

PS
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CHRIST CENTRAL WOMEN

CONTENTS

A STUDY IN PSALMS

Introduction

- WEEK 1** Psalm 3
- WEEK 2** Psalm 42 & 43
- WEEK 3** Psalm 51
- WEEK 4** Psalm 34
- WEEK 5** Psalm 105
- WEEK 6** Psalm 106
- WEEK 7** Psalm 139
- WEEK 8** Psalm 19
- WEEK 9** Psalm 27
- WEEK 10** Psalm 145

Wrap-up

INTRODUCTION notes

WEEK 1: PSALM 3

PSALM OF LAMENT

As we enter this season of study and prayer in the Psalms at the start of a new year, take a few minutes to prayerfully and honestly evaluate your heart and spirit. We're praying that marking these things down and looking back later will be an encouragement as you see the grace of God at work through His word this spring.

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read through the psalm 2-3 times for comprehension.
2. Decide on a main theme of the Psalm and keep it to a single phrase or sentence.
3. Outline the Psalm, paraphrasing each section in a phrase or sentence and relating it to the main theme.
4. Psalm 3 is the first Psalm with a given title as well as a superscription. It is a Psalm of David and specifically a psalm of lament over David's son, Absalom's, rebellion. Read 1 Samuel 15-16 to familiarize yourself with the background of this particular Psalm.
5. David's Psalm naturally divides into 5 sections: vs. 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7 and 8. Can you sum up each stanza with a single word or phrase? What progression do you see from each section to the next?

6. Read through the Psalm again. Do you notice any key words (repeated words or phrases or words that seem significant to the text)? Mark them in a significant way (underline, highlight or circle in a specific color) and list them below.

7. David describes in detail his foes (or enemies) in verses 1-2. There are 2 main ways his foes were opposing him. What are those 2 ways?

8. David stated the problem in the first 2 verses, then he states the truths about God he will cling to. What truths about God does he state?

9. Where does David find assurance and confidence in the face of physical attacks? What does the promise that "God is a shield about me" really promise? Are we to believe that God will never let anything "really bad" happen to a believer?

10. Where does David find assurance and confidence in the face of accusation? How does he know that God will not ultimately forsake him? Think about where David might have gotten glory from or what may have given him cause to walk with head held high.

11. How does God become our glory? How can we know that God will not forsake us? Read v. 3 from Christ's perspective.

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. How do you see this psalm in light of Christ? How would He pray it? How would you pray it to Him?
2. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What attributes could you praise Him for? What wondrous works can you praise Him for?
3. Confession: How do you see yourself in this psalm? What sin does it bring to light? How are you failing to see and live in light of what you see of God?
4. Thanksgiving: How do you see God's provision in this psalm? How might it link to His grace and mercy? How do you see Christ as the ultimate revelation of this truth and ultimate answer to the sin revealed? Thank Him for this.
5. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? Ask Him for it.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

Pray through the Psalm several times (I will use Psalm 3 as an example)

1. Pray some of the petitions/statements to God very close to the original language, but also in your own words.

"Lord, you are a shield about me, my glory, the lifter of my head."

"Lord, you answer me when I call to you."

"Lord, you sustain me when I sleep."

"Lord, you are my salvation, salvation belongs to you."

2. Turn some of the statements in to petitions to God. This will mean using more of your own words.

"Lord, many are against me so I need you to be a shield about me, to protect me from the arrows being thrown at me, the words that sting. You be by glory, not my own accomplishments or standing before men."

"Help me to sleep, Lord. Only you can sustain me."

3. Do some praising, repenting and supplication based off of the psalms statements. This will be completely in your own words.

"Lord, there are many who would like to see me fail and make a fool of myself. Thanks be to you, my good is not dependent on my performance or standing before men. You are my protector and the final line of defense against my enemies. You are my main source of joy and pride. Thank you for answering me when I call to you. I sleep and wake unharmed because you cause me to do so. I don't have to be afraid of anyone or anything because you fight for me."

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. How does Psalm 3 help you to better “pray your difficulties?” What troubles do you have right now? What in this Psalm will help you to pray your trouble? Talk to God about it.
2. Can you relate to the oppression you listed in #8 of the study questions? Do you ever feel overwhelmed by threatening people or circumstances? How can you apply the truths about God you listed in study question #9?
3. Take an image or phrase from Psalm 3 and journal about it to the Lord, draw a picture, write a song. Sing it to the Lord.
4. What earthly things have become too important to you and may have functionally become your “glory” and the “lifter of your head”? How is your identity wrapped up into something other than Christ? Spend some time praying through this in repentance to the Lord.
5. In what ways have you experienced the Lord sustaining you in the midst of trouble? What truths about God have sustained you in the midst of trouble?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Psalm 3 (A Shield About Me) by Robert Seay Band

WEEK 2: PSALM 42 & 43

PSALMS OF LAMENT

Psalms 42 & 43 are believed by most commentators to have originally been one psalm. They are the beginning books of Book 2 in the Psalms and the psalms to be authored by the Sons of Korah. The Sons of Korah were a subgroup of Levites who were sanctioned to lead worship within the temple. In Psalm 3 we see a song of lament because of persecution from without. In this pair of psalms we see the lament of a temple singer exiled in the north at the headwaters of the Jordan far from the temple in Jerusalem. We will study them together as if they are one psalm.

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read through the psalms 2-3 times for comprehension.
2. What is the main theme of the psalms?
3. Outline the psalms, paraphrasing each section in a phrase or sentence and relating it to the main theme. Look for 3 different refrains and find a phrase or line that links the 3 refrains.
4. Give the Psalm a title and revise the theme if necessary.
5. The psalmist uses the term "downcast" to describe the state of his soul. Look up the definition of "downcast" and write it out. What other descriptive words does the psalmist use to describe the state of his soul? Which word do you most closely relate to?

6. The psalmist opens up talking about thirst for God, likening himself to a parched deer at the end of a season of drought. The analogy of hunger and thirst is not uncommon in the old and new testaments. Look up the following cross-references and write down any observations you make about hungering and thirsting for God. Why is this imagery so powerful in its ability to communicate a longing for the living God?

- * Psalm 36:8-9
- * Psalm 63:1
- * Matthew 5:6
- * John 4:10-14
- * John 7:37-39
- * Revelation 21:6
- * Revelation 22:17

7. What do the dried up streams seem to represent? What seems to have caused the dryness? Read through the psalms and make a note of any causes or triggers you see for this season of dryness.

8. How did the psalmist respond to this condition of dryness? Read back through both psalms and see if you can list 3-5 ways the psalmist chooses to respond.

9. Where does David find assurance and confidence in the face of physical attacks? What does the promise that "God is a shield about me" really promise? Are we to believe that God will never let anything "really bad" happen to a believer?

10. In the second refrain the psalmist mentions a place. What is this place in v. 5? Find a map and locate the land of Jordan and Hermon and Mount Mizar. Now trace its distance from Jerusalem. Why do you think where the psalmist is writing from is significant to his lament? Why does place of worship matter to the psalmist?

11. In 43:2 the psalmist refers to God as his "refuge". What is the definition of a refuge? What does it mean to take "refuge" in God?

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. How do you see this psalm in light of Christ? How would He pray it? How would you pray it to Him?
2. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What attributes could you praise Him for? What wondrous works can you praise Him for?
3. Confession: How do you see yourself in this psalm? What sin does it bring to light? How are you failing to see and live in light of what you see of God?
4. Thanksgiving: How do you see God's provision in this psalm? How might it link to His grace and mercy? How do you see Christ as the ultimate revelation of this truth and ultimate answer to the sin revealed? Thank Him for this.
5. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? Ask Him for it.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

Pray through the Psalm several times.

1. Pray some of the petitions/statements to God very close to the original language, but also in your own words.

"As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for you the living God."

2. Turn some of the statements in to petitions to God. This will mean using more of your own words.

"Why are you so despondent, soul? Why are you so sad and despairing? Put your hope in God! You will praise him again. He is still your salvation and your God."

3. Do some praising, repenting and supplication based off of the psalms statements. This will be completely in your own words.

"Lord, I feel forgotten by you and by your people. Completely alone and forgotten. I am lonely and I feel like you keep piling it on. It just won't let up. But I know, in my head and my heart, that you command your steadfast love to follow me all the days of my life, even the heaviest and darkest of days. And at night your song is there, even when I am too troubled to hear it. I will still hope in You. I will praise you again. You are my salvation. You are my God and I am your child."

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. The psalmist appears to be experiencing a season of dryness not necessarily caused by his own sin or the sin of another. Have you ever experienced a season of spiritual dryness that wasn't connected to any sin on your part or the part of someone else? How did you see God in it? How do you see Him in it now in retrospect, if it is retrospect for you?
2. What evidence do you see in your life of a thirst for God? What does it look like to thirst for God?
3. What does it mean for God to be your refuge? What does it look like for you to take refuge in Him?
4. What situation in your life do you need to see from God's perspective? Can you pray or journal and ask Him to give you His eyes to see what He might be doing?
5. We see in these two psalms the psalmist communing with God in the very middle of his trial and trouble. How can you commune with God right in the midst of your trials and hurts?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

My help, My God (Psalm 42) by Sandra McCracken
Send Out Your Light (Psalm 43) by Sandra McCracken
Satisfied in You by The Sing Team

WEEK 3: PSALM 51

PSALM OF REPENTANCE LAMENT

Psalm 51 is a repentance lament, or a "penitential psalm." David composed it after being convicted of his sin by Nathan the prophet for adultery with Bathsheba and the ensuing murder of her husband, Uriah the Hitite. It is a personal prayer, but is structured so that it could easily be used as a corporate confession of sin in worship. It allows the singers to appeal to God's own character as the grounds for forgiveness, echoing Exodus 34:6-7.

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read through the psalm 2-3 times for comprehension.
2. What is the main theme of the psalms?
3. Outline the psalm, paraphrasing each section in a phrase or sentence and relating it to the main theme. Look for 4 different sections and find a phrase or line that sums up each.
4. Give the Psalm a title and revise the theme if necessary.
5. Psalm 51 is another psalm of David and its background can be found in 2 Samuel 11 & 12. Read through the passage in 2 Samuel to give you some context. What happened between the conniving, scheming David we see in 2 Sam 11 and the penitent David we see in Psalm 51?

6. David talks a lot about his sin in this psalm, and has an amazingly sharp sense of self-awareness. List all the synonyms he uses for "sin". Look them up in a lexical dictionary (blueletterbible.com). How do you define sin? If we are sinners from birth (v.5), then sin is more than just an action we do. What else could it be?

7. We see in v. 1-2 David asking God for something. What is he asking of God in these opening verses (look for 3 things)? On what grounds is he asking this of God (look for 2 things)? David's calling on the character of God for the basis of his forgiveness echoes what God reveals about himself first to Moses in Exodus 34:6-7. Look up this passage and write out what the Lord says about himself.

8. In v. 3-5 we see David confessing. What exactly does he confess? In 2 Sam 11 we see David making lots of justification and excuse for his actions. What were or might have been some of his justifications or excuses? How does his confession expel any chance of justification or excuse? How is being brutally honest with yourself about your own sin without excuse or justification the only way to true restoration through repentance?

9. What is God asked to do about the sin? List all the things David asks God to do with his sin.

10. In v. 6-13 we see David asking God for what he needs from Him. They are all requests that would impact his future way of living/moving forward (external consequences of internal forgiveness). List out the requests that you see. In v. 10 he uses creation language, rather than restoration language. Why do you think this is?

11. In the remainder of the psalm (v. 13-19) we see David committing himself to the Lord and making promises. What commitments/promises does He make in response to God's restoration?

12. What is a "broken and contrite heart?" How would you describe it? How is this elevated over sacrifice and burnt offering during the time of ritual ceremony (pre-Christ)?

13. In v. 18-19, what is the link between repentance and social concern?

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What attributes could you praise Him for? What wondrous works can you praise Him for?
2. Confession: How do you see yourself in this psalm? What sin does it bring to light? How are you failing to see and live in light of what you see of God?
3. Thanksgiving: How do you see God's provision in this psalm? How might it link to His grace and mercy? How do you see Christ as the ultimate revelation of this truth and ultimate answer to the sin revealed? Thank Him for this.
4. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? Ask Him for it.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

Pray through the Psalm several times.

1. Pray some of the petitions/statements to God very close to the original language, but also in your own words.

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love (hesed: unconditional, covenantal love). According to your abundant mercy blot out (erase) my sin."

2. Turn some of the statements into petitions to God. This will mean using more of your own words.

"I know what my sins are...the sin of jealousy, longing for something that wasn't mine to take, discontent with what you have provided for me, not trusting in your good provision. My sins have hurt and maligned so many, but my first and ultimate sin is against you. I am a sinner to the core of my being. But you desire truth and wisdom for me and won't withhold it. If you clean me, I am clean. No amount of work on my part will do the trick. Create a new heart in me and give me a new spirit to do walk with you and trust your goodness."

3. Do some repenting and supplication based off of the psalms statements. This will be completely in your own words. Prayerfully read over the account of the first sin in Genesis 3.* Ask the Lord to increase your awareness of your sin and an appropriate sorrow for it. Imagine the story of Genesis 3 taking place right before you, as if peeking through a bush. Now, taking any sin the Lord has convicted you of or brought to your attention, write out a history of your sin. Did anyone influence you wrongly? Admit your hurt and forgive them. Did you hurt anyone in your own sin? Talk to the Lord about it. Pray through David's model of "I ask," "I confess," "I need," and "I offer and promise," with your specific sin. Accept his forgiveness and grace. As His covenant child there is steadfast love (hesed: unconditional, covenantal love and commitment) for you.

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What has been your experience with repentance? Does it lead to renewed joy and confidence, or does it make you feel more insecure and sensitive? Why?
2. Have you ever experienced a broken and contrite heart? What does it feel like? How do you cultivate a broken and contrite heart in your everyday?
3. As believers we know we are sinners. Then why is it so painful to be confronted with a specific sin?
4. Are you ever tempted to only conform your actions to God's ways rather than your heart?
5. Is it a comforting truth to you that you don't have the power to transform your own heart?
6. How does the gospel give you the freedom and the power to be brutally honest about your sin?

WEEK 4: PSALM 34
PSALM OF THANKSGIVING

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read 1 Samuel 21:10-14, as David wrote this psalm in response to the events recorded here.
2. Read through the psalm 2-3 times for comprehension.
3. Identify theme and title for verses 1-3, 4-7, 8-14, and 15-22.
4. What is David's general attitude throughout the psalm?
5. What does the LORD deliver David from?
6. *Taste and see* is a metaphor for having a personal experience with God. Based on this psalm how does David experience God?
7. In verse 9, David invites us to fear the LORD with him. What is the benefit to fearing the LORD?
8. Make a list of verbs that demonstrate how God cares for the righteous.

9. What does God do for the broken hearted and those crushed in spirit?

10. Afflictions are a part of our lives. What hope do we have in bearing afflictions?

11. Verse 20 is cited in John 19:36. How is this promise true of Christ?

12. In a brief sentence, state what this psalms says of those who trust in the LORD.

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What attributes could you praise Him for? What character qualities are worthy of our praise?
2. Confession: How do you see yourself in this psalm? What fears have you succumbed from which you need God's deliverance? What is your cry to God?
3. Thanksgiving: How do you see God as your refuge in life? Thank him for this. How do you see Christ as the ultimate revelation of this truth and ultimate answer to the sin revealed? Thank Him for this.
4. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? Ask Him for it.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

Pray through the Psalm several times.

1. Pray the call of Thanksgiving. *I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth...*
2. Praise God for how he has answered you. *I sought the LORD and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.* List your fears to God and ask him for deliverance.
3. Pray for you to grow in the fear of the LORD. *Oh fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him have no lack.*
4. Pray to God asking for his help. *When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears and delivers them out of all their troubles...*
5. Praise God for his delivering you from afflictions and redeeming your life. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all...The LORD redeems the life of his servants.*

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. How does my daily thought life and prayer life reflect the truth that God delivers me from all of my fears? What key phrase or verse can I meditate on to make this truth settle deep within my heart?
2. How have I engaged with God to experience his goodness? How have I trusted God recently?
3. Growing in the fear of the LORD is a lifelong process. Jot down the key instructions in verses 13-14. Write down one way you can seek and pursue peace in your life or relationships.

WEEK 5: PSALM 105

PSALM OF THANKSGIVING

Psalm 105 is a hymn recounting Israel's history, more specifically, God's work in redemptive history. It retells of God's action, intervention, and deliverance for the entire nation of Israel. This is a corporate song of thanksgiving.

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read 2 times for comprehension. Read a third time identifying repeated words (these will be your keywords).
2. Highlight 105:2. Based on this verse and what follows, what is the author focusing on in this psalm?
3. Read 105:3-5. List the commands at the beginning of each verse. What attitude of the heart do these verses foster?
4. Identify and summarize each stanza.
5. Read Genesis 15:18 and Genesis 17:6-8, 19. What did God promise Abraham? Find the corresponding verse in Psalm 105.

6. According to Psalm 105:16-17, how did God prepare his people ahead of their move to Egypt?

7. According to Psalm 105:39-41 list the ways God provided for them while in the desert.

8. According to Psalm 105:43-45, did God keep his promise?

9. Why did God do all these wondrous works?

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What attributes could you praise Him for? Reflect on your family's history and praise God for how he has intervened.
2. Confession: How do you see yourself in this psalm? What areas in your life have you not be thankful for? Does this psalm expose the sin of unbelief in your life?
3. Thanksgiving: How do you see God's provision for his people in this psalm? In what ways do you see his provision for you and your family? How do you see Christ as the ultimate revelation of this truth and ultimate answer to the sin revealed? Thank Him for this.
4. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? Ask Him for it.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

Pray through the Psalm several times.

1. The call to thanksgiving is found in verses 1-6. Pray this to set your heart to be a heart of thanksgiving.
2. Verses 7-41 recount specific moments in Israel's history. Using the verbs that describe God's actions, make a list of events in your life for which you can thank Him.

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What key phrase from Psalm 105 can you commit to memory that will cultivate in you a thankful heart?
2. What has been a seemingly difficult time in your life that God has used to display his glory? Have you shared this intervention in your history to lead others into thanksgiving?
3. God provided us with Jesus to deliver us from sin. How does reflecting on our collective past aid us in developing a prudent walk with the Lord in our present?

WEEK 6: PSALM 106
PSALM OF THANKSGIVING

Psalm 106 follows Psalm 105 as a hymn of thanksgiving, recounting God's acts in salvation history. Note the different events recounted in this psalm.

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read 2 times for comprehension. Read a third time identifying repeated words (these will be your keywords).
2. Identify theme and title for verses 1-3, 4-5, 6-46, 47-48. Give the entire psalm a title.
3. Based on the narrative in this psalm, what part of Israel's history is recounted?
4. Based on verse 47, when do you think this psalm was written? Before or during their exile?
5. What attitude does the psalmist set for the listener's hearts in verses 1-3?
6. Before recounting the good works God has done, the psalmist looks ahead toward a future hope in verses 4-5. What is the hope that we can pray as well?
7. The psalm opens by stating the LORD is good. Make a list of all the good works God does as recounted in verses 6-46.

8. This psalm highlights God's goodness in light of Israel's failures and sin. Who committed the sin and who is confessing the sin?

9. How has Israel sinned according to verses 7, 13, 21, 24 and 25? Make note of the specific sins Israel committed.

10. Verses 13-15 refer to an account recorded in Numbers. Read Numbers 11:4-6, 18-20, 31-35. What was Israel's sin in one word?

11. How does God display his salvation to Israel throughout history?

12. How does his method to use Moses and Phinehas as interventions look ahead to God's Ultimate Mediator for us today?

13. Verse 45 says God remembered his covenant. Read Exodus 34:6 and write out the covenant. What hope do we gain from this promise?

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What attributes could you praise Him for? What character qualities are worthy of our praise?
2. Confession: How do you see yourself in this psalm? At what times have you demonstrated unbelief in God's word? What other sins have you committed due to unbelief? Because this is a community psalm, spend time confessing sins of our community, society, and nation.
3. Thanksgiving: How do you see God's arm of salvation working for his people in this psalm? In what ways have you seen God's salvation work in your life, in our community, and nation? How do you see Christ as the ultimate revelation of this truth and ultimate answer to the sin revealed? Thank Him for this.
4. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? Ask Him for it.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

Pray through the Psalm several times.

1. Read Psalm 106. Begin with a call for thanksgiving: *Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! Who can utter the mighty deeds of the LORD, or declare all his praise? Blessed are they who observe justice, who do righteousness as all times.*
2. Pray the prayer of hope in verses 4-6: *Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people; help me when you save them.*
3. Make a confession of sin for you and your community: *Both we and our fathers have sinned...list specific ways that you, your community, your nation has failed to believe God's good and perfect word.*
4. State God's specific work of salvation in your life: *Yet he saved us for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power. Nevertheless, he looked upon my distress when he heard my cry. For my sake he remembered his covenant and relented according to the abundance of his steadfast love.*
5. Cry out to God for the salvation of our families, community, and nation. Close with the doxology in verse 48: *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, "Amen!" Praise the LORD!*

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. In light of this psalm, how should you consider all of God's works in your life?
2. How does this psalm make you reconsider God's discipline in your life?
3. What truth about God's character can you hang on to as you continue this walk of faith?
4. How does God's steadfast love encourage you to press on despite living in a fallen world?

WEEK 7: PSALM 139

IMPRECATORY PSALM

Psalm 139 offers a vivid exploration of God's intimate knowledge of our lives, including the hatred and anxiety He is apt to find in our hearts. Part of this Psalm is included in the body of "imprecatory" or "cursing" Psalms, which call for God's wrath and justice to be served on enemies. (The NIV translation of this Psalm is particularly helpful; you may want to read it for further understanding as you study!)

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read Psalm 139 through twice for comprehension. Read a third time and identify 2-4 main divisions. Mark repeated themes, imagery, or other literary devices you notice.
2. Pick a key word or title for each stanza, and identify a verse or phrase that sums up the theme of the Psalm as a whole.
3. "O Lord, you have searched me and known me." (vs 1) Mark all the times this Psalm indicates "searching" or "knowing." What things does God search and know? What does the Psalmist search and know?
4. "Where shall I go from your Spirit?" the Psalmist asks. Look up the following passages and note what they teach us about the Holy Spirit. John 16:5-22; Romans 8:1-27; or any others you may know. What strength do these promises about the Spirit bring to this passage from Psalms?
5. In verses 11-12, does David value his own perception of circumstances, or the faithfulness of God's character? How can you tell?

6. What does the Psalmist consider precious (verse 17)?

7. What does the Psalmist loathe (verses 19-22)? How are the "wicked" described?

8. How does this Psalm handle expressing these strong, negative emotions? What truth about God already mentioned in this Psalm might guide David's expression?

9. In this angry outburst, what "lines" are not crossed? What hateful things are not said? What limits does David seem to have in his expression?

10. What is the resolution to this cry against the wicked? What does David ask God to do about his own offensive ways?

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What does this Psalm say about God's character, either explicit or implicit? What attributes could you praise Him for?
2. Confession: How do you see yourself in this psalm? What in your life feels hidden? What anxious thoughts sit in your heart? What anger and frustration can you bring the Lord? Does this psalm expose sin in your life or call you to confession?
3. Thanksgiving: How do you see God's revelation of himself in this Psalm? Are you grateful for the way He searches and knows you, lightens darkness, and meets those who call out to him? How do you see Christ as the answer and fulfillment of God's promises in this Psalm? Thank Him for this.
4. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? Ask him for these things.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

Pray through the Psalm several times.

1. Recount your regular activities and praise God for the ways He knows every one of them. *"Oh Lord, you have searched me and known me..."*
2. Offer your past and future words to Him, confessing any anxiety or repentance for things said or left unsaid, and express your trust in His sovereignty over your words and their impact in the world. *"Even before a word is on my tongue..."*
3. Remember how God has protected you and been with you throughout your life. *"You hem me in, before and behind..."*
4. Praise God for the ways his Spirit helps us, comforts us, reminds us of his words, and convicts us of sin. *"Where shall I go from your Spirit?"*
5. Confess ways you easily give up hope or believe the worst of a situation, and ask God to remind you of all the ways your darkness is light to him. *"If I say, 'Surely the darkness...'"*
6. Praise God for the way he created you and knows your days. *"For you formed my inward parts..."*
7. Ask God to make his thoughts and his words the most precious thing in your heart. *"How precious to me are your thoughts..."*
8. Pray that God would strike down the wickedness we see in the world, the wickedness in our own hearts, and trust that He will act justly in all circumstances. *"Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God!..."*
9. Submit the things others have to search for in your heart (especially the things you're angry about) to Him. Ask him for his guidance and leading in all areas of your life. *"Search me, O God, and know my heart..."*

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. How comfortable do you feel with God knowing everything about you? What actions or attitudes do you most want to hide?
2. Which circumstances in your life make it easiest to despair or doubt in the dark? What truth about God can you bring to lighten that darkness?
3. What makes you most angry? Does it line up with what makes God angry? Do you express this in prayer? What anger do you need to submit to God right now? On the flip side, does actual wickedness bother you enough? What kind of guidelines or boundaries does this passage (or others you might now) give for expressing anger and calling for God's justice? How would your life change if you acted on a biblical understanding of anger?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

All My Ways by CityAlight

Nothing is Beyond You by Rich Mullins (or Amy Grant's tribute to Rich Mullins).

Psalm 139 (Far Too Wondrous) by Shane & Shane

WEEK 8: PSALM 19

PSALM OF PRAISE

Psalm 19 celebrates the greatness of God's glory through both the created world and the law (or "torah"). These are common themes through Psalms, so they may remind you of other Psalms that praise God's creative work (like Psalm 8 and Psalm 103), or Psalms praising God's law (like Psalm 119).

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read Psalm 19 through twice for comprehension. Read a third time and identify 2-4 main divisions. Mark repeated themes, imagery, or other literary devices you notice.
2. Pick a key word or title for each stanza, and identify a verse or phrase that sums up the theme of the Psalm as a whole.
3. In one column, copy down the prominent verbs listed in verses 1-6. Next to each, write the definition of each verb from a dictionary.
4. What do verses 1-6 tell us about God communicating through creation?
5. Verses 7-11 discuss the law of the Lord. What synonyms (words or expressions that mean almost the same thing) does the Psalmist use to describe the law? If you have another version of the Bible handy, see what that translation says, too.

6. At first glance, verse 9 may seem out of place. What do you know about the fear of the Lord? What does Proverbs 1:7 tell you about the relationship between fearing the Lord and receiving His instructions?

7. What is the ultimate benefit or purpose of God's law, according to verse 11?

8. In verses 12-14, how does the Psalmist respond to knowledge of his sin?

9. What do the final verses tell us about our communication with God? How does this compare with God's communication through creation (verses 1-6) and the law (verses 7-11)?

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What attributes could you praise Him for? Reflect on what you know of the world around you, and praise God for the ways he reveals himself in your life.
2. Confession: How do you see yourself in this psalm? What did this passage reveal about your attitude to the world around you and God's word? Does this psalm expose sin in your life or call you to confession?
3. Thanksgiving: How do you see God's revelation of himself in this Psalm? Are you grateful for the ways He warns us of sin and rewards our fellowship with him? How do you see Christ as the ultimate revelation of this truth and ultimate answer to the sin revealed? Thank Him for this.
4. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? Ask Him for it.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

Ask the Lord to show you all the ways he speaks. Use the themes of this Psalm to guide your personal prayer, using your own words.

1. Praise God for ways you have seen nature and the created world proclaim his goodness. *"The Heavens declare the glory of God..."*
2. As you follow these refrains, praise God for what is revealed about his law. Ask him to make the benefits true of you: reviving your soul, bringing joy to your heart, etc. *"The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul..."*
3. Ask God to make your heart tender to his warnings and obedient to his call of confession and restoration. Leave some silence and space to confess and acknowledge errors, hidden faults, and presumptuous sins. *"Moreover, by them is your servant warned..."*
4. As you join the Psalmist in this conclusion, especially savor Jesus as the rock and redeemer who made satisfaction for all our errors. *"Let the words of my mouth..."*
5. Ask the Holy Spirit how your life and your relationships could be another way he declares his glory to everyone around you. Pray that through this passage, He would deepen your love for his word, warn you of your sin, and to comfort you with his presence.
6. Consider copying down verse 14 to memorize as a quick prayer to repeat throughout your week.

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What would it look like to notice and appreciate God's glory in the world around you, whether you're an "outdoorsy" person or not? What are ways God uses every bit of your life to continually declare his glory, power, and love?
2. How would you describe God's word to a friend? How about the "rules" in the Bible? How does Psalm 19 encourage you to see God's goodness in all of scripture?
3. Praying through verses 7-11 would be a wonderful habit before reading other scripture passages. How would your personal Bible reading change in light of these truths?
4. Do you take warnings of your sin seriously? Do you take Jesus' work as redeemer seriously? Do you find it hard to engage during the "confession of sin" part of our Sunday worship services?
5. Does meeting with God in his word change your heart and life? How can you ask God to keep sanctifying the words of your mouth and the meditations of your heart?

WEEK 9: PSALM 27

PSALM OF PRAISE

Psalm 27 is a "Song of Confidence," a hymn praising God for a specific attribute or characteristic. We will see how our certainty in God's character encourages us and equips us to live fearlessly in all circumstances. (Does this remind you of other Psalms with this same introduction: "The Lord is my...?")

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read Psalm 27 through twice for comprehension. Read a third time and identify 2-4 main divisions. Mark repeated themes, imagery, or other literary devices you notice.
2. Pick a key word or title for each stanza, and identify a verse or phrase that sums up the theme of the Psalm as a whole.
3. What is the primary character of God noted in the opening of this Psalm, and what primary emotion is confessed by the author? What are their opposites? How are these things related?
4. Can you think of any other passages that describe God as "light"? (You can use a Bible word search or think back to past Bible Study experiences.)
5. What specific circumstances mentioned in this Psalm could cause the Psalmist to be afraid?

6. What is David's "one" request of God? (verse 4). How would you describe his tone or emotions in this request?

7. Read 1 Chronicles 17:1-15. Verses 1-4 especially explain more of the backstory behind David's request. What was God's answer? How does this strengthen your understanding of David's confidence in God?

8. What other things does David go on asking of God as the Psalm continues?

9. How do the final verses (vs. 13-14) display David's confidence in God's goodness? How do they offer hope and encouragement in the face of fear?

10. This Psalm begins and ends addressing God as "the LORD," which means Jehovah or Yaweh and indicates God's covenant with Israel. How does remembering God's covenant with his people intensify and strengthen David's (and our) confidence in his character? (*A covenant is an agreement which God makes with us, in which he guarantees to keep his promise.)

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What does this Psalm say about God's character, either explicit or implicit? What attributes could you praise Him for?
2. Confession: How do you see yourself in this psalm? What fears do you face? What requests are you too timid to bring before God? What did this passage reveal about your heart attitude in hard, fearful circumstances? Does this psalm expose sin in your life or call you to confession?
3. Thanksgiving: How do you see God's revelation of himself in this Psalm? Are you grateful for the way He illumines darkness, beckons us to call on him, and rewards those who wait for him? How do you see Christ as the ultimate revelation of this truth and ultimate antidote to our fear? Thank Him for this.
4. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? This Psalm especially reminds us we can always ask, and keep asking more, in confidence that God will meet us with all his goodness no matter what the future holds.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the hidden fears, insecurity, false strongholds, and other troubles buried in your heart. Use the themes of this Psalm to guide your personal prayer.

1. Praise God for the way He meets our darkest fears with steadfast light and salvation. Recount the ways God's character tells a better story about your circumstances than what you initially see. *"The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?..."*
2. Start naming specific fears or difficulties and bring these before the Lord. *"When evildoers assail me..."*
3. Offer specific desires to the Lord with confidence and joy. Pray that he would increase your desire to worship and honor him. *"One thing I ask..."*
4. Praise God for the ways he protects and upholds you in all circumstances. Recount specific ways you can see his hand in your life. *"For he will hide me in his shelter..."*
5. Ask God for continued reminders of his closeness and affection in your difficulties. *"I will sing ... Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud!"*
6. Ask for guidance (and a willing heart to obey) in the path before you. *"Teach me your way..."*
7. Pray that God would deepen your belief in His goodness and raise up your hope in his loving actions on your behalf. Ask God to help you wait on Him for His own sake without settling for lesser hopes. *"I believe that I shall look on the goodness of the LORD..."*
8. Consider copying down verses 13-14 to memorize as a quick prayer to repeat throughout your week.

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What have you learned this week about the character of God? What has He revealed about your fears? And your attitudes about unfulfilled desires? What desires are hard for you to admit to God or to yourself?
2. How does the character of God speak to your fear? How does praising God as your light and your salvation change your perspective of your circumstances?
3. What needs to change in your life and heart to wait fearlessly on God? What evidence of God's goodness do you see in your life now, and how can you praise Him for that?

WEEK 10: PSALM 145

PSALM OF PRAISE

Your Bible probably indicates that Psalm 145, like just a few other Psalms, has a title: A Song of Praise. Since it is near the conclusion of the Psalms as a whole, you may note many themes or phrases similar to previous Psalms. It connects the main body of Psalms to the final climactic doxologies of 146-150 and points forward to worship in God's eternal kingdom.

DAY 1: STUDYING THE PSALM

1. Read Psalm 145 through twice for comprehension. Read a third time and identify 2-4 main divisions. Mark repeated themes, imagery, or other literary devices you notice.
2. Pick a key word or title for each stanza, and identify a verse or phrase that sums up the theme of the Psalm as a whole.
3. Taking a cue from the title, how many times does this Psalm use the word "praise?" What about similar words, ideas, or synonyms? How does the dictionary define these words?
4. What is the opposite (antonym) of praise? Do you see any reference to that idea in this Psalm?
5. Mark every occurrence of the words "all," "every," and other similar concepts. What do these words describe? What does this reveal about God's character and the nature of praise?

6. What do you notice about the presence of *personal* praise (“I will extol...” vs 1) and *corporate* praise (“all your saints shall bless...” vs 10)? Does this Psalm (or others you have studied) seem to indicate you can have one kind without the other?

7. Note the verb tenses this Psalm employs to reference God and the author. Are God’s actions past, present, or future? What about the actions of humans?

8. What does this Psalm promise about God? How would you describe the relationship between God’s promises and our praises?

9. “One generation shall commend your works to another...” (vs 4). While this does explicitly point forward to God’s praise continuing through all history, it has some hints of another specific event as well. What notable, praiseworthy, mighty act of God occurred in the generations following from David’s royal line? (See Matthew 1:1-17.)

10. Verses 12-13 describe worship in the “everlasting kingdom,” which we can also read more about in Revelation 4:8-11, 5:11-14, and 6:9-12. What does the worship described in these passages share in common with the praises in Psalm 145?

11. It can be easy to think praising God is something that happens only when we are content and satisfied in our life and faith. Which verses or promises included in this Psalm offer hope and healing to those who are struggling with spiritual, physical, or emotional distress?

12. How would you describe the tone or emotions of this Psalm? Is it inspiring, comforting, sobering, exuberant?

DAY 2: MEDITATING ON THE PSALM

1. Adoration: How do you see God in this psalm? What does this Psalm say about God's character, either explicit or implicit? What attributes and promises could you praise Him for?
2. Confession: How do you see mankind and yourself in this psalm? In what ways have you failed to praise God, to share his praise with others, or believe what he has promised? Does this psalm expose failure or sin in your life? Where does this call you to confession?
3. Thanksgiving: How do you see God's revelation of himself in this Psalm? Are you grateful for the character of God revealed here? How is Christ the answer and fulfillment of God's promises in this Psalm? Thank Him for this.
4. Supplication: What might you ask God for in light of the previous questions? How can He meet you where you are? What do you need from Him to live in light of the truths He has revealed to you in this psalm? Ask him for these things.

DAY 3: PRAYING THE PSALM

Read through the Psalm again.

The best way to pray this Psalm may be to read it out loud! (If you have willing housemates or family members, see if you could read this out loud together.)

1. Praise God for his fulfillment of all promises in Jesus Christ! Ask him to encourage and equip you to commend his works to those in your life. *"One generation shall commend your works..."*
2. Honestly confess ways it is hard to reconcile God's good character with the hardships you have seen and experienced. Pray that those who suffer will experience reminders of God's goodness and mercy. *"The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made..."*
3. Praise God for specific ways you have seen these verses fulfilled, and ask for special compassion towards those who are falling, who have unfulfilled desires, and who cry out to him in their distress. *"The LORD upholds all who are falling..."*
4. Praise God for his steadfast salvation, and use this reminder to pray for those you know who are not believers. *"The LORD preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy."*
5. Consider copying verse 21 down and memorizing it as a prayer of praise to return to throughout your week.

DAY 4: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. How much of your thoughts and words are devoted to praising God? Think about your conversations, your internal dialogue, your social media posts, or other places you speak. What else crowds in the way of the worship God is due? What would change about your life if your primary concern was praising the Lord?
2. What evidence of God's goodness can you speak of today? What could you share with someone else?
3. How does praising God influence those around you? When you struggle to praise God or rejoice in him, what kind of company do you seek? How can praising God be a comfort in times of distress?
4. Think about your personal relationships and the circumstances of people in your life. Who might welcome the encouragement coming from your praise? Who praises God in ways that encourage you?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Revelation Song by Kari Jobe
Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence
Holy! Holy! Holy!

WRAP-UP

1. Choose at least one psalm from each genre to read through again, paying attention to the themes. Which themes stand out to you this last time through? Go through each psalm and write out one summary sentence for each psalm you studied.
2. What aspect of God's character stands out to you the most after studying the psalms these last 12 weeks? How do you know Him more fully after your study?
3. In what ways have you been convicted of sin in the Psalms? How do you pray your troubles differently now that you have studied the psalms? Has your view of sin changed?
4. How do you see the gospel in the psalms and how is it good news to you in your conviction of sin? How does the work of Jesus give you hope for the future?
5. How has the Holy Spirit encouraged you through the psalms? Which psalm stood out to you as the most relevant?
6. What personal applications would you like to make from your time studying Psalms? What specific action steps will you take to apply what you've learned from your time in the psalms?
7. Spend some time listening through the psalms playlist on Spotify. Sing along and spend some time worshipping. Don't be scared to raise your hands and dance in your kitchen!
8. Now get creative. Write your own psalm. Sing it to the Lord. Journal it and illustrate it. You were created in the image of Creator God. Really allow yourself to engage with that aspect of His character. No one else ever has to see (or hear).