

HOME CHURCH LESSON SERIES

Psalms in Real Life

Honest Prayers for Every Season

"I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?"

Psalm 121:1

A Home Church Resources Lesson Series

homechurchresources.org



Who We Are

We are a Christian ministry that helps people start home churches through providing support to potential and current home church leaders. You don't have to spend years on a church staff and have college degrees in ministry (although they are welcome to help!) to be qualified. You can be a mechanic and start a home church...a teacher and start a home church...retired and start a home church.

We are here to help you get the support you or others you know need to get started!

How We Help

We provide the resources needed to help you get started. This includes:

- An online community for encouragement
- Online training that combines our best resources in one streamlined pathway
- Dozens of PDF tools to equip you to succeed
- Coaching to tackle the specific issues you face.
- Training for your home church members so they have ministry skills and disciplines

You can join a community where people interact, encourage and pray for each other as they live out the home church planting life together.

All of this is done through an online learning community where you can quickly and easily connect with all of the resources we have developed that are helping home church leaders around the world.

How to Start

Anyone can start, no cost, to start a home church. Our Prepwork will help you lay a biblical foundation for a home church and assemble the building blocks you need for a solid foundation to start a home church. You will also learn a few things to help you prayerfully consider if starting a home church is right for you in this season. This Prepwork comes with a Field Guide, which is a fillable PDF, so that when you are done you will have a guidebook in your hand that you have created, specific to the vision you are finding in scripture and through prayer.

[Take the Prepwork Here](#)

Lesson 1 – Introduction to the Psalms

What is your favorite psalm?

- Spend time reading a few of these
- Mine - Psalm 139
 - I remember reading that while sitting on the beach alone at night during a college trip to Daytona
 - Powerful and moving...like God was right there

What are some times/events you can think of that are associated with the Psalms?

- Funerals
- Church service
- Worship

What are some reasons you have turned to them?

- Comfort
- Worship/praise

Who wrote the psalms?

- David – wrote 73 psalms total
- Asaph – 12 (50, 73-83)
- Sons of Korah – 11 (42, 44-49, 84-85, 87-88)
- Jeduthun – 39, 62, 77
- Solomon – 72, 127
- Moses – 90
- Heman – 88
- Skeletor – Psalm 151 (joke!)
- Ethan – 89

What are the Psalms?

- Song book of the Old Testament
- Poetry

Different genres in the Bible – knowing that helps us read them better.

What is a genre?

- Different styles
- Newspaper reads differently than a Romance Novel (so I have been told) reads different than a joke book which reads different than a weather report.
- Knowing how to read each one helps you understand it better

- The Psalms are not Law ○ Poetry is not legal language. Not everything that is said in a poem is a law to be obeyed (10 commandments)

From Dr. McMillon on genre in the psalms Example
of two descriptions of a sunset.

Scientific: sunlight reflecting off of moisture and dust particles in atmosphere produce light waves of a certain band producing unusual color patterns visible to the human eye.

Poetic: As the fiery torch sank below the horizon, it set the sky ablaze with crimson.

Is one of those more or less true than the other? No, they are two different ways of describing the same thing.

The Psalms are a poetic expression

When you think about poetry, what types of different devices or tools do poets use to make poetry?

- Rhyme - □ Imagery
- Metaphor/Simile
- Repetition

Here are the main tools in the toolbox of the Hebrew psalmists (written 3000 years ago!)

1. Repetition/recurring refrains (like a chorus)
 - a. Psalm 46:7, 11
 - b. Psalm 49:12, 20
2. Acrostic (22 letters in Hebrew Alphabet)
 - a. Psalm 119 – 8 verses each
 - b. Psalm 111, 112 & 145 (each have all 22 letters)

Aside - Alphabet

- By the way, Alphabet comes from 1st 2 letters of Greek (Alpha + Beta)
- Borrowed from Hebrew (Aleph, Bet)
- Letters in Hebrew came from shapes of various things ○ “B” looks like a little house – Bayit/Bet Bethlehem – house of bread ○ “M” looks like a little wave of the sea – Mayim (Sea)

Back to poetry tools in the psalms

3. Parallelism
 - a. Psalm 18:5 – two lines that say basically the same thing
4. Comparisons
 - a. Simile – Ps 42:1
 - b. Metaphor – Ps 3:3

Types of Psalms:

That is zooming in a bit...let's zoom out

- Lament Psalms – Roughly 80
- Praise – Roughly 100
- Wisdom – 20

The psalms reflect everything it means to be human. There is victory and defeat. There is anger, compassion, love, humility, bitterness, rage, sadness, and joy. There is a psalm for every occasion in life. The psalms show us how to live in total openness to God with our feelings. We learn how to deal with sin (Psalm 51). We learn how to rejoice in God (Psalm 68) and so many other good and practical things.

Lesson 2: Psalms of Comfort

One of the primary reasons we turn to the psalms is to find comfort and assurance.

Best known – Psalm 23

(Say it together...(have handout they can read it off of if necessary)) The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. ⁴Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,^[a] I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Was there a time in your life where you turned to those words for comfort?

Why have countless generations found those words comforting?

Metaphor – God is our shepherd'

What actions does God do as our shepherd? Look for verbs

- Makes me lie down
- Leads me
- Restores my soul
- Guides me
- Stays with me in the valley of death
- Prepare a table
- Anoint my head with oil
- Allow me to dwell in his house

Those are shepherding actions at their best...they are pastoral.

What is David's response? □

Wanting nothing

- Restored soul
- No fear of evil
- Comfort in the presence of God
- Etc

This seems tangible (touchable) to David.

When was a time in your life God's comfort seemed tangible?

What made that time so different?

Let's read a few more psalms of comfort together and learn about the God who brings us comfort in our time of need Psalm 27

Of David.

The Lord is my light and my salvation—
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life—
of whom shall I be afraid?

²When the wicked advance against me
to devour^[a] me,
it is my enemies and my foes
who will stumble and fall.

³Though an army besiege me,
my heart will not fear;
though war break out against me,
even then I will be confident.

⁴One thing I ask from the Lord,
this only do I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord
and to seek him in his temple.

⁵For in the day of trouble
he will keep me safe in his dwelling;
he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent
and set me high upon a rock.

⁶Then my head will be exalted
above the enemies who surround me;
at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make music to the Lord.

⁷ Hear my voice when I call, Lord;
 be merciful to me and answer me.
⁸ My heart says of you, "Seek his face!"
 Your face, Lord, I will seek.
⁹ Do not hide your face from me,
 do not turn your servant away in anger;
 you have been my helper.
Do not reject me or forsake me,
 God my Savior.
¹⁰ Though my father and mother forsake me,
 the Lord will receive me.
¹¹ Teach me your way, Lord;
 lead me in a straight path
 because of my oppressors.
¹² Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes,
 for false witnesses rise up against me,
 spouting malicious accusations.

¹³ I remain confident of this:
 I will see the goodness of the Lord
 in the land of the living.
¹⁴ Wait for the Lord;
 be strong and take heart
 and wait for the Lord.

Psalm 30

A psalm. A song. For the dedication of the temple.^[a] Of David.

¹ I will exalt you, Lord,
 for you lifted me out of the depths
 and did not let my enemies gloat over me.
² Lord my God, I called to you for help,
 and you healed me.
³ You, Lord, brought me up from the realm of the dead;
 you spared me from going down to the pit.
⁴ Sing the praises of the Lord, you his faithful people;
 praise his holy name.
⁵ For his anger lasts only a moment,
 but his favor lasts a lifetime;
weeping may stay for the night,
 but rejoicing comes in the morning.

⁶When I felt secure, I said,
 "I will never be shaken."
⁷Lord, when you favored me,
 you made my royal mountain^[c] stand firm;
but when you hid your face,
 I was dismayed.
⁸To you, Lord, I called;
 to the Lord I cried for mercy:
⁹"What is gained if I am silenced,
 if I go down to the pit?
Will the dust praise you?
 Will it proclaim your faithfulness?
¹⁰Hear, Lord, and be merciful to me;
 Lord, be my help."
¹¹You turned my wailing into dancing;
 you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,
¹²that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.
 Lord my God, I will praise you forever.

Psalm 34^[a]

Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he left.

¹I will extol the Lord at all times;
 his praise will always be on my lips.
²I will glory in the Lord;
 let the afflicted hear and rejoice.
³Glorify the Lord with me;
 let us exalt his name together.
⁴I sought the Lord, and he answered me;
 he delivered me from all my fears.
⁵Those who look to him are radiant;
 their faces are never covered with shame.
⁶This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;
 he saved him out of all his troubles.
⁷The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,
 and he delivers them.
⁸Taste and see that the Lord is good;
 blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.
⁹Fear the Lord, you his holy people,
 for those who fear him lack nothing.
¹⁰The lions may grow weak and hungry,

but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.
¹¹ Come, my children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
¹² Whoever of you loves life
and desires to see many good days,
¹³ keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from telling lies.
¹⁴ Turn from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.
¹⁵ The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are attentive to their cry;
¹⁶ but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil,
to blot out their name from the earth.
¹⁷ The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;
he delivers them from all their troubles.
¹⁸ The Lord is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
¹⁹ The righteous person may have many troubles,
but the Lord delivers him from them all;
²⁰ he protects all his bones,
not one of them will be broken.
²¹ Evil will slay the wicked;
the foes of the righteous will be condemned.
²² The Lord will rescue his servants;
no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.

Psalm 142

A *maskil*  of David. When he was in the cave. A prayer.

¹ I cry aloud to the Lord;
I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy.
² I pour out before him my complaint;
before him I tell my trouble.
³ When my spirit grows faint within me,
it is you who watch over my way.
In the path where I walk
people have hidden a snare for me.
⁴ Look and see, there is no one at my right hand;
no one is concerned for me.

I have no refuge;
no one cares for my life.

⁵ I cry to you, Lord;
I say, "You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living."

⁶ Listen to my cry,
for I am in desperate need;
rescue me from those who pursue me,
for they are too strong for me.

⁷ Set me free from my prison,
that I may praise your name.
Then the righteous will gather about me
because of your goodness to me.

As you hear those psalms, what stands out to you about God's comfort?

What makes it easy to relate? Hard to relate?

What are you needing comforted in, in your life right now?

Lesson 3 - Psalms of Praise

Reverse order of class this week...

1 – Read psalms first and experience them

2 – Then unpack the following...

This goes back to N.T. Wright/Eric Brown's point of experience should proceed discussion. That way the discussion is informed by experience and is not just an intellectual game.

What is praise?

What is it about God that should make us want to praise him?

Big idea - Praise doesn't put God in the center...He has always been there. Praise recognizes that God is in the center of everything whether we realize it or not.

What is Worship?

Exo 20:1-6? – Worship God, not idols

Worship – ascribing worth or value to someone or something.

- Matt 4:10 – worship God alone ○ Quotes Deut 6:13 ○ Deut 6:13 – serve God alone

Worship = **serve**

Another word for worship – **prostrate**

What does prostrate mean?

Attitude, physical position or both?

Why should worship give you that attitude/position?

Listen to each of these psalms and listen for a couple of things:

- *What is the attitude of the psalmist toward God?*
- *What does he praise God for/Why is God to be praised?*
- *How can we develop the same attitude toward God as they had?*

Read each psalm through at least twice and let them sink in and then ask those questions.

The whole point here is to let the psalms have the effect/response they were written to evoke in the reader and to God.

Psalms of Praise

Psalm 145^[a]

A psalm of praise. Of David.

- ¹ I will exalt you, my God the King;
I will praise your name for ever and ever.
- ² Every day I will praise you
and extol your name for ever and ever.
- ³ Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;
his greatness no one can fathom.
- ⁴ One generation commends your works to another;
they tell of your mighty acts.
- ⁵ They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty—
and I will meditate on your wonderful works.^[b]
- ⁶ They tell of the power of your awesome works—
and I will proclaim your great deeds.
- ⁷ They celebrate your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your righteousness.
- ⁸ The Lord is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and rich in love.
- ⁹ The Lord is good to all;
he has compassion on all he has made.
- ¹⁰ All your works praise you, Lord;
your faithful people extol you.
- ¹¹ They tell of the glory of your kingdom
and speak of your might,
- ¹² so that all people may know of your mighty acts
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.
- ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures through all generations.
- The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises
and faithful in all he does.^[c]
- ¹⁴ The Lord upholds all who fall
and lifts up all who are bowed down.
- ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food at the proper time.
- ¹⁶ You open your hand
and satisfy the desires of every living thing.
- ¹⁷ The Lord is righteous in all his ways
and faithful in all he does.
- ¹⁸ The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
- ¹⁹ He fulfills the desires of those who fear him;

he hears their cry and saves them.

²⁰ The Lord watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.

²¹ My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord.
Let every creature praise his holy name
for ever and ever.

What is the attitude of the psalmist toward God?

What does he praise God for/Why is God to be praised?

How can we develop the same attitude toward God as they had?

Psalm 138

Of David.

¹ I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart;
before the “gods” I will sing your praise.

² I will bow down toward your holy temple
and will praise your name
for your unfailing love and your faithfulness,
for you have so exalted your solemn decree
that it surpasses your fame.

³ When I called, you answered me;
you greatly emboldened me.

⁴ May all the kings of the earth praise you, Lord,
when they hear what you have decreed.

⁵ May they sing of the ways of the Lord,
for the glory of the Lord is great.

⁶ Though the Lord is exalted, he looks kindly on the lowly;
though lofty, he sees them from afar.

⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve my life.

You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes;
with your right hand you save me.

⁸ The Lord will vindicate me;
your love, Lord, endures forever—
do not abandon the works of your hands.

What is the attitude of the psalmist toward God?

What does he praise God for/Why is God to be praised?

How can we develop the same attitude toward God as they had?

Lesson 4 - Psalms of Lament

Start by reading some of these psalms and let them sink in so we can discuss them.

Read Psalm 13, 88, 109

What do we do with psalms like these?

These psalms make us a little uncomfortable...So does life.

These are the psalms of the downtrodden, the seasons of life that are dark and there isn't much light to find hope in.

Do we sing these songs? Do we sing positively in spite of the darkness that can characterize our lives at times.

What do you do with these songs?

What does it mean to you that these exist?

Does talking like this mean you are less faithful to God? Why or why not?

Orientation – Disorientation – New Orientation (Baptism)

- If you leave someone under the water, it doesn't turn out well
- If all you did was study these psalms to the exclusion of the others it wouldn't be good for your soul
- We need balance.

Once you have gone through dark times, it helps you appreciate the good ones.

Key – 99% of the time these psalms result in hope, in answered calls of distress

Personal Lament – Psalm 13, 86, 35

Communal Lament – 74/79, 88 (troubling – absence & silence of God), 109 (vindictiveness of God)

Lament lays out the problem, expresses specific need, calls upon God's faithfulness, expresses the worthiness of the psalmist for redemption, etc.

Personal Lament

No lecture...just let these sink in and process them together. It is so easy to talk about Psalms rather than experience them.

Psalm 13

For the director of music. A psalm of David.

¹ How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

² How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?

³ Look on me and answer, Lord my God.

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,

⁴ and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

⁵ But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.

⁶ I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me.

Psalm 86

A prayer of David.

¹ Hear me, Lord, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.

² Guard my life, for I am faithful to you;
save your servant who trusts in you.

You are my God; ³ have mercy on me, Lord,
for I call to you all day long.

⁴ Bring joy to your servant, Lord,
for I put my trust in you.

⁵ You, Lord, are forgiving and good,
abounding in love to all who call to you.

⁶ Hear my prayer, Lord;
listen to my cry for mercy.

⁷ When I am in distress, I call to you,
because you answer me.

⁸ Among the gods there is none like you, Lord;
no deeds can compare with yours.

⁹ All the nations you have made
will come and worship before you, Lord;
they will bring glory to your name.

¹⁰ For you are great and do marvelous deeds;
you alone are God.

¹¹ Teach me your way, Lord,
that I may rely on your faithfulness;
give me an undivided heart,
that I may fear your name.

¹² I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart;
I will glorify your name forever.

¹³ For great is your love toward me;
you have delivered me from the depths,
from the realm of the dead.

¹⁴ Arrogant foes are attacking me, O God;
ruthless people are trying to kill me—
they have no regard for you.

¹⁵ But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God,
slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

¹⁶ Turn to me and have mercy on me;
show your strength in behalf of your servant;
save me, because I serve you
just as my mother did.

¹⁷ Give me a sign of your goodness,
that my enemies may see it and be put to shame,
for you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Psalms 35

Of David.

¹ Contend, Lord, with those who contend with me;
fight against those who fight against me.

² Take up shield and armor;
arise and come to my aid.

³ Brandish spear and javelin^[a]
against those who pursue me.

Say to me,
“I am your salvation.”

⁴ May those who seek my life
be disgraced and put to shame;
may those who plot my ruin
be turned back in dismay.

⁵ May they be like chaff before the wind,
with the angel of the Lord driving them away;

⁶ may their path be dark and slippery,
with the angel of the Lord pursuing them.

⁷ Since they hid their net for me without cause
and without cause dug a pit for me,

⁸ may ruin overtake them by surprise—
may the net they hid entangle them,
may they fall into the pit, to their ruin.

⁹ Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord
and delight in his salvation.

¹⁰ My whole being will exclaim,
“Who is like you, Lord?

You rescue the poor from those too strong for them,
the poor and needy from those who rob them.”

¹¹ Ruthless witnesses come forward;
they question me on things I know nothing about.

¹² They repay me evil for good
and leave me like one bereaved.

¹³ Yet when they were ill, I put on sackcloth
and humbled myself with fasting.

When my prayers returned to me unanswered,

¹⁴ I went about mourning
as though for my friend or brother.

I bowed my head in grief
as though weeping for my mother.

¹⁵ But when I stumbled, they gathered in glee;
assailants gathered against me without my knowledge.
They slandered me without ceasing.

¹⁶ Like the ungodly they maliciously mocked;^[b]
they gnashed their teeth at me.

¹⁷ How long, Lord, will you look on?
Rescue me from their ravages,
my precious life from these lions.

¹⁸ I will give you thanks in the great assembly;
among the throngs I will praise you.

- ¹⁹ Do not let those gloat over me
who are my enemies without cause;
do not let those who hate me without reason
maliciously wink the eye.
- ²⁰ They do not speak peaceably,
but devise false accusations
against those who live quietly in the land.
- ²¹ They sneer at me and say, "Aha! Aha!
With our own eyes we have seen it."
- ²² Lord, you have seen this; do not be silent.
Do not be far from me, Lord.
- ²³ Awake, and rise to my defense!
Contend for me, my God and Lord.
- ²⁴ Vindicate me in your righteousness, Lord my God;
do not let them gloat over me.
- ²⁵ Do not let them think, "Aha, just what we wanted!"
or say, "We have swallowed him up."
- ²⁶ May all who gloat over my distress
be put to shame and confusion;
may all who exalt themselves over me
be clothed with shame and disgrace.
- ²⁷ May those who delight in my vindication
shout for joy and gladness;
may they always say, "The Lord be exalted,
who delights in the well-being of his servant."
- ²⁸ My tongue will proclaim your righteousness,
your praises all day long.

Lesson 5 - Communal Lament

Psalm 74

A *maskil* of Asaph.

- ¹ O God, why have you rejected us forever?
Why does your anger smolder against the sheep of your pasture?
- ² Remember the nation you purchased long ago,
the people of your inheritance, whom you redeemed—
Mount Zion, where you dwelt.

- ³ Turn your steps toward these everlasting ruins,
all this destruction the enemy has brought on the sanctuary.
- ⁴ Your foes roared in the place where you met with us;
they set up their standards as signs.
- ⁵ They behaved like men wielding axes
to cut through a thicket of trees.
- ⁶ They smashed all the carved paneling
with their axes and hatchets.
- ⁷ They burned your sanctuary to the ground;
they defiled the dwelling place of your Name.
- ⁸ They said in their hearts, "We will crush them completely!"
They burned every place where God was worshiped in the land.
- ⁹ We are given no signs from God;
no prophets are left,
and none of us knows how long this will be.
- ¹⁰ How long will the enemy mock you, God?
Will the foe revile your name forever?
- ¹¹ Why do you hold back your hand, your right hand?
Take it from the folds of your garment and destroy them!
- ¹² But God is my King from long ago;
he brings salvation on the earth.
- ¹³ It was you who split open the sea by your power;
you broke the heads of the monster in the waters.
- ¹⁴ It was you who crushed the heads of Leviathan
and gave it as food to the creatures of the desert.
- ¹⁵ It was you who opened up springs and streams;
you dried up the ever-flowing rivers.
- ¹⁶ The day is yours, and yours also the night;
you established the sun and moon.
- ¹⁷ It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth;
you made both summer and winter.
- ¹⁸ Remember how the enemy has mocked you, Lord,
how foolish people have reviled your name.
- ¹⁹ Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild beasts;
do not forget the lives of your afflicted people forever.
- ²⁰ Have regard for your covenant,
because haunts of violence fill the dark places of the land.
- ²¹ Do not let the oppressed retreat in disgrace;
may the poor and needy praise your name.
- ²² Rise up, O God, and defend your cause;
remember how fools mock you all day long.

²³ Do not ignore the clamor of your adversaries,
the uproar of your enemies, which rises continually.

Psalm 88

A song. A psalm of the Sons of Korah. For the director of music. According to *mahalath leannoth*.^[a] A *maskil*^[b] of Heman the Ezrahite.

¹ Lord, you are the God who saves me;
day and night I cry out to you.

² May my prayer come before you;
turn your ear to my cry.

³ I am overwhelmed with troubles
and my life draws near to death.

⁴ I am counted among those who go down to the pit;
I am like one without strength.

⁵ I am set apart with the dead,
like the slain who lie in the grave,
whom you remember no more,
who are cut off from your care.

⁶ You have put me in the lowest pit,
in the darkest depths.

⁷ Your wrath lies heavily on me;
you have overwhelmed me with all your waves.^[d]

⁸ You have taken from me my closest friends
and have made me repulsive to them.

I am confined and cannot escape;

⁹ my eyes are dim with grief.

I call to you, Lord, every day;
I spread out my hands to you.

¹⁰ Do you show your wonders to the dead?
Do their spirits rise up and praise you?

¹¹ Is your love declared in the grave,
your faithfulness in Destruction^[e]?

¹² Are your wonders known in the place of darkness,
or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?

¹³ But I cry to you for help, Lord;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.

¹⁴ Why, Lord, do you reject me
and hide your face from me?

- ¹⁵ From my youth I have suffered and been close to death;
I have borne your terrors and am in despair.
- ¹⁶ Your wrath has swept over me;
your terrors have destroyed me.
- ¹⁷ All day long they surround me like a flood;
they have completely engulfed me.
- ¹⁸ You have taken from me friend and neighbor—
darkness is my closest friend.

Psalm 109

For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.

- ¹ My God, whom I praise,
do not remain silent,
- ² for people who are wicked and deceitful
have opened their mouths against me;
they have spoken against me with lying tongues.
- ³ With words of hatred they surround me;
they attack me without cause.
- ⁴ In return for my friendship they accuse me,
but I am a man of prayer.
- ⁵ They repay me evil for good,
and hatred for my friendship.
- ⁶ Appoint someone evil to oppose my enemy;
let an accuser stand at his right hand.
- ⁷ When he is tried, let him be found guilty,
and may his prayers condemn him.
- ⁸ May his days be few;
may another take his place of leadership.
- ⁹ May his children be fatherless
and his wife a widow.
- ¹⁰ May his children be wandering beggars;
may they be driven^[a] from their ruined homes.
- ¹¹ May a creditor seize all he has;
may strangers plunder the fruits of his labor.
- ¹² May no one extend kindness to him
or take pity on his fatherless children.
- ¹³ May his descendants be cut off,
their names blotted out from the next generation.
- ¹⁴ May the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the Lord;
may the sin of his mother never be blotted out.

- ¹⁵ May their sins always remain before the Lord,
that he may blot out their name from the earth.
- ¹⁶ For he never thought of doing a kindness,
but hounded to death the poor
and the needy and the brokenhearted.
- ¹⁷ He loved to pronounce a curse—
may it come back on him.
He found no pleasure in blessing—
may it be far from him.
- ¹⁸ He wore cursing as his garment;
it entered into his body like water,
into his bones like oil.
- ¹⁹ May it be like a cloak wrapped about him,
like a belt tied forever around him.
- ²⁰ May this be the Lord's payment to my accusers,
to those who speak evil of me.
- ²¹ But you, Sovereign Lord,
help me for your name's sake;
out of the goodness of your love, deliver me.
- ²² For I am poor and needy,
and my heart is wounded within me.
- ²³ I fade away like an evening shadow;
I am shaken off like a locust.
- ²⁴ My knees give way from fasting;
my body is thin and gaunt.
- ²⁵ I am an object of scorn to my accusers;
when they see me, they shake their heads.
- ²⁶ Help me, Lord my God;
save me according to your unfailing love.
- ²⁷ Let them know that it is your hand,
that you, Lord, have done it.
- ²⁸ While they curse, may you bless;
may those who attack me be put to shame,
but may your servant rejoice.
- ²⁹ May my accusers be clothed with disgrace
and wrapped in shame as in a cloak.
- ³⁰ With my mouth I will greatly extol the Lord;
in the great throng of worshipers I will praise him.
- ³¹ For he stands at the right hand of the needy,
to save their lives from those who would condemn them.

We can feel like lament means we are faithless, when really the reverse is true. We cry out to God, even complain sometimes because we believe He is the one who can do something about it. *What difficulties are you facing that you feel like lamenting over? What would you like to tell God?*

Lesson 5 - Wisdom Psalms

We are going to listen in on two wisdom psalms. As you listen to them write your thoughts/underline any key phrases that jump out at you. Could be something you really needed to hear.

Read Psalm 1 through twice and then discuss

Psalm 1

- ¹ Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.
- ⁴ Not so the wicked!
They are like chaff
that the wind blows away.
- ⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
- ⁶ For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Discussion

Notice the progression of behavior...walk, stand, sit (what does that mean)?

What is the difference between the wise and foolish man?

□ Delight

What do you delight in and why?

Have everyone read Psalm 119 and ask them - What stood out?

Key words – obedience, desire...anything else?

Lesson 6 - Finding God in the Psalms

Temptation: Find yourself in the psalms

- Psalms for when you are up, down, etc

Main thing: Find God there

- Who is God
- How does He “show up”
- What is He up to, etc

Psalm 3 – God is our deliverer & sustainer □

What does he compare God to?

- *How has God been like a shield to you?*
 - Carjack story
- *What will he not do? Why?*
- *Do you struggle with fear? How does seeing God as your deliverer and sustainer help?*

Psalm 47 - The Lord who reigns

- *What does it mean that God reigns?*
- The sovereignty of God
- God calls the shots...God is in charge
- God has authority
- *What does it mean that God is lifted up? Exalted?*
- *What does it mean to you that God has authority over all?*
- Everything on the earth has been subdued (Phil 2:9-11)

Psalm 11 & 15 & 16 – Our refuge/security □

What is a refuge?

- *How is God a refuge for the righteous?*
- *Does that mean we will never have trouble if we find refuge in God?*
- *What does it mean that the upright will see his face?*
- *Does that give you hope?*
- *What have you made your refuge/where do you find comfort?*
- *How would you like to never be shaken? Why?*
- *How does God provide that kind of foundation?*
- *How do we find security in a God like that?*
- *What does all that result in?*

Psalm 18 – Rock, fortress, deliverer

- God is someone to be called on at all times

- God hears (18:6)
- *How does God respond to the cry of the righteous/upright in heart?*
- Contrast that with the wicked enemies who had no one to save them (18:41)

Psalm 24 – Our light, salvation and stronghold...the one we wait for and the one we seek

- *If you had a mighty fortress full of walls, guards, and protections would you sleep at night fearing for your life?*
- *How is God like our fortress who gives us confidence?*
- He says of all the things he can seek he wants to seek being in God's presence
- *If you could seek one thing what would it be?...what if I had asked you that question without having read this psalm? Or asked you that question over lunch and not in Bible class?*
- After all that...all that confidence, he still is waiting for the Lord. Wow!

Psalm 30 – The one who lifts us from the depths

- Notice...I will exalt you God because you have exalted me
- I called and you answered
- *What contrast do we find between 6 & 7?*
- *How has God lifted him from the depths?*
- *What is his response?*
- *What has God lifted you out of? What was your response?*

Lesson 7 - Finding God in the Psalms Part 2

Psalms 50, 57, 63, 65, 66, 84, 85, 93, 97, 100 (our response) 111, 113, 137,

Looking for God in these psalms Read Psalm 139

139:1-4 – God knows everything about you.

- *What do you think about that?*
- *Is that comforting or troubling? What makes the difference?*

139:5-10 – God is ever present

- *Have you ever thought about God's presence in your life?*
- *How do you think God is present?*
- Point – there is no place you can go where God is not
- Ancient world – “gods” were the gods of various geographical locations.
- Not our God!
- *What does it sound like the writer is trying to do here? – Get away ☐ Have you ever tried to run away from God? Were you successful?*
- *Anyone in the Bible tried to run from God?*
- *How did that turn out?*
- 139:10 – Not scary – no matter where you go, God's hand can hold you fast
- *What does it mean for God to hold you fast?* (repetition of line before – guide/protect)
- *If you had to pick someone to protect you from harm...what would your criteria/qualifications be for that person?*
- *Why is it awesome that God is guiding and protecting you?*

139:11-16

- Turning from God's presence back to how well God knows you.
- *What would you think if a total stranger came up to you and knew everything about you?*
 - David Suggs – Brightouse example
- *Does it bother you that your parents know so much about you?*
- *What is the difference?*
 - One has known you since you were born...relationship
 - The other person has no need to know all that (creepy and weird) ☐ *Why does God know so much about you?*
 - God created you!
- *Why is that important?*

139:17-18 – He doesn't think it is creepy...he praises God instead!

139:19-24 -The turn

- The psalm takes what seems on first glance like an unwarranted turn. It sounds harsh. It sounds unchristian. It makes you want to look for a footnote that says, “the following verses were not in many early manuscripts.” But the footnote is not there. These words

are well-attested to be a part of this psalm. They are not there by accident. They are an **expression of brutal honesty on the part of David – God this is how I feel. This is where I am at. I am in need of justice. You know me. You have searched me out. You know my thoughts and my words. You made me!** You also know my enemies Lord and you know how they have treated me terribly wrong. Lord, let's see some justice take place in this wicked world.

- The psalm turns from what feels like a philosophical treatise on God's knowledge to a practical plea for help in an all too real situation.
- Notice how he concludes laying it all before God – **139:22-24**
- *What will God find when he searches David's heart?*
 - He will find anger ○ He will find hatred
 - He will find a follower who is honestly seeking justice and honestly seeking help in dealing with his problems.
 - **David seeks God out for help because God knows him best and God knows the right answer. It may not be what David wants. The answer may not be destruction of his enemies. It may be a change of heart for David to have mercy on his enemies. We aren't told the conclusion of the matter.** But we do know that David honestly puts his life before God's eyes and God will be faithful to help David grow and mature through that process. *What will God find when he searches our hearts, your heart?*

Honesty can be a coverup to make excuses – “at least I am honest about it”

□ *Is saying things like that a problem?*

- Still have to be repentant

Some times we are afraid to be honest about how we feel with God. When David was angry he let God know. When he was sad he told God about it. When he felt hopeless he sought God out. God was faithful to David.

So, David lays his raw emotion before God and concludes by saying, “Search me, God and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting...” **Here is where I am at Lord. Test it, try it, change it to your desires and your will. Deal with it how you will and change me from the inside out. Bottom line he knows everything – even our dirty laundry.** Brutal honesty of our emotions and feelings to God – lay it all before him and let him work it out. Do you have hatred in your heart? Do you have malicious thoughts? Are you angry at your brother? How do you treat your enemies? Lay it before God. Take a step out of the darkness and bring it before the throne and hand it to him and recognize that he will deal with you perfectly because he knows you perfectly and he has walked with you before.

Exercise: Give a few minutes for people to tell God how they feel and ask God to work with them on it

Read Psalm 97

Psalms in Real Life – Conclusion

Last class – practice the psalms through singing.

Let people write numbers of songs from the book (we have our own devo song book. Email me if you want the pdf) on the board and we will sing them at the end of the class. Will (our song leader) is going to join us with his class and sing the second half of class

After looking at some psalms over the past two months, what have you grown to appreciate about the psalms?

How might you use these psalms at different points in your life to bring you closer to God?

How have you found God in the psalms?

How have you found yourself in there?



Who We Are

We are a Christian ministry that helps people start home churches through providing support to potential and current home church leaders. You don't have to spend years on a church staff and have college degrees in ministry (although they are welcome to help!) to be qualified. You can be a mechanic and start a home church...a teacher and start a home church...retired and start a home church.

We are here to help you get the support you or others you know need to get started!

How We Help

We provide the resources needed to help you get started. This includes:

- An online community for encouragement
- Online training that combines our best resources in one streamlined pathway
- Dozens of PDF tools to equip you to succeed
- Coaching to tackle the specific issues you face.
- Training for your home church members so they have ministry skills and disciplines

You can join a community where people interact, encourage and pray for each other as they live out the home church planting life together.

All of this is done through an online learning community where you can quickly and easily connect with all of the resources we have developed that are helping home church leaders around the world.

How to Start

Anyone can start, no cost, to start a home church. Our Prepwork will help you lay a biblical foundation for a home church and assemble the building blocks you need for a solid foundation to start a home church. You will also learn a few things to help you prayerfully consider if starting a home church is right for you in this season. This Prepwork comes with a Field Guide, which is a fillable PDF, so that when you are done you will have a guidebook in your hand that you have created, specific to the vision you are finding in scripture and through prayer.

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