise Him for his saving work.

SONGS OF PILGRIMAGE

Also called the Psalms of Ascent, these were the songs Israel sang every year when they went up to Jerusalem. Representing many categories, these “road trip” songs gave

them perspective for the journey.

120*, 121*, 122*, 123*, 124*, 125*, 126*, 127*, 128*, 129*, 130*,
131*, 132*, 133*, 134*

SONGS OF THANKSGIVING

As we pray these Psalms, we're shaped to celebrate our amazing God and His gracious work. We have so much to thank God for and these Psalms help us become a thankful people.

8, 9, 11, 18*, 30, 32, 33*, 34, 40, 48, 65, 66, 67, 68*, 75, 76,
84*, 87, 92, 95*, 98*, 100, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 111*, 112*,
113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 124*, 134*, 135, 136, 138, 145, 146,
147, 148, 149, 150