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A Sermon Series on Selected Psalms

*Come at me, all who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.*  
Matthew 11:28

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*r e s t* }

A Sermon Series on Selected Psalms

PERSONAL READING AND  
GROWTH GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Finding Rest. A Sermon Series on Selected Psalms  
Personal Reading and Growth Group Study Guide  
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Come to me, all who labor and are heavy  
laden, and I will give you rest.  
Matthew 11:28



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# Foreword

The final stages of completing this Psalm sermon series came at a point where GCF South Metro family contends with deathsof loved ones, debilitating diseases, broken relationships, and seeming desperate situations. The month of June 2013 was quite overwhelming in terms of ministry experience.

One Sunday night, after visiting two families in the funeral parlor, I got home a little before midnight. SJay noticing my unusually silent demeanor, called her mom and said, “Let’s pray for dad.” We gathered around the dining table. SJay led our family prayer time. I cannot recall the exact words she uttered. But her prayers gave comfort and peace in our hearts.

That Sunday night experience brought to mind the words of Jesus Christ, the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls:

*<sup>28</sup>Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30).*

The following morning, as I continued to reflect on the big ideas of the 15 selected psalms for our sermon series, one theme prevails: praise God no matter the circumstance and you will find rest. Thus, I entitled the sermon series, “Finding Rest.” For it is only in praising God even in the most difficult moment that we can find rest. The kind of rest only Jesus Christ can give!

The Book of Psalms teaches believers how to praise and worship God in any situation. John Calvin wrote in the introduction of his commentary on the Book of Psalms, “there is no other book in which we are more perfectly



taught the right manner of praising God, or in which we are more powerfully stirred up to the performance of this religious exercise.”

The Psalmist wrote: “When I think of your rules from of old, I take comfort, O Lord” (Psalm 119:52). In the midst of affliction the Psalmist found rest for his soul by calling to mind God’s Word.

Since it is improbable to preach all 150 psalms in a single sermon series, we chose 15 based on a random survey of favorite psalms. The selection is a good representation of the different kinds of psalms. This material also includes a reading schedule that will guide you in reading through the whole Book of Psalms.

I praise God for the GCF South Metro Pastoral Team. It is such a blessing and privilege to work alongside every one of them. They contributed ideas and insights during our initial study of the Psalm sermon series. I also thank God for the wisdom and diligence of Teacher Carol Felipe as she led the pool of volunteers and staff who conceptualized, wrote, edited and designed this devotional and Growth Group study guide.

As you take your journey through the Book of Psalms, it is our prayer that the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord, will take your praise and worship of our Sovereign God to a deeper and more meaningful level!

Return, O my soul, to your rest;  
for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.  
- Psalm 116:7 (ESV)

Rev. Lito Villoria  
Senior Pastor, GCF South Metro

# Introduction to the Book of Psalms

“The Book of Psalms is a record of God’s call and of his people’s response, enacted a thousand times in history. The Psalms are a photograph album of ancient Israel in its relationship and reaction to God who summons his people and promises his presence and secures the future. Anytime we interpret the Psalms, a journal of Israel’s life—so filled with joys and sorrows, inscribed with aspirations and failures—we will find ourselves experiencing a catharsis of the soul.” – C. Hassell Bullock

## NAME OF THE BOOK

The title of the book comes from the Hebrew word *Tehillim* (“praises”). Its singular form (*tehillah* “praise”) occurs multiple times in the book and is used only once as part of a title (Psalm 145, “Praise of David”). Major Greek versions of the book rendered another Hebrew word, *mizmor* (“song”), as *psalmos*, and named the book *Psalmoi* (“Psalms”) [cf. Luke 20:42]. From this Greek word was derived the English title “Psalms.”

## NATURE OF THE BOOK

The Book of Psalms is “an anthology of prayers, worship songs, and poems sung and spoken in public and private worship.”<sup>1</sup> Some were written to be sung in public during temple worship while others were intended for private worship. The composition of the psalms represents prayers and hymns covering several centuries.

Gordon Fee wrote that psalms “contains words spoken to God or about God... by their very nature they addressed God or express truth about God in song... Since they are not propositions or imperatives or stories that get us in touch with God’s Story, they do not function primarily for teaching of doctrine or moral behavior. Yet they are profitable when used for the purposes intended by God, who inspired them, by helping us to express ourselves to God and to consider his ways. The psalms, therefore, are of great benefit to the believer who looks to the Bible for help in expressing joys and sorrows, successes and failures, hopes and regrets.” (How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth, 205)

John Calvin considered the Book of Psalms as “a guide for life.” He wrote, “Considering the whole course of the life of

<sup>1</sup> C. Hassell Bullock, *Encountering the Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction* (2001), 22.

David, it seemed to me that by his own footsteps he showed me the way, and from this I have experienced no small consolation." In Psalm 51, David showed how to rise after a fall and follow God's direction once again.

## AUTHORS IN THE BOOK

The Book of Psalms is divided into five collections (1-41; 42-72; 73-89; 90-106; 107-150). Interestingly, each of the books concludes with a doxology: 41:13; 72:18-19; 89:52; 106:48; and 150 which serve as the concluding doxology for the whole book.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.  
- Psalm 41:13 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup>Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.<sup>19</sup>Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen! - Psalm 72:18-19 (ESV)

<sup>52</sup>Blessed be the LORD forever! Amen and Amen.  
- Psalm 89:52 (ESV)

<sup>48</sup>Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, "Amen!" Praise the LORD! - Psalm 106:48 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup>Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD! - Psalm 150:6 (ESV)

Most of the psalms were attributed to identifiable personalities through the author titles. David wrote the most number of psalms, two were written by Solomon (Ps 72,

<sup>2</sup> William S. Lasor, David A. Hubbard, and Frederick William Bush, *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament* (1996), 430.

127), while one was by Moses (Ps 90). Others were written by Asaph, the sons of Korah, Heman, and Ethan. There are, however, a good number of psalms with no specified author. Refer to table "Author Titles in the Psalms" on page 19.

## INTERPRETING THE BOOK

To get a clear understanding of the psalm, it is good to begin by asking specific questions: (1) What is happening in the psalm: complaint, praise, thanksgiving, instruction or a combination of emotions? (2) Who is speaking: an individual or the community? If an individual, is he a spokesperson for a group, such as a king, a priest, or a prophet, or an individual complaining of suffering or giving thanks for deliverance? Are both singular and plural pronouns used, as though an individual and the congregation were both involved? (3) Is the king mentioned? Do words like "anointed," "son," or "shield" denote his relationship to God and Israel? <sup>3</sup>

Gordon Fee gives basic guidelines in reading and interpreting the psalms as Poetry:

1. Hebrew poetry, by its very nature, was addressed to the mind through the heart (i.e., much of the language is intentionally emotive). One must be very careful not to find a deeper meaning in specific words or phrases where the author intended none.

2. The psalms themselves are musical poems. With the poetic nature of the psalms, it cannot be read like an epistle or narrative. It appeals to the emotions and feelings rather than the mind. Its purpose is to evoke a response that goes beyond the intellect.

3. The vocabulary of poetry is purposefully metaphorical. The reader must strive to find the significance of the metaphors used in the psalms.

<sup>3</sup> La Sor, et al, 431.

## AUTHORS IN THE BOOK

There are different ways to classify the psalms. However, the most common are the following:

- Psalms of Lament – express the deep and innermost struggles or sufferings to God. The Israelites lamented and cried out to God for various reasons. This could be an individual or corporate lament. Individuals, like David was in anguish after Nathan confronted him. And when he was persecuted and pursued by his enemies, he sought God's deliverance. Cities under siege by the armies of its enemies cried out for God's protection. E.g. Psalm 6; 22; 38; 41; 51; 69; 71; 88.
- Psalms of Thanksgiving – as the name suggests, these psalms express feelings of gratitude and joyous celebrations for what God has done for His people. This could be community or individual psalms of thanksgiving. E.g. Psalm 18; 30; 31; 32; 40; 118; 120.
- Psalms of the Heavenly King – focus on the enthronement and reign of Yahweh over all the earth. It shows God's universal concern for all peoples and His complete sovereignty and supremacy over any other god. E.g. Psalm 47; 93; 95; 96; 97; 98; 99.
- Psalms of Celebration – focus on celebrations and affirmations for covenant renewals and pilgrimages to Jerusalem. E.g. Psalm 121; 121; 122; 123; 124; 125; 126.
- Psalms of Wisdom – focus on the merits of wisdom from God and reflect the teachings of wisdom literature, like Proverbs. E.g. Psalms 1; 32; 34; 37; 73; 127; 128; 133.
- Psalms of Confidence/Trust – focus on the reality that God is worthy of trust and that even in times of

crisis, God's goodness and graciousness will be upon His people. E.g. Psalm 4; 16; 23; 27; 90; 115.

- Royal or Messianic Psalms – focus on God's prediction about the future reign of His Anointed Son. E.g. Psalm 2; 18; 20; 89; 101; 132.
- Imprecatory Psalms – focus on the curses or imprecations against the enemies of God's people. These expressions may be a small segment or a major part of psalms of lament. Though they give initial impressions of a vengeful spirit and attitude, a deeper look reveal they were not motivated by sinful or personal vendetta. E.g. Psalms 35; 55; 59; 69; 79; 109; 137.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS IN THE BOOK <sup>4</sup>

- Maskil – a title of literary or musical genre alternately understood as an artistic or didactic song. Although the term titles thirteen psalms, its exact meaning is lost; perhaps understanding it as a "well-crafted Levitical song" is the closest we can come.
- Miktam – a title of literary or musical genre variously understood as golden, atonement, pillar, indelible, or silent. With a meaning obscure to modern scholarship, it prefaces only certain Davidic psalms that reflect situations of peril.
- Mizmor – a title of literary or musical genre meaning "psalm." It suggests a poetic form intended for musical accompaniment. In the Septuagint (LXX), this word is normally rendered psalmos, from which we get our word "psalm."

<sup>4</sup> Bullock, 249-52.

- Selah – an enigmatic word occurring seventy-one times in the Psalms. Traditionally associated with “always, everlasting” (Norma H. Snaith, “Selah,” *Vetus Testamentum*, 2 [1952]: 55), it may be more a liturgical term than a theological one. Snaith has proposed, based on 1 Chr 16:41, that selah marked the end of the strophe or stanza, identifying the spot where the Levites responded, “Give thanks to the LORD for he is good, for his mercy endures forever” (Snaith, 43). While the Levites made that response, the congregation of Israel would prostrate themselves before the Lord (Snaith, 56). [This is not to be read in Scripture reading!].
- Shir – a title of literary or musical genre meaning “song.” It seems to suggest a vocal rather than instrumental rendering, and is connected with the Songs of Ascents or Songs of the Steps (Pss 120-34), the former referring perhaps to a pilgrimage to the temple, and the latter to a singing of these psalms on the steps of the temple.
- Tefilla – a psalm title meaning “prayer.” As a term for literary genre, it probably refers to “prayer of lament” or “bidding prayer.”

## THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BOOK <sup>5</sup>

- In times of difficulty believers can bring all their burdens to God, for He always hears and comforts those who come to Him.
- The prayer for help should not just be centered on the problem of what is needed. It should also focus on God’s ability to answer prayer, the believer’s commitment to trust God, and the ultimate desire to glorify God for His grace and goodness.
- God’s house is a place of praise and thanksgiving. The joy of the Lord should fill the hearts and lips of those who



have been blessed by God.

- God is to be praised because He is God, we are His people, and He has provided for us.
- God is sovereignly involved in directing each believer's life.
- In spite of human sinfulness, God graciously offers forgiveness to those who will repent.
- God hates sin and will judge the sinner.
- God's way of living has been revealed in His Word. The righteous person will wisely avoid sinful ways and follow God's way.
- God is the King of this world. He reigns with all power and with perfect justice. In the end He will defeat every other power on earth, and all will praise Him.
- At the end of time God will send the Messiah, who now sits at the right hand of God, to defeat the forces of evil and rule the whole earth.

## JESUS CHRIST IN THE BOOK

The New Testament quoted or alluded to Psalms the most than any other Old Testament book. One writer cited a total of 350 references to Psalms in the New Testament. Jesus Christ quoted the Psalms frequently during His ministry. The New Testament also quoted Psalms to refer to Jesus Christ (e.g. Heb 1:5-13). It is imperative for the reader to discover what the psalm is revealing about the person and work of Jesus Christ. The application of the psalms in the present context must be through Jesus Christ. It means that the message of the psalm must be related to Jesus Christ before it can be linked to us.

Goldsworthy wrote: "The danger of the Psalms to the preacher is the easy applicability of so many of them to the

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 119, 126.

contemporary listener. But we should not be seduced into thinking that the Psalms can speak from and of themselves to us. If they speak to us of God, they must speak to us of the God who has finally revealed himself in Jesus Christ. If they speak to us of sinners, they speak to us of those who are outside of Christ. If they speak of the judgment of God, they speak to us of the curse of the law that Christ suffered for his people on the cross. If they speak to us of the faithful, the godly, or the righteous, they speak to us first of Christ, and only then of those who are redeemed in Christ....The preacher must constantly ask of the Psalms, 'How do they testify to Christ?'...the preacher needs to constantly bring his hearers back to this gospel-center biblical perspective on God."

After following the basic hermeneutical principles in interpreting the Psalms, it must be related to God's overall plan of redemption through Jesus Christ.

## PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

The purpose of the Book of Psalms is to:

"give us inspired models of how to talk and sing to God... (It also provides) inspired models of how to meditate about God— how to think reflectively about God and what he has done for us...it does not present specific doctrinal guidelines to us, but rather examples of how to communicate our deepest emotions and needs to God. When a psalmist cries out in anguish and despair, for example, the point of the lesson is not that we also should cry out in despair. Rather, the lesson is that when we find ourselves in despair, it is right and proper for us, like the psalmist, to cry out in anguish and pain to God. As we do so, we can begin to experience his comfort and indeed be lifted 'out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire' (Ps 40:2)."

The Psalmist wrote: “When I think of your rules from of old, I take comfort, O Lord” (Psalm 119:52). In the midst of affliction the Psalmist found rest for his soul by calling to mind God’s Word.

Jesus Christ, the Living Word, said: <sup>28</sup>“Come to me, all who labor and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest.” <sup>29</sup>“Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” <sup>30</sup>“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30).

Meditate on each psalm, listen to Sunday messages, and discuss in your Growth Groups. And as you worship God, pray to God, express your feelings to God, and reflect on what God is doing in your life, may you find rest for your souls whatever the circumstance.

“Let everything that has breath  
praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!”  
– Psalm 150:6

# AUTHOR TITLES IN THE PSALMS\*

	<b>Book 1 (1-41)</b>	<b>Book 2 (42-72)</b>	<b>Book 3 (73-89)</b>	<b>Book 4 (90-106)</b>	<b>Book 5 (107-150)</b>
<b>David</b>				Ps 90	
<b>Moses</b>	Pss 3-32 (taking 9 and 10 as a single psalm), 34-41	Pss 51-65, 68-71 (taking 70 and 71 as a single psalm)	Ps 86	Ps 101, 103	Pss 108-110, 122, 124, 131, 133, 138-145
<b>Solomon</b>		Ps 72			Ps 127
<b>Asaph</b>		Ps 50	Pss 73-83		
<b>Sons of Korah</b>		Pss 42-49 (taking 42 and 43 as a single psalm)	Pss 84-85, 87-88 (both “sons of Korah” and “Heman” are noted in Ps 88)		
<b>Heman</b>			Pss 88 (both “sons of Korah” and “Heman” are noted)		
<b>Ethan</b>			Ps 89		
<b>Anon.</b>	Pss 1-2, 33	Pss 66-67		Pss 91-100, 102, 104-106	Pss 107, 111-121, 123, 125-126, 128-130, 132, 134-137, 146-150

\* Taken from C. Hassell Bullock, *Encountering the Book of Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction*, 2001





**DAILY DEVOTIONAL  
& READING GUIDE**

## HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This Daily Devotional and Reading Guide is a handy companion tool to accompany the fifteen-week series, “Finding Rest. A Sermon Series on Selected Psalms”.

The Daily Devotional section contains precious and powerful nuggets for you to meditate on and to live by. Make time during the day to ponder on the selected verse or verses and pray. We also encourage you to read intently the selected psalm for the week many times over during the week and listen to what God is teaching you in the course of your personal time with Him.

The Today’s Reading section is a pre-planned reading guide to lead you to read through the entire book of Psalms by the end of the sermon series.

It is our great joy to aid you in your personal reading and Bible study. It is our hope that at the end of this sermon series, we will not only know God a little more but we will be more like Him in character.

God bless your reading and study of the Word!

WEEK 01 DAY 01  
**Psalm 23:1**

Sing this song to the Lord. Meditate on its lyrics and pray to Jesus, the Shepherd of my Soul.

Shepherd of my soul, I give you full control,  
Wherever You may lead I will follow.  
I have made the choice to listen for Your voice,  
Wherever You may lead I will go.

Chorus:

Be it in a quiet pasture or by a gentle stream,  
The Shepherd of my soul is by my side.  
Should I face a mighty mountain or a valley dark and deep,  
The Shepherd of my soul will be my guide.

Is Jesus the Shepherd of your soul?  
How are you making Jesus the Shepherd of your soul?

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 1-4



WEEK 01 DAY 02

# Psalm 23:2

Still waters mean no flow or motion of the current is visible. This is exactly how we desire our life to be. That life could be as calm and as quiet. But life is anything but still waters. There is the surge of tension, uncertainty and uneasiness to contend with. But when our life is held by God, we can experience calm amidst the chaos of this world. The line from the song Magnificent says it beautifully,

Who compares to You?...  
You who calmed the raging sea  
That came crashing over me...

Indeed, the Shepherd of my soul is the One who leads me to still waters.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 5-6

WEEK 01 DAY 03

# Psalm 23:3a; 2Corinthians 3:12-18

Visiting the beautiful ancestral houses of Laguna or Binondo makes one wish that each of these houses can be restored to its former glory. Home restoration requires a great deal of research, patience, meticulous preparation and diligent follow through as the house is rebuilt and restored. The rebuilding of our life is the same. A life marred because of sin is delicately and intricately restored by the Master Restorer everyday. In fact, His fantastic restoration or extreme make-over in today's terms, allows us to change from glory to glory, for us to be like Him (2Corinthians 3:18b)!

Jesus, the Lover of my Soul is also the Restorer of my life.  
How is Jesus restoring your life for His glory?

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 7-9

WEEK 01 DAY 04

# Psalm 23:4

“I wish” is a phrase that states the spoken and even the quiet desires of our heart. Wishes allow us to dream until the truth of life takes over us. While life is not all about wishes and dreams, it is also about hope. More than our wishes, we are to anchor on the truth that will set us free and make us hopeful. We are to anchor our life on the One who is enough, the One who is more than enough to comfort, conquer and quiet our hearts.

Look to Jesus. Hope in Jesus.

Trust in Jesus.

How is Jesus comforting you today?

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 10-11

WEEK 01 DAY 05

# Psalm 23:5-6

Children are taught not to fight with playmates, more so with siblings. But as childish as we can be, we make a fuzz out of everything. This is the reason why a good playtime can turn out to be a big fight. But when little children fight, there is also a natural inclination for them to reconcile. There is something with children that makes it easy for them to overlook an offense and let peace reign.

We are no longer kids. But when we are in a situation that needs reconciliation, may we also be ready and lavish to extend our love the way Jesus did! The reward? Peace and His abiding presence!

Is there anything in your life that needs to be reconciled with God? The Lord is lavish in His love and forgiveness. Come, and He will give rest for your soul.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 12-16

## WEEK 01 DAY 06

This song is an invitation to come to the Lord's presence.  
Make time. Enjoy His loving presence and give thanks!

Come into his presence  
With thanksgiving in your heart  
And give him praise,  
And give him praise;  
Come into his presence  
With thanksgiving in your heart,  
Your voices raise,  
Your voices raise.

Give glory and honour  
And power unto him,  
He is Jesus, the name above all names

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 02 DAY 01

# Psalm 16:1-2; John 17:15

The challenge and struggle of life is a reality we all have to face. We all struggle at one point. But as believers in Christ, we hold on to His promise. Though Jesus promised a life that is full, it does not mean it will be problem-free. Jesus promised and prayed to the Father that we will be protected from the evil one. Though the enemy may strike us with a blow, the protection of the Lord is sure. Indeed the Lord is our refuge!

Keep us from the evil one, dear Lord!

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 17

WEEK 02 DAY 02

# Psalm 16:5

Life is a choice. From the time that we wake up in the morning to the time we retire at night, we are always faced with choices. Sometimes, though, we are fazed.

David affirms his choice in verse 5. He chose to trust in God. How are your choices today? Did you trust in the Lord the whole day?

Keep choosing Christ. Keep trusting Christ.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 18

WEEK 02 DAY 03  
Psalm 16:7

Have you had a favorite teacher?

Class reunions allow us to reminisce the past. We talk about friends, classmates, and even our teachers. Some, we remember with fondness, some, we don't.

David in verse 7 remembers the One who gave him the wisest of counsel and instruction—the LORD.

The Lord is our Master Teacher. He teaches us through His Word and through our experiences of His grace. He speaks to us in a language so near our heart that we may not fail to hear the small voice of the Lord.

When the Lord speaks, listen. Obey.  
What is the Lord speaking to you today?

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 19-20



WEEK 02 DAY 04

# Psalm 16:8

Scientists have developed instruments to predict bad weather, a typhoon, a hurricane, a meteor drop but never an earthquake. Earthquakes come unannounced. Despite technological advances, it still comes like a thief in the night!

In the same way, challenges of life come unannounced. But one thing we can be sure of, we, too can be prepared when it strikes. How? Stay close to Jesus. Make Him your power source and anchor. For sure, you will be able to take the shaking. He is our security.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 21-22

WEEK 02 DAY 05

# Psalm 16:9-11

Walking is not learned overnight. It is a long process. But once a toddler has gained the confidence to balance, he might just attempt to take the step towards faster things. But of course we know that he has to learn with the walker supporting his upper torso. He also has to learn the confidence of walking with someone holding his hand. But alas, one day, he will just venture on his own and walk.

Confidence in the Lord is what we need to realize who we really are in Him. It is also what we need for us to appreciate what we have in Him. Unless we are confident on who Jesus is and who He is to us, we will never enjoy His great presence.

Who is Jesus to you? Affirm His place in your life.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 23-24

## WEEK 02 DAY 06

Continue meditating on the question, “Who is Jesus to you?” Continue to discover your inner thoughts about your relationship with Christ. It will be good to write down your thoughts for clarity.

### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 03 DAY 01

# Psalm 40:1-3

When I think about the Lord,  
How He saved me, how He raised me,  
How He filled me, with the Holy Ghost.  
How He healed me, to the uttermost.

These are the first four lines of a well-loved song. As we ponder on the lyrics, we can ask ourselves the question, “What have we done to merit this kind of love?” For sure, there is nothing that we have done to deserve the love that the Lord unconditionally gives us.

In whatever situation we are in, may we find the courage to sing and ponder on the Lord’s goodness and mercy in our lives.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today’s Reading: Psalm 25-27

WEEK 03 DAY 02

# Psalm 40:5; Luke 15:11-31

The words “lavish” and “extravagance” create a picture of bounty. Lots of food, beautiful things, lots and lots of many things that one can have and desire. But more than possessions, food and things, love can also be lavish and extravagant.

The story of the Lost Son in Luke 15, shows us how lavish God can get toward us. There is no good thing that He would like to withhold from His children. And when His children get out of the right path, His lavish and extravagant love awaits as we come back.

Come back. The Lord is waiting. His lavish love is more than what meets the eye. It is more than enough for us to share and enjoy!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 28-29

WEEK 03 DAY 03  
Psalm 40:6

A parent's greatest joy is to see his/her children obey. Obedience, they say, is taught not by a single instance, but by the continuous reprimands and reminders of parents.

The Lord has shown His people His great love. His greatest joy is to also see His people obey Him as well.

Is the Lord's greatest joy of obedience our greatest joy as well?

Teach us to obey You! Teach us to desire and enjoy obeying You every day!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 30-31

WEEK 03 DAY 04

# Psalm 40:13; Romans 8:28

We all have alarm clocks. Some have more than one. There are people who use at least three alarm clocks with different timings and at different designated locations. Why? So that it will be fool proof. They are just making sure that they will be up at the right time and be at the right place when the next alarm goes off!

While we all are so dependent on them to wake us up or just to let us know that it's time, they sometimes fail. Not with God. The Lord is always on time. There is no delay on His eternal timepiece. His ways may not be our ways, His timing may not be the same as ours, but He is always on time.

Reflect on the Lord's timing in your life. Can you say that He is on time? He is!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 32-33

WEEK 03 DAY 05

# Psalm 40:16

There is no perfect life. Hardships and trials will always come our way. We will always be in need. We will always fail. Man's frailty and imperfection should teach us that we need God. That apart from His awesome strength and power, we are nothing.

Have we accepted this fact of life? Have we confessed before the Lord our humanity and frailty? God knows what we go through every day. But His perfect love, goodness and deliverance teach us to trust in His consistent loving kindness toward us, His people.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 34



## WEEK 03 DAY 06

Declare what the Lord has done for you in the past, present and what He can do for you in the future.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 04 DAY 01

# Psalms 46:1

Declarations. These are what presidents and heads of states say as they deliver their first speeches. They declare their vision for the nation. They communicate to the country their dreams and desires to make their nations great in their sight. What is your great declaration in life? What is your great declaration for God? The Korahites declared the LORD as their refuge, strength and help. This is who God is to them. Who is God to you?

We declare, dear LORD your goodness and love!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 35-36

WEEK 04 DAY 02

# Psalm 46:2

I have confidence in sunshine  
I have confidence in rain  
I have confidence in me!

These are lines from Julie Andrews' song as she made her way to the Von Trapp residence.

We need a healthy dose of self-confidence for us to accomplish our purpose in life. But many people in their desire to have more in life get an overdose. They try to find confidence in themselves, in other people, and even from what they have. This can be disastrous. As believers, Jesus is our only source of confidence. Our confidence in Him is based on who He is, what He has done and what He has promised will come to pass.

As Israel put their confidence in God, they lived in accordance to His desire and design. Let us follow their lead.

Is God your source of confidence? Let us put all our hearts and minds to the True Source of godly confidence.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 37

WEEK 04 DAY 03

# Psalm 46:4

Sea lovers enjoy the gushing sounds of the waves as the wind splashes over the waters. When the weather is calm, it is a soothing sound. But during weather turbulence, it can be a frightening sound and a harrowing sight.

The world we live in is a stormy place wherein frightening sounds and harrowing sights can be experienced at all times. But the good news is, we can find a quiet place in the stormy world only in the presence of the Almighty God.

Come. Come into the Presence of the Almighty God!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 38-39

WEEK 04 DAY 04  
Psalm 46:7

Have you ever gotten lost? Have you seen a lost child?

This is an everyday sight at the mall. Just observe. Go to the customer service section and wait for a while. For sure an announcement will be blasted regarding a lost child or a lost parent. As the child submits himself/herself to the security for protection you will sense his/her fright. This emotion of fright is highly seen and felt when parents come and would like to know if their child is safe. But when the lost child comes, you will sense relief as the lost has been found; finally secure in the arms of their parents.

Israel was not lost but she was in trouble. The nation did not find security in their army and strength but in the LORD ALMIGHTY. All Israel had to do is to put her trust in the Sovereign God who knows the past and the future!

Are you lost? Let Jesus be your salvation. Be Saved.

(See Appendix 2, What it Takes to be a Christian)

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 40-41

WEEK 04 DAY 05

# Psalm 46:8-10

We have a God who is able to do everything and anything. He creates. He creates out of nothing, only with the power of the spoken Word. He breathes life and there is life. The psalmist declares in verses 8-9 that He has the power to do great things, to cease wars and to bring forth peace. Truly there is no one like God!

What can God do for you today?

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 42-44

WEEK 04 DAY 06

# Psalm 46:10a

Be still and know that I am God.

Come into the presence of God. Declare your love and allegiance to Him. Speak to Him today!

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 05 DAY 01

# Psalm 84:1-2

“Babalik Ka Rin” is a song written by Gary Valenciano way back in the 1990s. Its main idea is about someone who is longing for his loved one to come home, thus the title Babalik Ka Rin. Today, when we miss a loved one who is far away, technology makes it easier for us to ease our longing. There is Skype, Facetime, Viber and the good old SMS make it easier for us to convey our hello’s, how are you’s and I miss you’s.

Are you missing a friend, a parent, or your significant other?

Do you miss God? If you do, the Lord misses you more. Then it is the Lord’s turn to say, Babalik Ka Rin.

Let us come to the Lord daily!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today’s Reading: Psalm 45-46



WEEK 05 DAY 02

# Psalm 84:3-4; Matthew 11:28

How is your home? Is your home a place of love and affection? A place of comfort and rest?

While we may have a place to stay while we are here on earth, be reminded that this is a temporary home full of imperfections. But by the Lord's grace in the lives of His people, His grace abounds. While the homes that we have is for the time being, be comforted that our eternal and true home is only with the Lord forever and forever.

In the Lord we can find rest.

In the Lord there is comfort.

In the Lord there is truly peace.

Come, make the Lord your home that you may have rest for your soul.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 47-48

WEEK 05 DAY 03

# Psalm 84:5

In life, there are many times when we think we are strong. We try to carry the load of life alone. We do not even care to share it even with our loved ones. However, the Bible teaches us otherwise. Jesus is the strength of our heart. He is able to carry our burdens only if we let Him. He is our very present help.

Have you experienced the Lord's strength upon you this week? May you be able to declare that "My source of strength is Christ alone!"

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 49-50

WEEK 05 DAY 04

# Psalm 84:8-9

Prayer is a spiritual discipline that requires the greatest degree of dedication and persistence. We come to the Lord with an open heart and as such it is Him who teaches us how to pray.

God delights in the praises of His people. He also delights when we come and bring our hearts closer to Him as we pray.

Come into His presence and present your heart to Him.  
Allow God to teach you to pray.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 51-52

WEEK 05 DAY 05

# Psalm 84:10-12

Life in the 21st century is hectic. There are tasks to finish, deadlines to beat, reports to submit, meetings to attend, cancel and reset. There are phone calls to return and much more!!!

Some say we are victims of this kind of pace and lifestyle, but it is us who made this life so hurried and hectic. So, is there a way out? Is there another way to live to escape the hurried life of this hectic world?

Yes, there is. Let the Lord lead your life.

Come to Him, and He will teach you to live unhurriedly in the fast-paced world. He will lead you to a place of refreshing, comfort and peace.

In the Lord's presence, we long to be there!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 53-55

## WEEK 05 DAY 06

Read through the whole psalm and allow the Lord to fill the longings of your heart.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 06 DAY 01

# Psalm 51:1

The most comforting place anyone can be is the mother's loving arms.

The Pieta by Michelangelo depicts Jesus being on Mary's lap after being taken down from the cross. While the scene can be the artist's interpretation, the sentiment it portrays, is the very essence of love. Only in the arms of a loving parent can a wounded child find refuge. In the same way, only in the loving arms of the Father can David seek mercy.

Come back to the loving arms of the Lord. He awaits.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 56-57

WEEK 06 DAY 02

# Psalm 51:3; 1 John 1:9

Transparency and accountability define the government of PNOY. Government officials have to submit the famous statement of assets and liabilities or SALN. Officials are subjected to lifestyle checks. And even before a government employee is allowed to travel abroad, he/she has to get clearance from the government office first. These are just some safeguards to enforce transparency and accountability.

If transparency is required by the state, it is much more required and much more desired by God from His children. In as much as Jesus has paid for all our sins, the Lord even provided a way for His children to come clean as we are still in the flesh. This is what 1John 1:9 is about.

Come clean. Confess.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 58-59

WEEK 06 DAY 03

# Psalm 51:3-4,7

People run away from life because of different reasons. Some run to escape problems, or to make a change; while some run from life thinking that there is a way to escape the ugly past.

The Bible teaches us that no matter how much we run, we can never escape God. When we run in guilt, one day, the reason for guilt will find a way to find us. So, if that is the case, why run? Face life. Face up to its challenges.

Don't run away. Face it.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 60-62



WEEK 06 DAY 04

# Psalm 51:8-12

Many times we think that it is us who find God. Thinking through it, we, humans, sinful beings, will never come to a point of intentionally seeking God. Our nature is contrary to His. On our own, we will never desire Him. But His loving kindness towards us opens our eyes little by little for us to see His beautiful and loving ways. He sends people along the way who will tell us about His love and goodness. He will give us the opportunity to know Him one day at a time until we are ready.

Truly, it is God who finds us. It is God who makes a way for us to know Him and love Him so that we can put our trust in Him.

Thank you Lord for finding a way to our hearts!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 63-65

WEEK 06 DAY 05

# Psalm 51:13-17

When the Lord moves in our lives, we are changed.

As people of grace, our response should only be “Hallelujah!”

Write down your “Hallelujah” for today. Praise the Lord for His grace and mercy towards us everyday.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 66-67

**WEEK 06** DAY 06

Confession Day.

Holy Spirit, I desire to be contrite before You. I open my heart to You. Search me. Pinpoint any area of my life that does not give glory to You that I may confess and repent.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 07 DAY 01

# Psalm 128:1

Watching little children mimic their parents is a sight to behold. It is just so amazing how a little child would take time to observe and practice a parent's antics. It can be a mannerism but most of the time a mom or dad's way of doing things. It can be how a mom would move her head, how a dad would twitch and scratch his head or even just clear his throat.

When children are with adults, they watch us. They intently watch to the point that they are already able to copy adults. Are we making it easy for the children to copy our ways so that they may have a blessed walk in the Lord?

May our actions lead children and those intently watching us to know Jesus and obey Him.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 68

WEEK 07 DAY 02

# Psalm 128:3b; John 15:1-7

While on a cross country tour last summer, it was an awesome sight to see a small tree bearing so much fruit that it looked a little bent. Delighted on the sight, the farmer was asked why it bore so much fruit.

The farmer explained that the tree is dwarfed and engineered, meaning given the necessary growing and fruit-bearing fertilizers throughout the year!

If fruit-bearing trees can be engineered, how are we engineering our lives to bear fruit in the same way the Lord wanted?

What do we need to bear fruit, more fruit and much fruit?

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 69-70

WEEK 07 DAY 03

# Psalm 128:3-4

Finding an old family album brings one to a place of nostalgia. Old family albums allow us to see a family history—from black and white to amazing colored or even faded pictures. It is amazing to see that after twenty years, they do not look so young and slim as they used to be. But what amazes us when we flip the pages of a family album is how the Lord has blessed a man and a woman with children. And later, how their children are blessed with children as well.

Truly, the Lord is the builder of our homes.

God bless our homes!

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 71

WEEK 07 DAY 04

# Psalm 127:1

We know by now that for a house to withstand great winds, fire and flood, it has to be built with the right specifications starting from the materials, to the paint and roofing, but most of all the right foundation. The capacity of a structure to expand in height and width requires a deeper and stronger foundation. If Jesus is truly the Lord of your life, He is the Lord of your homes as well. He is the foundation of a strong home. As such, when trials come in the life of the family, the whole household is able to weather the storm.

Make Jesus the Lord of your homes!

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 72-73

WEEK 07 DAY 05

# Psalm 128:6; Luke 2:52

GROW. Grow is an acronym that guides the ministry in how we desire to grow the children the Lord has blessed us with. We pray to grow and disciple children to be Godly, Responsible, Obedient, Winsome kids for the Lord Jesus!

How do you want your children to be as they grow in their relationship with the Lord?

Pray for your children's spiritual walk that they, too, will grow in the ways of the Lord!

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 74



## WEEK 07 DAY 06

For today, bring your family together for a family devotion. Read this psalm to them. Encourage every family member to learn that each one is a blessing from the Lord!

### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 08 DAY 01

# Psalm 13, Psalm 121:3-4

The brain is a very intricate body part. It was made to remember significant information. It is also made to forget when information is not used. It functions like a file folder wherein the more you access it, the more opportunities you'll get to remember information. Amazing. A small organ with a huge capacity for processes.

The Bible teaches us that the Lord never forgets. In the Lord, it is not a matter of how many times information and our prayers are processed. But it is about the truth that He never forgets. Though at times He can be silent, and sometimes silent for a very long time, but He never forgets.

He is God.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 75-77

WEEK 08 DAY 02

# Psalm 13:2; 1 Peter 4:8-9

Has it ever occurred to you that we are more prone to have a pity party when we are distressed, lonely and feeling low? There are even times that we feel so defeated by the enemy that we are just captured by his wiles and it is so easy to give in. Why? Because we allow our minds to be re-captured by the enemy at a low point.

Though life will always have a stressful point, it should not be an excuse to be captured by the evil one. Remember, the enemy is like a lion seeking whom to devour (1Peter 4:8-9). Let us not allow the enemy to make us his prey. Remember, we are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb!

I surrender my heart and mind to the Lord!  
Be strong in the Lord!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 78:1-25

WEEK 08 DAY 03

# Psalm 13:2

While the brain is a small body part, its potency cannot be equalled. We know that it is the brain that tells you to move, to act and to speak. With the power of the mind, we see the value of training it to righteousness. The mind should be held captive by the saving power of the Gospel. Yes, our minds are redeemed as well! When we are in the Lord, our minds should also be held captive by His power and might.

To whom does your mind belong? Surrender it to Christ.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 78:26-72

WEEK 08 DAY 04

# Psalm 13:5-6; Philippians 4:4-7

The book of Philippians is often called the book of joy! It has been called such not because its setting is a joyful one; but the writer, Paul, exhorts the believers in Philippi to rejoice even if their situation is not the same and even if the situation warrants that response.

Paul continues to exhort them to be gentle, not to be anxious but to pray with thanksgiving in their hearts in everything. He even went further to tell them to guard their hearts in Christ Jesus with the peace of God.

Are you able to claim this prayer in times of trouble and uncertainty? If David was alive during Paul's day, he would have cried out the prayer of Paul as enemies came nearer and God seemed silent.

Let us allow the peace of God to guard our hearts!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 79

WEEK 08 DAY 05

# Psalm 13; Hebrews 12:7-12

All things come from God. God allows His children to be disciplined according to His ways. There are times when the discipline of God seems so difficult to discern.

Hebrews 12:7-11 teaches us that God disciplines us because He loves us. His discipline desires to transform and rend our hearts to be like that of Christ. He further cites that the discipline of God will produce a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it (v.11)! If this is God's agenda for disciplining us, how then should we regard discipline?

Teach us to regard discipline as good. Allow us to desire Your discipline that we may be trained in Your righteousness!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 80-82

WEEK 08 DAY 06

# Psalm 13

Meditate on the Lord's goodness in your life. Who is God to you? What has He done for you? Write a statement of confidence.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 09 DAY 01  
Psalm 73:1

God is good all the time.

The best way to start the week is to first affirm the goodness of God regardless of the circumstances. Thank you Jesus for your great love and goodness towards me, your servant.

Personally write your affirmation of God's goodness in your life.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 83-84



WEEK 09 DAY 02

# Psalm 73: 2

Navigators are great assistants. Their job is to make sure that the drivers take the right lane to make the right turn and ultimately reach their destination. For the tandem to succeed in arriving at the correct destination safely requires a lot of focus. The driver must take the right turns while the navigator should be able to provide the right commands at a safe distance. To accomplish both goals, both need to have focus.

How is your focus? Do you easily lose focus on your to-do list? What makes you lose focus?

Let us keep our hearts and mind fixed on the Lord as our eyes are when on the road. Stay focused. Keep right. Stay right.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 85-86

WEEK 09 DAY 03

# Psalm 73:4-12

A Singaporean pastor cited in his preaching that Cash, Cars and Condos are the 3C's that grip the hearts of his fellow Singaporeans. As a Filipino, it is the same for us. Asaph, during his time had his own list. What is yours?

Lord, we submit to you these things that take our eyes and hearts away from you.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 87-88

WEEK 09 DAY 04

# Psalm 73:12-17

Breakthrough.

Seeking the Lord's breakthrough can be heart-wrenching and mind-boggling. But more than that, waiting on the Lord can also be time draining. But even if things do not go as we desire it should, we can trust in the Lord's unfailing grace and love. He will break through!

Wait. Pray. Read. He will break through in His time!

What are you waiting on the Lord upon? Is there a life situation or question you are waiting upon the Lord for? Take heart. When the Lord answers, it cuts.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 89

WEEK 09 DAY 05

# Psalm 73:18-27; Ecclesiastes 3:11

Life is beautiful. It is beautiful despite the challenges that goes with it. Life is still beautiful even when funds are low and resources are tight. It accomplishes the best in our character when we are pitted with things that can be discouraging and heartbreaking.

What makes life even more beautiful is that at the end of the day, we know we have hope. The beauty of life is more than the eyes could see. It is in the hope that we have in the One who makes our life beautiful in His own perfect time.

What gives us courage to carry on with life's challenges?  
God is the strength of my heart!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 90

WEEK 09 DAY 06

# Psalm 73:28

Make time to be near God today. Spend time in the Word, prayer and meditation.

Cast all your joys and disappointments to Jesus. He is our Mighty God and refuge.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 10 DAY 01

# Psalm 1; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

The word happy is a weak translation of the word blessed. If we can translate it more accurately, the word blessed should be translated as “a very happy man.” Putting it in its right context, the happiness that the psalmist describes here is not about the tangible things in life. It is not about the temporal life, but about what is eternal.

A man is in the state of blessedness only when he is at peace with the Lord. The Psalmist describes for us the blessings of those who are in the Lord. Write down your blessings from the Lord. Give thanks for all He generously gives to you.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 91-93

WEEK 10 DAY 02  
Psalm 1:1

The life we have in Jesus is victorious because of His grace! However victorious, it still is not perfect. Yes, we are redeemed, but still, we aren't perfect. We still sin. Thus, David shows us how a blessed man should treat sin. He shows us three progressive actions as to how the blessed man shuns sin (Psalm 1:1).

A blessed man has nothing to do with sin. He says no to sin. This is the victorious life in Christ that we already have.

Live it.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 94-95

WEEK 10 DAY 03

# Psalm 1:2; Psalm 119:103

“Delight” in the Webster dictionary means happiness and may refer to someone or something that gives such a state! In the psalm, the psalmist declares that a blessed man delights in the Word of the Lord. To David, God’s Word is sweet, even sweeter than honey. Thus, the blessed man finds joy, wisdom and comfort in God’s Holy Word.

May the reading and study of God’s Word give you a sweet, and even a sweeter, aftertaste.

Desire God. Read God’s Word.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today’s Reading: Psalm 96-98



WEEK 10 DAY 04

# Psalm 1:3; John 15:1-11

The Lanzones tree is a sight to behold during the fruit-bearing season. During this time, every branch holds bunches of the sweet fruit that is a joy to the palate when ripe. However, fruitfulness does not just happen. The farmer ensures that the tree is watered, nurtured and fertilized to be able to bear such sweet fruit,

Our life in Christ should be like a fruit-bearing tree that bears sweet fruit. But just like the tree, our lives should also be watered, nurtured and fertilized. Desire to grow in your spiritual life and fruitfulness shall follow.

What are you doing to grow in your Christian life? Make time for the reading and study of God's Word.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 99-101

WEEK 10 DAY 05  
Psalm 1:4

The chaff is the covering of the grain. It is something light and useless, part of the crop, but a part to be disposed of by the farmer. This is how the psalmist describes the life of those who are not in Christ.

Are you in Christ? If not, consider Christ.

If you are in Christ, rejoice. Rejoice for your life has great purpose in His kingdom.

Delight in Him.

(See Appendix 2, What it Takes to be a Christian)

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalms 102-103

## WEEK 10 DAY 06

Spend an extended time with God today. Sing to Him. Read the Bible. Pray through Psalm 1.

What is God's greatest blessing in your life according to the psalm?

How is Christ accomplishing the blessed man in you?

### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 11 DAY 01

# Psalm 11:1; 1 Samuel 17:34-50

The Lord is my refuge!

This is David's courageous declaration of faith in verse 1. David, despite the challenges he faced has experienced the Lord's safekeeping and care. The Lord has seen him through the lion, bear and even the big Goliath (1 Samuel 17:34-50). He has even saved David from his sinfulness.

Remember how the Lord has saved you in the past. He can save you today. Seek the Lord's intervention in your life today!

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalms 104

WEEK 11 DAY 02

# Psalm 11:1-3

Count your blessings name them one by one!

If we will be given the chance to edit the line and change it to “Count your problems name them one by one”, We may have so much to write in the same way we gripe about them given the opportunity.

Our life in the Lord is not a life free from evil influences and problems. He did not promise us a challenge-free life. What Jesus said is that, He will be with us until the end of the age.

Are there challenges in your life that come one after another? Continue to trust in God’s power to change our mourning into dancing. Truly, nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1:37).

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today’s Reading: Psalm 105

WEEK 11 DAY 03

# Psalm 11:4

Pictures are meant to serve as remembrance.

When we look back at our pictures, they conjure memories and bring us back to the time when we had those pictures taken. It gives us a sense of nostalgia and smiles on our faces.

When we see the cross, we are to remember what God has done. We remember who He is—the Holy One.

The pictures, the cross are meant to remind us—to bring into our remembrance what they truly mean.

When challenges come our way, may we remember that the Lord is constant. He is always present. He is seated on His throne of power.

Remember.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 106:1-19

WEEK 11 DAY 04

# Psalm 11:5-6

Gas price hike. Tuition fee increases. Peso devaluation. Floods. MRT Fare Hike. Rape. Child Abuse. War.

As we survey the broadsheets, these items take centerstage.

When will all these end? What can we do to make things better for our country and people? When will crime have its end? Sad to say, we don't know. We do not have answers to these questions. But what we know is that—it will.

Justice may be denied for now. True solutions may be absent. Peace on earth will never be absolute but only peace with God will come—very soon. On that day, we will all have our day in the Lord's court of Justice. For some, to be judged, but for those who believe, to give an account for his life.

True justice is served—only in the Lord!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 106:20-48

WEEK 11 DAY 05

# Psalm 11:7; Matthew 5:7

Disciples of the Lord are called to be pure in heart. To be pure in heart is to have the heart of God that loves, gives, and forgives even in times of challenges and hurt. It may seem impossible from an earthly perspective, but in the eyes of the Lord Jesus, it is done!

Trusting in the heart of Jesus, we know that our heart can be pure in Him and in the end we will have His everlasting reward- to see God!

“Lord Jesus, the challenges of life is a burden. But I give to you all my cares. Teach my eyes to only look up to You and create in me a pure heart everyday!”

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 107



WEEK 11 DAY 06

# Psalm 11

How does Psalm 11 allow you to rest in God's promises and ways? Spend your time basking in God's glory!

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 12 DAY 01

# Psalm 42:1-2

Examinations are students' worst nightmares. Though it is part of student life, there are instructors however who enjoy giving horrific exams. These kinds of examinations make learners feel emotions of insecurity and fear to the point of depression. Some, even put an end to life just because of failure.

While life does not begin and even end in examinations, our sorrow, failure and depression should not allow us to go beyond ourselves. Times of testing and depression should usher us to come and long for the presence of God. The presence of God in our lives is what we have as believers in Jesus Christ. He sent the Holy Spirit to be our Comforter, Convictor and Enabler. The Lord is with us!

Do not fear. Do not be dismayed.

At all times, long for the abiding presence of God!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 108-109

WEEK 12 DAY 02

# Psalm 42:5

When we are in extreme desperation and sorrow, we cry to death. We sleep in tears and still wake up in tears.

Tears as food is what the psalmist declares as his diet. This is a figure of speech for him to say that he has been crying day and night. His desperation and sorrow is beyond consolation. But remember, we have a God who knows our pain. He knows each tear that falls and at the right time will bring forth the smiles again.

Hope.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 110-111

WEEK 12 DAY 03  
Psalm 42:8

Susana Wesley was a housewife and a mother to 10 children (9 more died as infants!) With the busyness of her household it was impossible for her to find a quiet time and quiet space for her to pray. But because she knew the relevance and importance of prayer in her Christian life, she has taught her children that whenever they would see her with her apron on her head, she is not to be disturbed. It is time to pray.

When do you take time to pray? Is your lifestyle too busy?

We are to pray at all times.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 112-114

WEEK 12 DAY 04

# Psalm 42:11

Experiencing God is a daily thing. It is coming to Him with our hearts and minds ready for an encounter with Him. In this daily walk, the Lord reveals Himself to us in the Word and even in the world. The Lord uses ordinary events in our lives to experience Him. As we experience God, He, too grows our faith. He does so, little by little, but sometimes He does grow it by leaps and bounds! But as to how He chooses to do so, may we cherish the encounter we have with God every day, in the Word and in the exercise of our faith!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 115-117

WEEK 12 DAY 05

# 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

What brings you comfort from this verse?

Take time to ponder.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 118

## WEEK 12 DAY 06

Victory Day! Declare the victory the Lord has taught you this week.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 13 DAY 01

# Psalm 34:1

Praise you in the morning  
Praise you in the evening  
Praise you when I'm young and when I'm old

This is the songwriter's idea of praising the Lord. How about you? How do you want to praise the Lord today?

You may be ecstatic for how the Lord has been answering your prayers or you may be wandering when the Lord will break through regarding your situation. But just the same it is a good day to praise the Lord.

No matter what.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 119:1-40



WEEK 13 DAY 02

# Psalm 34:4

I thank God that He knows all my thoughts  
whether spoken or unspoken

I praise Him that all my prayers are answered  
even if His answer is a no

I give glory to Him for all His ways in my life,  
whether it is seen or unseen, heard or unheard

I extol Him for being the Sovereign God of my life  
who discerns my thoughts and guides all my ways.

Lead me to the place dear God to the place where I can  
always give thanks to you for all Your movements in my life.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 119:41-80

WEEK 13 DAY 03

# Psalm 34:8

Young children are asked to take in little amounts of sugar and salt so that their palates can be trained to eat well. Children with developed palates for sugar tend to be on the round side while those who have less liking for sugary stuff remain lean. In as much as our palates are trained, our hearts and minds should be trained as well – yes, to be trained in the Lord.

When we are trained in the wisdom and ways of God, we learn to listen, to discern, and to obey Him. This is what we call a developed taste for God.

How is your taste for God? Are you making time to develop your relationship with Him?

Come and taste that the Lord is good!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 119:81-112

WEEK 13 DAY 04

# Psalm 34:19

Troubles can be blessings in disguise depending on how we view life. It is a matter of perspective on how we look at a glass of water – is it half-full or half-empty? It's a matter of perspective.

How do we view troubles in life that the Lord allows? Though challenges can bring some amount of stress in our daily lives, we can still choose to be rested in Him.

How?

Trust that God's hand is never too short.  
Trust that God is always on time.  
Trust that God is Sovereign.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 119:113-144

WEEK 13 DAY 05  
Psalm 34:22

“The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

God’s people have a very good tradition of remembrance. When they pray, they always cite what God has done for them in the past. They enjoy recounting the Lord’s goodness. When they pray, it is always to the same God of their Fathers – the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

When God’s people are in trouble, they do the same. They trust the same God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob because they are sure that He will break through.

Do you trust God the same way that they do? Trust in Him. He will redeem. He will show up.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today’s Reading: Psalm 119:145-176

## WEEK 13 DAY 06

I would like to trust the Lord in these areas of my life.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 14 DAY 01  
Psalm 139

When you hear the phrase ‘this matter is personal to me,’ what comes to your mind?

There are certain things in life that seem to grip our hearts a little more. These are the things that usually remind us of someone very special, a momentous event or milestone in our lives. And these times become even more special when our friends and family remember these “special and personal” moments. And when they do, we are touched—moved by the thought that they remembered.

The Lord in Psalm 139:1 does not only remember! He is. He knows. He does.

How is the Lord revealing Himself personally to you today?

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today’s Reading: Psalm 120-123

WEEK 14 DAY 02

# Psalm 139:3

In our mischievous ways, there comes a time that we think that we can have our hidden ways truly hidden for life. This may be true for a time but as believers, we know that there is nothing hidden from God. Jesus, Himself tells us that all will come to light!

Is there anything you are hiding from God? Don't bother. He knows everything—even before you even think about it!

PuttominddearGod,thethingsthatarehiddenthatdoesnotgive glory to your name!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 124-127

WEEK 14 DAY 03

# Psalm 139:8

Getting lost in an unfamiliar territory can be dangerous but can also be a thrill. It would be great to know how it feels to know no one, not being able to speak and understand inscriptions. As thrilling as it can get, this can also pose great danger. But in any dangerous situation the Lord's presence gives hope. Jesus is always with us. His confounding and ever present presence in our lives allow us to hope that we are in the right direction, right ways and at the right time.

Truly, Jesus is with us anytime, everywhere and even anywhere! Thank you Jesus!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 128-131



WEEK 14 DAY 04

# Psalm 139:15

I know that I am created by the Great Creator!

The Body exhibit features the human body in its preserved state. Using the technology called plastination, it is able to preserve even the tiniest of veins in the human body. It causes us to ponder and be in awe as to how intricate each body part is and how each tissue is connected to the other body parts. Truly, God is the Creator of the world and He wonderfully and fearfully made each one of us!

How wonderful are your works dear God. How awesome are your ways. Thank you for creating me to be just me!

Write a note of praise to God.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 132-134

WEEK 14 DAY 05

# Psalm 139:23-24

David was truly amazed by who God is. God revealed to him His power, might, knowledge and ever abiding presence in his life. However, all these things about God do not change the truth that we live in a world that is seemingly overruled by evil men doing evil deeds.

Have you ever thought about your sinfulness? May it cause us to weep and mourn for our sinful state.

David responded to God in total surrender. How are we responding to God every time He confronts us of our sinfulness? May we respond like David.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 135-137

## WEEK 14 DAY 06

Write down how Psalm 139 taught you about who God is and who you are.

How does Psalm 139 give you comfort and rest?

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 15 DAY 01

# Psalm 118: 1

“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good”

How has the Lord shown you His goodness today?  
Come to God with thanksgiving for His everlasting goodness.  
You may enumerate how the Lord has personally ministered  
to you today.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 138-139

WEEK 15 DAY 02

# Psalm 118:1b

What do you do when your little child comes seeking forgiveness for something she has done? There is no other way but to forgive. As this little child grows up, there will be more occasions that she will have to come back and seek forgiveness for an offense. And as parents, forgiveness is given alongside with the disciplinary measure.

This is the way we should see the steadfast love of the Lord. The Lord is unrelenting to show us His mercy and grace. That anytime and everytime we come back to Him, He is always gracious, forgiving and loving towards us. In the same way, He also disciplines us.

The Lord's steadfast love never ceases.  
His love endures forever.

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 140-143

WEEK 15 DAY 03

# Psalm 118:8-9

Reliability is a trait that we all hope to have. Reliability and trust are traits that we hope our relationships have. But in the course of treading our personal relationships, we cannot be reliable and trustworthy every time. But we have a God who will never fail us. He is trustworthy and reliable all day at all times. We can fully trust in Him.

Is there anything in your life that you need to give to an ever trustworthy God? He will not fail you. He is reliable!

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 144-145

WEEK 15 DAY 04

# Psalm 118:19-20

Praise God for life. Praise God for eternal life!

How has your relationship with the Lord changed your life?  
Write your thanksgiving for the opportunity to be a child of  
the King.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

WEEK 15 DAY 05

# Psalm 118:22-24

Jesus is our Great Cornerstone. He is the anchor of our soul. Pray for unsaved friends and family members who have yet to recognize Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Today's Reading: Psalm 148-150



WEEK 15 DAY 06

# Psalm 118:28-29


Using the English alphabet ( A to Z) write on your journal the names, character, attributes of the Lord that has ministered to you during the season of the Psalms.

Example:

A- Jesus is my All knowing God

B- Jesus is my Best Friend

Today's Reading: Psalm 146-147



**GROWTH GROUP  
STUDY GUIDE**

## HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This basic Growth Group guide desires to aide and guide the growth group leader. It has basic observation, interpretation and application questions. Learning goals have been established along with a starter activity.

For material appreciation, it is best to read and study the Bible text and then read through the suggested activities and discussion questions of the material. You are free to add, revise activities and rephrase questions according to your Growth Group needs.

It is our prayer that we will all have personal encounters with the Lord as we all make time to study, ponder and apply His Word.

May the Lord speak to us through this sermon series.

# 1 Psalm 23

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Understand the shepherding qualities of the Lord
  - Affirm the lovingkindness of God in your life
  - Be a good sheep of the Good Shepherd
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. The Lord's Provision (23:1-3)
- b. The Lord's Protection (23:4-5)
- c. The Lord's Promise (23:6)

This psalm – perhaps the best known of the entire Psalter – is an individual psalm of confidence. In the psalm, David recalled his days as a shepherd in Bethlehem's fields and how he tenderly cared for the defenseless and naive animals under his authority. If he, a human shepherd, could exercise such vigilance over mere animals, how much more must God guard those persons created in His very image. He provides for every need, and no matter the danger, He guarantees protection for the present and the future.+

## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Charade. GG facilitator writes down certain qualities of a good overseer in a folded sheet of paper. During GG time, the group may be divided into two teams. Each team member will act out the traits written on the paper as each one takes his turn to do the same. The team with most number of correct guesses wins.

Spiel could be... Enumerate the correct guesses. These words reflect qualities or traits that are described in our lesson tonight.

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Observe the Passage. Cite the qualities of being a shepherd? Which quality of the shepherd is very near your heart? How is God fulfilling this role as your Shepherd?
2. What does John 10 teach us about Jesus as our Shepherd? Cite the qualities of the Shepherd mentioned in this passage? Why is Jesus the Good Shepherd? Share how the Lord has been the Good Shepherd to you this past week.
3. If Jesus is our Good Shepherd and we are His sheep, how do you think you can be a good sheep of the Good Shepherd? What hinders you to be a good sheep to the Good Shepherd?



### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Shepherding was one of man's earliest occupations. Flocks and herds, always a prominent feature in Palestine and other Near Eastern societies, consisted specifically of cows, sheep, and goats, but could also include horses, asses, and camels; the principal animal, however, owing to size, abundance, and usefulness, was the sheep.

Possession of these animals indicated power and wealth; Job had thousands of sheep, camels, oxen, and she-asses (42:12), and Abraham's flocks, herds, camels, and asses were counted among his blessings (Gen 24:35). At the dedication of the temple, Solomon sacrificed innumerable sheep and oxen (1 Kgs 8:5).

The owner himself was sometimes the shepherd of his flock. Abel was a "keeper of sheep" (Gen 4:2, 3) and Jacob cared for his own flocks (Gen 30:40). God is pictured as a shepherd who seeks out his own scattered sheep (Ezek 34:12). The work might be delegated to the owner's

children; Rachel looked after Laban's sheep (Gen 29:6), and David, though the youngest of Jesse's sons, was given this responsibility (1 Sam 16:11; 17:15).

The principal duty of the shepherd was to see to it that the animals found enough food and water (cf. Psalm 23); and it was important that he guard the sheep, since they were easy prey for wild animals (1 Sam 17:34–35; Amos 3:12). There was also a danger that thieves might sneak among the sheep and carry them off (John 10:1).

The good shepherd was especially concerned for the condition of the flock, careful that the animals be not overdriven (cf. Gen 33:13–14); and would sometimes carry helpless lambs in his arms (cf. Isa 40:11), or on his shoulders (e.g., the Arcadian god Hermes Criophorus, shepherd and protector of livestock). At night, sheep were often kept in simple walled enclosures made from tangled bushes, providing a minimum of protection from weather and enemies (Num 32:16; Judg 5:16; 2 Chr 32:28; Ps 78:70; Zeph 2:6; John 10:1), or caves might have been used, affording the best protection (1 Sam 24:3). The work of the shepherd was essentially to keep the flock intact, counting each animal as it passed under his hand (Jer 33:12–13; Ezek 20:37; cf. Jer 31:10–11; Pss 49:15).

From this routine of daily life, an extensive and complex stock of shepherd and flock imagery developed throughout the ANE (Ancient Near East). It was one of man's earliest symbols, and is used repeatedly in the Bible to picture God, or national leaders ruling over their people. It was an ancient figure of speech common in Mesopotamia and Egypt, and the Greeks also used the image for several abstract concepts.

The early church saw Jesus as the great shepherd and the fulfillment of the good shepherd. Even in modern times

the image continues in the pastorelle, or the eclogue, as a recognized form of poetry, and the picturesque nature of the image has inspired some of the great composers to immortalize in music the idyllic shepherd life. <sup>1</sup>

**SHEEP AND SHEPHERD** The Jewish nation prided itself on being God's special flock. Jehovah God is called "the Shepherd of Israel" (Ps. 80:1), and the nation is "his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps. 100:3). When God delivered Israel from Egypt, he led them "like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron" (Ps. 77:20; and see 78:52). When God called David to become Israel's king, he chose an experienced shepherd (Ps. 78:70–72). When the nation was in decline under King Ahab, the prophet Micaiah "saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd" (1 Kings 22:17, and see Mark 6:34). As he contemplated the Babylonian captivity, the prophet Jeremiah wept when he saw the "Lord's flock . . . carried away captive" (13:17)

What Israel was under the old covenant, the church is today under the new covenant: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people [a people of his own possession]" (1 Pet. 2:9; and note Matt. 21:43). God has certainly not abandoned Israel (Rom. 11:1), but in this present age, He is working in and through His church to get the gospel to every creature. The church is His "little flock" (Luke 12:32) made up of "lost sheep" that the Good Shepherd has rescued (Matt. 18:10–14). <sup>2</sup>

## PUT TO HEART

Jesus is our Good Shepherd and as His sheep,  
He delights when we obey Him.

<sup>1</sup> Freedman, D. N. (1996). Vol. 5: The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary (1187–1188). New York: Doubleday.

<sup>2</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). Be What You Are : 12 Intriguing Pictures of the Christian from the New Testament (28). Wheaton IL: Tyndale House.

## 2 Psalm 16

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Understand that God is able to save us from all our troubles
  - Affirm the lovingkindness of God
  - Stand firm in times of uncertainties of life
- 

### BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. The Refuge of the Saints (16:1-3)
- b. The Rejection of the Sinners (16:4)
- c. The Riches of the Steadfast (16:5-8)
- d. The Redemption of the Saints (16:9-11)

This miktam (perhaps from the Hebrew *kātab*, “to write”) of David is a psalm of confidence penned at some period of his life when he was unusually hard-pressed. Its climax (16:10-11) contains one of the few clear references to resurrection in the Old Testament, a point underscored by its use by the apostles to prove the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2:24-32; 13:35-37). David acknowledged his security in the Lord as well as the folly and futility of paganism. The righteous, he wrote, enjoy the blessings of God in this life, and all can have confidence in the life to come, one filled with felicity and joy. +

### SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Rating Game. Rate the important things in your life. Write down according to importance (1 as the highest, 10 the least) your top ten things to do in a day. GG facilitator can ask for 3 volunteers to share before the actual lesson.



## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is a Miktam? What is the sense of danger the passage is telling us ( v.1)?

A miktam is an unexplained term though it always stands in the superscription of Davidic prayers occasioned by great danger (Ps. 56-60).

Verse 1 is David's plea to God to preserve or take care of his life which denotes a great sense of danger. The latter part of the verse affirms David's trust and confidence in who God is—his refuge. He refers to the Father as 'El, the strong one, mighty to deliver in time of danger.

2. How does David continue to acknowledge and affirm the Lord's place in his life in verses 2-4? Why are his declarations important as king and as a worshipper of the LORD?

Be able to Share. Can you directly declare who God is in your life? Why is it important for a believer to continually declare and affirm God's place in his life most especially when one is in great danger like David in this situation?

- You are my Lord (v.2a)- God's primary place in David's life. That He is LORD.
- I have no good apart from you (v.2b)- acknowledgement of David's sinfulness , limitations and nothingness apart from the Lord's grace.
- David delights in God's people (v.3) This statement affirms the servanthood of David as King of God's people and also an affirmation of His allegiance toward's God Himself.

- Running after other gods (v.4)- David affirms the rule of God in Israel and in the lives of the Israelites. It also denotes David's obedience to Yahweh as well.
3. David continues to personally declare and affirm His trust in who God is in verses 5-6. What does it mean to make the Lord your portion, cup and the one who holds your lot (v.5)?

Portion and cup is a figurative language referring to the Lord's provision and sustenance over his life. What is worth noting is that his use of the personal pronoun "my" and "chosen." This stresses the Lord's personal ministry over David and David's surrender over whatever the Lord gives to him—in his case, immense blessings of wealth. Surrender of "his lot" is allowing the Lord to direct the circumstances and events of his life. This is David's acknowledgement of the Lord's sovereignty over his life.

Be able to Share. How has the Lord blessed you? How are you ascribing thanksgiving and praise towards your portion, cup and lot and life?

4. The next section teaches about David's source of wisdom and counsel (vv.7-8). He also shows us that the LORD takes priority in his life. Is God number one in your life (check your opening activity)? How do you know that God is number one in your life? Does your daily time with God reflect His being number one? How does your daily time with God allow you to have the same instruction and counsel? How are you able to use this in your daily life?
5. As David makes the LORD his priority in life, what were his concluding declarations about Him (vv.9-11)?

Be able to Share. Remembering the context of the psalm, can you still express your great delight in the Lord even in challenging times? How? (Write a one or a two-liner declaration of faith in the Lord. This can also be your closing activity as every member of your group shares.)

David expressed his delight in the Lord using three words: glad, rejoices and secure. This allows us to see the great delight that He had before the LORD even in grave threat. He also expressed the sureness of his salvation in Him (v.10)- that those who delight in Him shall be with Him forever. David, in verse 11, summarizes for us his great delight in the Lord even in the trying times of his life. He cites about God being the guide of his life, the Lord being the fullness of his joy, and the Lord's presence in his life would assure him an eternal place.

## PUT TO HEART

We can still delight in the presence of the Lord even in the most trying times when we put Him first in our lives.

# 3 Psalm 40

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Understand the truth that God is our only source of deliverance
  - Appreciate the intimate relationship we have in the Lord
  - Delight in the Lord with our obedience and praise of Him
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. Works of the Lord (40:1-5)
- b. Worship of the Lord (40:6-8)
- c. Witness to the Lord (40:9-10)
- d. Waiting on the Lord (40:11-17)

Basically a psalm of individual thanksgiving, this poem includes touches of other elements as well. Verses 1-10 clearly express thanksgiving, but verses 11-17 are similar to a lamentation. David was especially grateful for God's redemptive grace that had delivered him from some actual or anticipated disaster and had set him on a firm foundation (40:2). This elicited from him what he said was the highest form of sacrifice to the Lord, namely, obedience to the will of God (40:8). The author of Hebrews quoted this text to speak of the atonement secured by the perfect obedience of Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:5-10).

David then declared that the salvation granted to him must reflect in his bearing witness of it to others. The song concludes, however, with a plea that the salvation will be on going. David's own sin and the dangers he faced threatened to undo him. But past deliverance gave him confidence that whatever arose would be dealt with by God's intervention (Ps. 40:17).+

## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Prayer and Praise Time. As every member of the group arrives, activity facilitator is ready with colored sheets of paper, masking tape and a big cardboard. Every member will write a couple of prayer and praise items and post it in the provided space. At the end of your time together, this will be the petitions and praises that the group will lift up to the Lord for the coming week.

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Observe the Passage. How did David respond to his dilemma as described in verse 1?

David responded to his dilemma by waiting patiently for the Lord. In other words, he cast himself and his situation completely upon the Lord as the only possible way out. This doesn't mean he passively sat down and fatalistically said, 'If the Lord wants to deliver me, he will deliver me.' His waiting rather consisted of crying to the Lord. Prayer is the means God has ordained for working his purposes out in the lives of his children.<sup>3</sup>

Be able to Share. David gives us a principle to be learned. Can you craft that principle? What does prayer accomplish in the life of the believer? Is it all about having the answers we desire?

2. How did God answer David's plea or prayer (vv.2-3a)? How did David respond to the LORD's intervention in his life (vv.3b-5)?

The Lord answered David's prayer as he: lifted him out of despair (v.2a); Set his feet on solid ground (v.2b);

<sup>3</sup> Ellsworth, R. (2006). Opening up Psalms (105). Leominster: Day One Publications.

Gave him a new song of praise (v.3). In the same way, David's delight was turned to praise as he started to declare praises to God! He declared His trust and confidence in God alone instead of man (v.4). He also declared the generosity of God towards him as the LORD has showed him wondrous deeds!

3. Verses 6-10 give us a clue as to what David did as he waited and prayed patiently to the Lord. What was his posture like? What do you think enabled him to do so (vv.7-8)?
4. Praise is a worshipper's natural response to God. How did David show delight in God (vv.9-10)?

Be able to Share. Is praise our natural reaction after an encounter with God? Share with us a recent encounter with God and how the Lord intervened in your life. End this session with a short thanksgiving prayer.

5. We have seen the Lord's intervention in the past and present. How is David affirming the Lord's power over his life for the days to come? What did he ask from God for the future (vv.11-17)?

David's Petitions (v.11). He specifically asks God to grant him 'tender mercies', 'lovingkindness', and 'truth'. Tender mercies refer to acts of mercy that spring from the most tender affection. Lovingkindness is very similar. It refers to acts of kindness that spring from a heart of love. The truth refers to God's faithfulness to His promises. One can easily see how these petitions related to David's struggle against sin.

David's Trouble (vv. 12-15). The horrible pit of the opening verses of the psalm is behind the psalmist, but in its place he now sees 'innumerable evils' surrounding him (v. 12). While David did not divulge the nature of the trouble from which he had been delivered, he

admits that he is struggling hard against sin (v. 12). The weight of his sins was so great that he was not able to look up, and their number was more than the hairs of his head. In addition to the keen consciousness of his sins, the psalmist was beset by enemies who desired to take his life (v. 14).

David's Motive (v. 16). David suddenly interjects his desire for all God's people to praise the Lord. He acknowledges that it is the Lord who saves us from our sins and from all troubles.

David's Confidence (v. 17). David was comforted by the thoughts of God towards him, and he casts himself totally upon God as his help and deliverer.

David, more than a man in need, is a worshipper of the Living God. His encounters with God have allowed him to put his trust upon the LORD. He declares that the Lord is greater than all His troubles, His mercies are great over all his sins and there is nothing the LORD cannot do for him. At the close of the psalm, David declared, "You are my help and my deliverer, do not delay, O my God!"

## WORSHIP ACTIVITY

Declare the Prayers and Praises. Assigned leader can put together a praise and worship segment to close the GG time declaring the Lord's deliverance as we fully put our trust and confidence upon Him.

## PUT TO HEART

The Lord's deliverance is sure.  
We just need to trust and wait patiently on Him.

# 4 Psalm 46

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Acknowledge that the Lord is our confidence
  - Affirm the greatness of God over all nations and history
  - Trust in the Lord's protection, presence and favor upon His people
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. The Presence of God (46:1-3)
- b. The Protection of God (46:4-7)
- c. The Promise of God (46:8-11)

Also called Song of Zion, one thematically linked to Psalms 47 and 48, this praise for a significant victory may have arisen out of a circumstance such as Jehoshapat's triumph over the Moabites and their allies (2 Chron. 20:1), a "holy war" campaign accompanied by the singing of hymns (20:21-22). The Psalm begins with the confession that God is a refuge (Ps. 46:1), a point that summarizes the next two main sections as well (46:7,11). So long as God is with His people, they need not fear (46:2). Zion itself is secure from all the threats of the nations because of God's role as a defensive fortification (47:7). And this is no temporary measure either, for He will usher in a day when all the nations will acknowledge His lordship (46:10).+



## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Name That Tune. GG leader compiles different songs or even just lyrics. The game master may recite one or two lines then the group guesses. A prize may be given to those who make right guesses.

Our study for tonight is about a song of confidence to God.

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Observe the Passage. What is the main theme of the psalm (vv.1-3)? How did he express his confidence in the Lord based on the imagery that was used in verses 2-3?

Be able to Share. The picture of the river in the city of God is in contrast to what was portrayed in verses 2-3. How is this imagery a truth in your life.

2. The psalm uses two names of God. What are these two names and what does it denote (vv.7 and 11)?

The composer of the song used the names “Lord of Hosts” and “God Almighty” denoting the power of God who has His angels at His command (2 Kings 6:16,17, Ps.68:17, Matt 26:53). He also used the name “God of Jacob” denoting the covenant God—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Using these names affirm in the hearts of God’s people the promise of His abiding presence, protection, favor and provision.

Be able to Share. Names of God. How do you call God? Why do you call God with this name? (El Shaddai, Jehovah Shalom, Jehovah Raffa, Jehovah Jireh, Jehovah Nissi)

3. Verses 8-9 show us another aspect of God’s power. What is the composer telling us about God? How does God’s

reply in verse 10 quiet the hearts of His people who were in trouble?

Be able to Share. What are the troubles of your heart? How does verse 10 calm your spirit? You may also share about how the Lord has proven to be your refuge in the past month and weeks.

## PUT TO HEART

The Lord is reliable. He is the Almighty God who is able to protect, provide and be present at all times.



# 5 Psalm 84

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Acknowledge that God is the only source of strength
  - Reflect on how the Lord has been your strength in the past
  - Trust in the Lord at all times
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. Desire for God's House (84:1-4)
- b. Directions to God's House (84:5-8)
- c. Dedication to God's House (84:9-12)

This song of Zion, a song of pilgrimage, is associated with the sons of Korah (see also Pss. 42 and 43) whose duties included being gatekeepers of the temple (1 Chron. 26:1, 12-19). The psalm expresses special concern for David as the anointed one of the Lord (Ps. 84:9). The author also revealed his intense longing for God's house, his desire, perhaps, to be there even when off duty as a porter (84:10). The author of Hebrews captured this idea when he urged Christians to be faithful in assembling for worship (Heb. 10:25). The psalmist added that the impulse for worship ought to be so strong as to overcome any obstacle that might stand in the way of the pilgrim on his way to the temple (Ps. 84:7). God was there, and to worship Him there was the height of all joy and blessing (84:10).+

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the utmost desire of the psalmist expressed in verses 1-2? Why was he not able to come into the temple? What has happened to them (2 Kings 18:13-16)? Using the image of the birds, how did he further show his utmost desire in verses 3-4?

The psalmist expresses his delight in the house of God for it is the place that is most lovely to him. But it is at this time that the temple may have been stripped of its physical beauty (see 2 Kings 18:16). In Judah's captivity, the psalmist declares that he longs to set foot in that place again. But more than the magnificent structure of the temple, it is the presence of God he ultimately misses. The temple is only the means of realizing the presence of "the living God".

The psalmist using the image of the birds captures for us his deep longing to come to God's presence. He even envies the birds that were flying and making the temple their home and nests while the actual temple keepers are not able to enter and come into the presence of the King.

2. What does "Valley of Baca" denote in verse 6? What does it reveal about the exact state of God's people? What was the psalmist declaration about God despite their current situation (vv. 5-7)?

The "valley of Baca" is an unknown place. However, the word baca means weeping or balsam trees. Using "baca" as a figurative language gives us a clue that God's people was in a state of sadness, of weeping. But even in their state of their journey's uncertainty and sorrow, faith turns that place into a place of springs, of hope. Instead of fainting on their toilsome journey,

the pilgrims gain fresh strength as they advance. In the place of weeping they found God's benevolent care. It was there that their hearts were transformed—from sad to glad and hopeful hearts!

Be able to Share. Are you passing through the "valley of Baca" in your life? Do you see God's hand as you journey? What are you hopeful about? How is God turning your sadness to joy?

3. What was the plea of the psalmist (vv.8-9)? How did God affirm who He is in the life of His people in the short prayer?

Using the names LORD, God of Hosts, God of Jacob teaches us that the psalmist is affirming that God is the same God who has seen been with His people in the past. YAHWEH as Lord is their Great I AM. The One who led them out of slavery to a place of redemption. The God who is able to do what He has promised, and the God who is able to fight for His people! The psalmist's prayer to God was for Him to look upon with favor on His people. Imploring and acknowledging of who God is and what He can do for his people gives the psalmist much hope and joy.

Be able to Share. Who is God to you? What has he done for you ? How does His work in the past give you hope and joy today?

4. In the prayer of the psalmist in verses 10 -11, what was his hope and joy? How did he affirm his relationship with God in verse 12?

The psalmist expresses hope that he will come back to do his ministry as doorkeeper in the temple of

the Lord! This, too was his joy. But his greatest joy is shown when he affirmed the LORD as his shield and protection, the Lord as the source of all the good things in his life. He also affirms the faithfulness of God to those who remain faithful to Him .

Be able to Share. How does the psalm bring comfort to you in times of worry and uncertainty?

## PUT TO HEART

The Lord is our ever present help even as we go through the “valley of Baca” of our life!

# 6 Psalm 51

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Acknowledge that God alone can forgive our sins
  - Admit our nothingness apart from the Lord's love and grace
  - Develop a high regard for the Lord that we may fear sinning against Him
  - Confess our sins before the Lord
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. Recognition of Sin (51:1-2)
- b. Recital of Sin (51:3-5)
- c. Repentance of Sin (51:6-9)
- d. Restoration from Sin (51:10-12)
- e. Restitution for Sin (51:13-17)
- f. Epilogue (51:18-19)

This famous confession by David, a psalm of individual lamentation, was composed in the aftermath of his sins of adultery and murder (2 Sam. 11). It is the first of the psalms of David in which he employed the divine name Elohim, a choice that perhaps reflects his sense of distance from God as Yahweh, that is, the covenant God. The psalm is a model of how one ought to address sin in his life. David first acknowledged that he was a sinner, and then he noted that though he did wrong against other people his sins were ultimately against God (51:7). He then pleaded for forgiveness from God (51:9-10) and restoration to fellowship with Him (51:11). The genuineness of his repentance is seen in his pledge to praise God and bear witness to others of God's saving grace (51:13,15).+



## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Giving High Regard. Conversation Starter: GG facilitator makes sure that the pre-GG conversations should be about giving high regard for others. What quality of a person makes you give him a “high regard” or “mataas na pagtingin.”

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Observe the Passage. Read 2 Samuel 11-12. Write down each sin that David committed in the chapter. Whom did the Lord send to rebuke David in 2 Samuel 12?

Be able to Share. Why do you think the Lord took almost a year for Him to send Nathan to rebuke David. What does it say of David? Of God?

The Lord might be allowing David some time to think of his wrongdoing for him to realize, confess and repent on his own accord. The Lord might have wanted him to do it on his own volition. This is the love and patience the Lord has over his people! We see the fallenness and pride of man in David while we see the lovingkindness of God in return! Truly He is a God who will forever pursue His people.

Why do you think the Lord took almost a year for Him to send Nathan to rebuke David. What does it say of David? Of God?

2. What was David’s appeal to God in the first two verses of the psalm? How did he passionately express this (Check the repetition of ideas using different words. This is what we call synonymous parallelism). What were the characters of God wherein David anchored his appeal on?

Be able to Share. How do you think David felt when he was telling God these? Can you re-create the emotion of David?

David appealed on God's mercy in verse one and later restates it as abundant mercy in v.1b. He also invokes on the LORD's steadfast love! He sought the LORD's forgiveness and states this passionately three times in the first two verses. This shows David's brokenness of heart and his desire to be reconciled with God.

3. Confession is agreeing with God that you have sinned. In David's confession, how did he express his sinfulness and remorse in verses 3-4? Can you sense David's high regard for God and his personal sorrow? What phrases give you a clue (vv. 3-6)?



#### GG FACILITATOR'S NOTES

Joy of my Salvation as David cites in the psalm does not speak about losing the salvation or relationship he has with the Lord. Salvation in the Lord is secure (Romans 8:29-30). Our transgressions after our profession of faith in the finished work of Christ do not disqualify us from enjoying eternal life with the Lord. What the believer loses at the time of sin is the joy of fellowship with the Lord in the Word, prayer and even ministry. Most of the time, the sinning believer experiences shame and guilt which are not actually from the Lord. What the Holy Spirit does is to prod and convict that he may be led to confess and repent. On the other hand, the enemy desires that the believer feels shame and guilt in order that he eventually pulls the believer further and further away from the Lord.

As we are still in the flesh, we are still prone to sin. That is why the Lord has graciously provided a way out of it. 1 John 1:8-9 clearly teaches us (speaking to believers),<sup>8</sup> If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." For the believer

to continually experience the joy of His salvation, he must consciously veer away from sin and be sensitive to the call of the Holy Spirit that will never leave the life of the believer.

Be able to Share. What does this section teach us about true confession and repentance? Can you sense David's mourning over his sin (cf. Matthew 5:4; John 16:8-11)? What does it mean to have a broken spirit and a contrite heart? Why is mourning over our own sin important as true believers?

4. What do verses 7-12 teach us about the result of confession and repentance? How does David regard his sinfulness towards God? How does he desire for God to change the course of his life? What is the role of the Holy Spirit in David's life? In your life?

Be able to Share. As we experience the grace and forgiveness of God, what do you understand about "true repentance"? How does God treat the repentant (cf. Luke 15)?

5. According to the psalm, what will be the fruit of David's deliverance from sin in verses 13-15? Why is this important for David?
6. According to verses 16 to 19, what are the things that the Lord takes delight in? How important is obedience to the Lord? Does this mean that He is not concerned in the things we are able to accomplish in His name?

Be able to Share. In your study, can you tell us how David regarded God? How did he regard himself and sin? What is the great relationship of the two?

## PUT TO HEART

When we have a high regard for God, we do not like to please ourselves and continue to sin. On the contrary, when we are full of ourselves, we cannot say that we regard the Lord highly!

# 7 Psalm 128

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Acknowledge that the LORD is the builder of families
  - Ascribe praise for His blessings towards our families
  - Fear the Lord and obey Him daily
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. Prosperity in the Family (128:1-3)
- b. Prosperity in the Future (128:4-6)

Another wisdom psalm, this one shares themes with the preceding psalm one such as a delight in children (128:2,6). The poet declared that material and familial prosperity results from fearing the Lord. Those who thus revere and obey Him –all in connection with true worship at His dwelling place – can expect His favorable response (128:4-5).+

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In verses 1 and 4, the psalmist declares that blessings await those who fear the Lord. Explain in your own words what is the fear of the Lord.

Fear of the Lord is the awe that a person ought to have before God (Prov. 5:7; Eccles. 12:13). As such, it can be said to constitute 'true religion' (Ps. 34:11). It is represented by the 'fear and trembling' with which Paul exhorts the Philippians to work out their salvation (Phil. 2:12). It describes the piety of the growing church in Acts 9:31. However, it may

also carry overtones of judgment (2 Cor. 5:11; 1 Pet. 1:17).<sup>4</sup> The fear of the Lord does not paralyze the person but on the other hand, allows his faith to arise. Fear of the Lord is borne out of love for God. It is displayed when our desire is to please Him and not to sin against Him.

2. Enumerate the blessings listed in Psalm 128 when we fear the Lord (vv. 2-3, 5-6).
3. Do you believe that those listed blessings are sure to come for anyone who fears the Lord? Why?
4. In what way does a wife become a fruitful vine? What does the imagery of olive shoots convey to us? (v.3)  
  
Be able to Share. How is the fruitfulness of your life? The Lord desires that we all become fruitful in our character, ministry and spirituality!
5. Share one personal insight that you gleaned from this study.
6. Meditate on the Lord's goodness in your life. Who is God to you? What has He done for you? Write a statement of confidence.

## PUT TO HEART

The Lord blesses those who fear Him!

<sup>4</sup> Achtemeier, P. J., Harper & Row, P., & Society of Biblical Literature. (1985). Harper's Bible dictionary (1st ed.) (305). San Francisco: Harper & Row.

# 8 Psalm 13

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Acknowledge that God is always aware of our concerns
  - Admit our nothingness apart from the Lord's love and grace
  - Trust in the Lord's unfailing love towards His children
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. The Perplexity of David (13:1-2)
- b. The Petition of David (13:3-4)
- c. The Praise of David (13:5-6)

An individual lament psalm, this work by David is appropriate for anyone who has cause to lament for any reason. David complained that God seems to have forgotten him, so he implored Him to make His presence known. Gaining such assurance, he praised God for His ongoing faithfulness (Hebrew, *hesed*, 13:5), a conviction that enabled him to act as though the desired deliverance had already taken place (13:6).+

## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Forgetfulness. GG facilitator researches about a very appropriate anecdote about forgetfulness. Share with your group.

Opening Activity: Write down the things you likely forget. Share with your group.

There are a thousand and one things to forget, but may it never be that we will ever forget the Lord's love towards His people.

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Observe the Passage. What do verses 1-2 highlight for you? What words or phrases did he use to express his heartbreak and disappointment over God's seeming inaction?

Be able to Share. Is there a long-standing challenge that you have been experiencing? What was your prayer to the Lord during the onset of this trial? After more than a month or even years (as the case may be) how does your prayer look like today?

2. What was David's appeal in verses 3-4?

Be able to Share. Has it happened to you that the appeal you asked from God regarding a particular situation did not turn out to be to your liking? What was your initial reaction? How did you come to terms with it?

3. Analyze David's verses of confidence toward God. What does each line say about God and about him? What does he affirm about God in his conclusion (vv.5-6)?

Be able to Share. Go back to question one. Can you now draft a concluding line to your prayer? How has Jesus showed you His unfailing love these days? Just like what we shared in our opening activity, may we never forget the Lord's lovingkindness.

4. Can you draft some lessons you have gleaned from the psalm? What should we do when God seems to be silent? Make sure to support it with the appropriate Bible verses.

## PUT TO HEART

The Lord is aware of all of our challenges even when He is quiet. His silence does not mean He is unconcerned.  
He is ever concerned over all His creation!

# 9 Psalm 73

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Explain what it means to come to the very presence of God
  - Acknowledge that we have to be focused on God alone and His works
  - Exercise focus in God's goodness even in challenging times
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. The Envy of the Man of God (73:1-14)
- b. The Enlightenment of the Man of God (73:15-20)
- c. The Enjoyment of the Man of God (73:21-28)

Psalms 73-83 are all attributed to Asaph (as Ps. 50 is), and they all refer to God as Elohim. Psalm 73 is a wisdom psalm whose sentiments are similar to those of Psalm 1. The psalmist admitted that in the midst of life's difficulties and dangers, he had perceived that evil people seem exempt from such things (73:5). They arrogantly refuse to consider God (73:11), and they seem to be blessed in spite of such arrogance (73:12).

Having come to his senses, Asaph described his change of heart as almost a conversion. He began to understand that the prosperity of sinners is only a mirage and that they are headed for certain disaster (73:18). In reality, the righteous are the ones who are blessed with divine insight and guidance (73:23-24). It is they who have hope in both heaven and earth (73:25). The righteous must therefore celebrate this hope and share it with others who need it (73:28).+



## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Billboards. GG facilitator will take a photo of the billboards along the highway. Using your laptop, flash the pictures and allow your group to react. Which billboard is truly attractive? Why? Bring the conversation to the point that the billboard takes your focus from driving or it just gets your attention.

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### 1. Who is Asaph? What does he do?

Asaph was Berechiah's son. He was an important tabernacle musician during King David's reign (1 Chr 6:31, 32, 39). Along with Heman the head singer and Ethan, Asaph was appointed to sound bronze cymbals during the ceremony when the ark was brought to the new tabernacle (1 Chr 15:1–19). David appointed Asaph to serve "by giving constant praise and thanks to the Lord God of Israel" (1 Chr 16:4, 5 LB) and to lead Israel in a special psalm of praise (1 Chr 16:7–36). Along with his relatives, he ministered daily before the ark (1 Chr 16:37; 25:6, 9; 1 Esd 1:15; 5:27, 59). He was also described as David's private prophet (1 Chr 25:1, 2). His name also appears in the superscriptions of Psalms 50 and 83 and in the guild he established, "the sons of Asaph" (1 Chr 25:1; 2 Chr 35:15; Ezr 2:41; Neh 7:44; 11:22).<sup>5</sup>

### 2. As a tabernacle musician, what happened to Asaph in verse 2? Why (vv.3-16)? What was the challenge he was facing that caused him to have this kind of commentary regarding the people around him?

<sup>5</sup> Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible (209). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House.

Be able to Share. How real is Asaph's situation? Can you cite personal instances when this has almost or has happened to you? What caused it?

3. Verse 16 tells us that Asaph could not comprehend why this is happening. What was his realization in verse 17? What does it mean to come into the sanctuary of God? How does coming to His presence change our minds and hearts? On the reverse, what hinders us from coming to His presence to experience His grace and comfort?
4. What were Asaph's realizations about the 'wicked' upon approaching God's holy presence ( vv 18-23)? His realization about God's grace in his life (vv.23- 26)?
5. Has the situation of Asaph's tabernacle environment changed? What changed? How did Asaph express this in verses 1, 27&28?

Application. Are you in the same situation as Asaph? Do you see a resolution? What will enable you to declare God's goodness despite your situation? What will enable you to say "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever"?

## PUT TO HEART

Stay focused on God.  
He will allow us to endure the challenges of life.



# 10 Psalm 1

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Understand what the word “blessed” means in the Bible
  - Appreciate the blessings of life one has in Christ
  - Begin a lifestyle of delighting in the Word of God through the study, meditation and application of the Word
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. The Comfort of the Godly (1:1-3)
- b. The Condemnation of the Ungodly (1:4-5)
- c. The Contrast between the Godly and the Ungodly (1:6)

This is a wisdom psalm considered by many scholars as an introduction to the whole Psalter. Its purpose is to support the idea espoused elsewhere in the wisdom literature that knowledge of and obedience to the Lord is the secret to success in life (Prov. 1:7; 9:10; 13:33; Ps. 111:10). It emphasizes the need to saturate oneself in the word of God (1:2), an idea greatly elaborated in the 176 verses of Psalm 119.(73:23-24).

## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Blessings. Bless each other today! At the start of the GG, make sure that each one is prepared to share a good word or a small token of blessing to someone in the group today!

What each of us has received today is the blessing of a good word. A good word truly encourages. It lifts the spirit and allows us to show more the character of Christ.

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Understanding the blessed man. From the verses below, discover who a blessed man is.

- Psalm 32:1–2
- Psalm 33:12
- Psalm 40:4
- Psalm 41:1–2
- Psalm 84:4–5, 12
- Matthew 5:3–12

So, who is the blessed man? What makes him blessed?

2. How does the blessed man regard sin? How does the psalm show us the blessed man's conviction towards sinfulness?

Application. How do you regard sin? How do you safeguard your testimony with regards to sin?

3. What delights the blessed man according to verse two? How does the blessed man show delight in God's Word? How can we delight in the Word of God every day?

From saying no to sin, the blessed man delights in God's Word. Delighting in God's Word is making God's Word the joy of his life. He further tells us that the blessed man MEDITATES on it. The word 'meditate' means 'to murmur' or 'to mutter'. It creates the image of "chewing" on it all day long. While day and night can be a figure of speech, it tells us that God's Word pre-occupies the time of the blessed man.

Application. How are you delighting in God's Word? Do you have a regular time of meditation and study of God's Word? If yes, praise God! If not, start tomorrow. (See Appendix A "How to Have a Meaningful Quiet Time")

4. How is the blessed man described in verse 3? How is fruitfulness portrayed in the imagery the psalmist has created (3b, 3c)? What is the key to fruitfulness according to John 15:4-7?

Fruitfulness is desired by the believer. Jesus teaches us to be fruitful. But in the process of fruitfulness, the Lord, through the image teaches us that the land should be watered and tended well.

Application. How are we cultivating our spiritual life so that, we, too, can be fruitful in our life? In your group, how can we develop a vibrant spiritual life? With abiding or obeying God as the key to fruitfulness, what are the things that we can do to enhance our spiritual growth?

5. Who is the wicked (v.4)? To what is he likened (v.4b)? What does the contrast show us about the “wicked’s” position and purpose in life?

The chaff is the skin of the grain. It is deemed useless as what is desired for harvest is the grain not the chaff. Do you see the drift of the contrast?

6. What is the destiny of the wicked (v.5)? the righteous (v.6)? How does knowing the destiny of man give you the sense of urgency to live in the ways of the Lord? How do you intend to begin living right in God?

What is Psalm One teaching you as a multiplying disciple of Jesus Christ?

## PUT TO HEART

Study God’s Word regularly.  
Follow the daily devotions and reading guide.  
Abide. Walk in the ways of the Lord.



# 11 Psalm 11

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Know that the Lord is our only true refuge
  - Appreciate the truth that we can rely on God's safekeeping
  - Trust the Lord wholeheartedly at all times
  - Draft two or three biblical principles that one can hold on to in times of trouble
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. Counsel to David (11:1-3)
- b. Confidence of David (11:4-6)
- c. Conclusion by David (11:7)

This is a psalm of confidence in which the original cause or lament has been overcome and its expression is therefore not included by the poet. The setting is not known, though such an occasion as the beginning of Absalom's revolt is possible. It seems that David had been advised by counselors to escape from Jerusalem, but his reliance on the Lord was so strong as to make this option unthinkable. Indeed, he was confident that the Lord would remove the threat by overcoming those who would do him harm.+

## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Fear. Share in the group: What are you most fearful of? Why? (This can be an animal, person, pastor future event, time of the day, time of the year)



## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the words “shield”, “fortress” or “refuge”? What do we need a refuge or fortress for? What would you do when you do not know where or who your enemies are? Has this happened to you? Share.
2. Observing the psalm, cite words that give you a clue as to the severity of David’s situation with his enemies.
  - “How can you say to your soul” (v.1b ) denotes the uncertainty of the situation.
  - Verse 2 hints that enemies are difficult to be detected.
3. What does verse 4 tell us of God? How does the truth of the verse comfort anyone who is in trouble or persecuted? How do these truths comfort you?
4. Who is the wicked (v. 5b)? Where is his destiny (v.6)?
5. Who is the righteous (v. 5)? What is the destiny of the righteous (v. 7)?
6. In light of who God is in your life, share with us how the Lord delivered you from a recent persecution. How has God been a fortress and refuge to you? Draft principles that you can hold on in times of trouble.

## PUT TO HEART

God is a reliable fortress and refuge.

# 12 Psalm 42

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Resolve to the truth that God is able to see us through life
  - Affirm our desire to be in the Lord's quiet presence
  - Trust God for all of life!
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. Thirsting for God (42:1-5)
- b. Trusting in God (42:6-11)

A song of individual lament, this first psalm in Book II uses the word Elohim ("God"). The whole section, in fact, is marked by this feature. In Psalm 42-72 the name "Elohim" occurs 164 times, compared with 30 uses of Yahweh ("Lord"). This psalm also seems to have been written by or under the auspices of the "sons of Korah" along with several others in Book II (Pss. 44-49). Korah, a great-grandson of Levi, rebelled against Aaron's leadership (Num. 16:1-2), but his own descendants distinguished themselves as leaders in Israel's worship (1 Chron. 6:32-38).

The unknown author spoke of his intense longing for God and his desire to worship Him with others in the temple (Ps. 42:4). It seems that for some reason, he had been denied access to this holy privilege, hence his bitter lament. Unless the language of verse 6 is to be taken figuratively, one must conclude that the poet was a long distance away from Jerusalem. While he experienced a great longing for the temple and its services, he was aware of God's presence and he knew that God was not geographically limited (42:11).+

## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Craving. For the ladies in the group. What do you crave for when you were infanticipating? (If someone can prepare manggang hilaw and bagoong as this section is ongoing!) For the men, how did you give in to your wife's craving, most especially for the firstborn in your brood?

We crave and long for food during special times in our life and we thank the people around us for allowing us the opportunity to meet those cravings. The Korahites longed and craved to come to God's presence that is why they wrote Psalm 42. While the psalm offers no resolve to their craving and longings, they continued to hope and trust in God!

For your opening worship section, you may include the song "As the Deer."

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Observe the Passage. Using the simile of the deer, how did the psalmist paint the picture of his longing for God and the work he used to do (vv. 1-4)?
2. How else did the Psalmist describe the sorrow of his soul? Describe his longing for God using heights and depth images (vv.6-7).

Be able to Share. Has it ever happened to you that you have described the sorrow of your soul similar to the psalmist's?

3. What is the hope the psalmist expressed in verse 8 and the anguish he is experiencing as stated in verses 9-10?

Be able to Share. We see the human side of the psalmist. He declares his faith and later speaks to God of his challenging situation. What does this say of his relationship with God? The truth about God?

4. How did the psalmist affirm his faith and hope in God in verse 5 and 11 despite the non-resolution of his predicament? Can you do the same?

Worship. You can end this session in a worshipful attitude. Worship leader can prod those with heavy burdens to surrender it to God. GG members can gather around these people and pray for them.

## PUT TO HEART

While not all challenges in life will have resolutions, believers should be resolute about his faith and hope in God!  
At the end of the day, our faith in God  
is what will see us through.



# 13 Psalm 34

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Know and be certain about the Lord's power to save
  - Appreciate the Lord's ministry to all the saints
  - Praise the Lord for His lovingkindness towards us at all times
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. David's Praise of the Lord (34:1-3)
- b. David's Prayer to the Lord (34:4-6)
- c. David's Prosperity in the Lord (34:7-10)
- d. David's Proclamation of the Lord (34:11-14)
- e. David's Preservation in the Lord (34:14-22)

An individual song of thanksgiving, this psalm, according to the title, originated in the days when David was "on the run" from Saul. A slight problem is apparent in the title in that David actually feigned madness before the Philistine ruler Achish, not Abimelech (1 Sam. 21:10-15). On the other hand, Abimelech may be a title for any Philistine ruler. That seems to be the case in the dealings of the patriarchs with the Philistines (Gen.20:1-18; 21:22-34; 26:1-17). In all, eight psalms are assigned to this decade of David's life, the chronological sequence perhaps being 7, 59, 56, 34, 52, 57, 142, and 54. Of further interest is the fact that this is an alphabetic acrostic with all but one letter of the Hebrew alphabet used as the beginning of each verse in sequence.+

David began by urging others to join him in praising the Lord, and then he recounted how God had heard his prayers and delivered him (Ps. 34:6). Those who depend on the Lord, said the poet, will lack nothing (34:10). Those who expect His blessings must, of course, depart from evil. When they do so, they, like him, will see how faithful the Lord is. The evil will surely meet judgment, but the saints of the Lord will never be held guilty in His eyes (34:22).

## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Show Up. How would you feel if a VIP (John Piper, Francis Chan, Edmund Chan) shows up in your GG tonight to be your guest teacher? (Make sure that the person showing up is well loved and admired by the group!)

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Context of the Psalm. What was the situation of David at this point in his life (1 Samuel 21:10-15)? How did David respond to his situation based on Psalm 34?

David expressed his heart as he encouraged the people to bless, boast and magnify the Lord. This is a response of a man whose heart is right with the Lord even if circumstances around him are not in his favor. "God is already great, without any human help. Yet the essence of praise is the acknowledgment and public declaration of God's greatness; such praise does not change the divine essence, but creates awareness of God's greatness in the perception of others. And, as an expression of awareness, it is also a personal acknowledgment of divine majesty and glory."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Craigie, P. C. (2002). Vol. 19: Word Biblical Commentary : Psalms 1-50. Word Biblical Commentary (279). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

2. In verse 4, David gives a declaration of his weakness and God's deliverance. How did the Lord 'show up' in David's great hour of need (vv.4-6)? How did David encapsulate what the Lord has done for him in verse 7?

- The Lord answered (v.4a)
- The Lord delivered (v.4b)
- The Lord did not put him to shame ( v.5)
- The Lord heard (v.6a)
- The Lord saved (v.6b)

Be able to Share. Can you sense the emotion of David as you were reading the psalm? Describe. Do you share the same emotion when the Lord 'shows up' in your hour of great need? Tell us about it!

3. In David's continuous praise of God, how did he declare God's goodness and provision in verses 8-10?

Be able to Share. Can you declare God's goodness and provision? As each one makes a declaration, you may end it with verse 10b 'but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.'

4. Verses 11-12 is the teaching section of the psalm. After David's declaration of praise, he now exhorts the people to fear the Lord. What is it fear the Lord according to verses 13-14?
5. What are the blessings of being in the Lord according to verses 15-18?
6. While being in the Lord does not exempt those who fear him from afflictions (v.19), what does the Lord do for the righteous (vv. 19-20)? For the wicked (vv.21-22)?



The LORD'S deliverance, preservation and redemption are for those who fear Him. It is also good to note that verse 20 speaks of the Messiah (cf. John 19:36). The wicked on the other hand will die of affliction and their eternal destiny is condemnation!

## PUT TO HEART

The Lord will always prove Himself faithful to those who fear Him.

# 14 Psalm 139

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Understand the character of God as revealed in the psalm
  - Appreciate the truth that we can trust God for who He is and what He can do
  - Trust God for His awesome character
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. The Presence of the Lord (139:1-12)
- b. The Power of the Lord (139:13-18)
- c. The Preservation of the Lord (139:19-24)

In this wisdom psalm, David reflected on the mystery of his own creation and of God's gracious preservation of him. He marveled at divine omniscience, the fact that God knows all about him, even the secret things (139:2,4). But God is also omnipresent. Should David go anywhere in the universe God would also be there. Even more astounding, God knew about him before he was born. In fact, God had created him and even before he had achieved final form. God knew how he would look and what would become of Him (139:16). To David, such things were overwhelming in their implications. But God's care does not end in creation. God is not some distant deity who merely begins the life process and then lets it run on its own. He protects His own from harm and evil from without (139:19-20) and is also able to convict of evil within. David therefore prayed that God would probe deep within his heart, deal with the sin there, and then lead him into life everlasting (139:23-24).+

## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Something Special. Tell us what's so special about you. (In your worship time, suggested song is "He Knows my Name" by Tommy Walker.)

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Observe the Passage. Read verses 1-6 and check out who is the one speaking in the Psalm. What has God done for David that merits all the praises given to Him? Cite your observations and generalizations.

What character of God is preeminent in this section? How does it amaze you that the Lord is acquainted in all your ways? If God knows all our ways, how then should we live?

God is omniscient. Yahweh has perfect knowledge of all of David's life and thoughts. It is God alone who possesses such absolute knowledge of His creatures. He understands David's thoughts "afar off;". Neither space nor time exists for God. The Lord had winnowed or sifted David, subjecting his life to the closest and most discriminating investigation.<sup>7</sup>

2. Verses 7 -12 teach us about the omnipresence of God. How does David prove the point that God is indeed everywhere? Knowing the life of David, why do you think David was praising God for His abiding presence in his life?

What was Jesus' promise to the disciples regarding His continual presence (Matthew 28:20b ;John 16:7-8)? How is this true in your life today?

<sup>7</sup>Smith, J. E. (1996). *The Wisdom Literature and Psalms (Ps 139)*. Joplin, Mo.: College Press Pub. Co.

God is omnipresent. God is to be praised because He is present everywhere. He is behind us and before us (v. 5). No one can escape from him. To drive this home, the psalmist proposes various places of hiding—heaven (v. 8), hell (v. 8), the uttermost parts of the sea (v. 9), darkness (v. 11)—but all are to no avail. By using this imagery, David is not suggesting that he wanted to escape from God (although many do), but is rather underscoring the sheer impossibility of it.<sup>8</sup>

3. Check out Genesis 1 and 2. What is the special difference by which God created man (1:1-31;2:7)? How do the Genesis accounts substantiate the truth that David is driving at in Psalm 139:13-16?

How awesome is the thought that God breathed life into you, knows your every thought, formed every cell, and has wonderfully put you together. What does it mean to be “fearfully and wonderfully made” according to verses 13-16?

God’s power is evidenced by His creation of each individual. God created our ‘reins’ (our innermost being, that is, those things that control us—minds, hearts, wills). He ‘covered’ us while we were in the womb. The word ‘covered’ may also be translated ‘knit’ or ‘wove’. By using this term the psalmist pictures himself as a fine piece of art and God as a skilled craftsman. The psalmist’s conclusion is that he is ‘fearfully and wonderfully made.’

Some of the newer translations render this phrase as a description of God—‘You are fearfully wonderful,’ that is, a God who is so marvelous and wonderful that the only thing one can do is stand in awe of Him.

<sup>8</sup> Ellsworth, R. (2006). *Opening up Psalms* (126). Leominster: Day One Publications.

It isn't all that important which of the two translations we follow. A fearfully wonderful God can only do fearfully wonderful works. David would have us know he is not just getting carried away with his own writing. He is not indulging in poetic license. He says it is the deep conviction of his soul that all God's works are marvelous (v. 14).<sup>9</sup>

Why can you say that YOU are fearfully and wonderfully made? What is so special about you that you can say that God truly created you wonderfully?

4. Verses 17 to 24 show us a realization from David. Can you tell us of the turnarounds you have observed? What is David telling God in this section?

David recognizes his limitations and sinfulness vis-a vis God's immensity and holiness (vv. 17-22). He responded by asking God to search his heart and thoughts for the things that are not of God that he may be led to God's everlasting way which is the way to righteousness.

5. If you were David, how would you respond to God's awesome character revealed in the psalm? How does God's character and works allow us to trust in Him fully?

## PUT TO HEART

God's character is awesome.

His omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence should bring us to the point of worship, trust and surrender.

We have a big God whom we can trust!

<sup>9</sup> Ellsworth (126–127).

# 15 Psalm 118

At the end of the lesson, every GG member should be able to:

- Know that we have to give thanks to the Lord at all times and in all circumstances
  - Appreciate our access in the Lord to praise him
  - Ascribe praise to the Lord at all times for all things
- 

## BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE

- a. Beginning the Procession (118:1-4)
- b. Along the Way (118:5-18)
- c. Entrance to the Temple (118:19)
- d. Greeting the Procession (118:20-27)
- e. Response of the Arrivals (118:28)
- f. Common Doxology (118:29)

This psalm is presumably a psalm of communal thanksgiving in which the text was sung as Israelites proceeded to the temple. After an opening appeal to the covenant faithfulness of God (118:1; repeated at the end, 118:29), the poet described the obstacles and handicap that must be overcome as one makes a pilgrimage to the temple (118:5-12). But God is always faithful to those who seek Him, and He will assist them in their pursuit (118:13-14). Arriving at the temple gate, the worshiper requested entrance (118:19). Those who opened to him extolled the name of the Lord (118:20-21) and expressed their praise that the place and occasion are indeed proper to the worship of God (118:22-26). The pilgrim added his assent (118:28), and he and all the others combined their voices in a final doxology (118:29).+

## SUGGESTED OPENING ACTIVITY

Show and Tell. Bring a picture of your favorite travel destination. Tell us about the most beautiful place on earth you have been to. Imagine that you are at the top of the Mayon Volcano staring at God's beautiful creation. What would be your immediate response? Wouldn't you be in a state of awe and wonder?

Spiel: In the same way, we ascribe praise to the Lord for all the things He has done for us! Can you share with us how the Lord blessed you this week?

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Observe the Passage. What is the repeated phrase of the first four verses? Why is this repetition important in the life of God's people? Recounting the Old testament, how has the Lord met God's people during troubled times (vv. 5-7)? How did he confess his dependence and confidence in the Lord (vv.1-4)?
2. How did the Lord deliver His people from harm according to verses 10-13? How does verses 8-9 affirm God's deliverance of His people?

Be able to Share. How has the Lord met with you in troubled times? Were there times in your life that you trusted yourself more but in the end the Lord intervened? As the group shares, make sure that you emphasize verse 14 "The Lord is my strength and my song, he has become my salvation."

3. The worshippers declare the power of God as denoted by the repetition of the words "right hand" and "valiantly." What is the proper response to the Lord's saving grace according to the psalmist (vv.17-21)?

Be able to Share. The psalmist showed forth his unworthiness in verse 18. Was there a time you felt unworthy of the Lord's intervention in your life? Is this a healthy mindset? Why /why not? How did the Lord deal with you at that time?

4. While verse 22 -24 can be in reference to a King who experienced the salvation of the Lord after a series of challenges, who is fulfilment of the King who has been rejected and has become the capstone? Check the following verses: Isaiah 8:14; Matthew 21:42; 1 Peter 2:3.
5. "In the name of the Lord" is an important phrase (v.26). Why is the psalmist invoking the 'name of the Lord" in his deliverance and success? How similar is this phrase to "in Jesus' name?" Why do we end our prayers "In the name of the Lord or in Jesus' name?" What does the phrase denote?
6. The psalm begins and ends with the same text. Can you make your own psalm inspired by this study? Begin and end your personal song or prayer with..."Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good for his steadfast love endures forever!"

## PUT TO HEART

It is good to give thanks to the Lord  
for anything and everything!

<sup>+</sup> Dyer, Charles & Merrill, Gene. (2001). THE OLD TESTAMENT EXPLORER: Discovering the Essence, Background, and Meaning of Every Book in the Old Testament. Nashville, Tennessee: WORD Publications.







# APPENDICES

# 1 Appendix

## HOW TO HAVE A MEANINGFUL QUIET TIME

### REGULAR QUIET TIME WITH GOD

Your regular quiet time with God is not designed for detailed intellectual analysis of the Bible passage, but for prayerful consideration and exploration to see what God might be saying to you. This will strengthen your relationship with Him. As the words hit home, allow the Holy Spirit to show you what you should do next. Then you can say you are 'listening' to God - with his Spirit meeting with your spirit, conveying to you what God wants from you as you respond to what you are hearing.

This style of reading is often called 'devotional reading'. It is important to distinguish between reading for information and reading for formation. Devotional reading is not so much concerned with acquiring knowledge as with transforming our lives and relationships.

More than one process is at work when you read devotionally so you will need to employ different methods to those normally used to process written information.

Here are some practical hints to help you read effectively:

- Read slowly.
- Read the passage several times, perhaps in different Bible versions if available.
- Read carefully to understand what the passage is actually saying rather than what you think it ought to be saying!

- Savor the passage. Sometimes you will need to read the passage in full to feel the force of its message; at other times you might pick out a verse or a line to mull over before moving on.
- Try to imagine yourself in the situation, as a participant or spectator.

Reading the Bible this way is especially helpful for your regular times with God. This will need to be complemented with times of in-depth Bible study, when your intellectual abilities and skills are brought to the passage. This will help you to understand the Bible more fully, which in turn will give you greater benefits from your devotional reading.

## INGREDIENTS FOR YOUR SPECIAL MEETING WITH GOD

What are the key ingredients of this special time for meeting with God?

### An open attitude

Remember you are meeting God, Who knows what is best for you – even though sometimes you might not understand where He is taking you. Be open to what God wants to say to you, and how you can respond. It may mean surprises or may require radical changes in your life.

### A time

Most of us are 'creatures of habits' and regular habits can be useful. If you plan to meet God at the same time and in the same place each day, this can help you to come prepared. Choose a time when you are alert, unlikely to be interrupted and able to put to one side any pressing need.

- Many people find first thing in the morning is ideal, as they are fresh and less likely to be pressured by other concerns and unplanned interruptions. They begin the

new day with God and can trust Him to take care of all that is to happen during it.

- Some people prefer the evening-but make sure you are sufficiently awake!
- Others prefer to take time out during the day – a mealtime, while commuting to work by train or bus, or a few minutes between other responsibilities.

Experiment until you find the time that suits you best.

How long should I spend?

The quality of time spent with God is more important than the quantity. You could start with five to ten minutes. As you grow closer to God you will find that you desire to spend a longer time with Him. God knows your situation and the time you have available – so it really depends on how much you want to grow in your friendship with Him.

A Place

Find a place where you can focus on God, ideally somewhere relatively quiet and free from distractions. Most people are able to focus more easily on God when alone. However, if you cannot find such a place, you may still be able to ignore what is happening around you and discover spiritual, rather than physical solitude.

Don't be daunted!

Do not be daunted if at first you are unable to find the 'ideal' time and place. Flexibility and creativity are keys to resolving such difficulties.

Negotiate with those you live with for time and space. You could ask your house-mate(s) not to chat with you for a few minutes or let the family know that the closed door in the evening means 'please do not disturb'. However, make sure you don't create misunderstandings as you work out these practical details.

Be creative in making time to spend alone with God. All of us face pressures – but whether you are an office worker, a business person who commutes for several hours each day, a member of a large family in a small home or apartment, or a busy mother with pre-school children – you can still find some time.

If, despite your efforts, you do not find a satisfactory block of time each day, develop the skill of meeting God many times during the day. Find a minute here, several there. Or plan for an extended interval once or twice a week when someone else is able to mind any pre-school children and keep them out of earshot. You might even find that an occasional formal or self-managed retreat suits your personal circumstances better.

#### A Bible

Choose a version of the Bible that you can readily understand. Many people appreciate the New International Version, the English Standard Version and the New Revised Standard Version. Ask a Christian friend or church leader to help you select the right version for you. A paraphrase like Eugene Peterson's *The Message*, can also be helpful.

#### Paper and Pen

Keep some paper or a notebook handy to jot down things that come to mind, to help you keep track of what God is telling you.

## A FOUR-STEP PATTERN TO GET YOU STARTED

### Prepare

Consciously prepare yourself to meet with God by opening your life to His presence and expecting to receive from Him.

- Use a simple prayer, such as 'Lord, as I meet You now please help me listen carefully to You and to respond obediently'.
- Because God is the author of the Bible, ask Him to help you understand what the particular Bible passage might mean for your unique situation. Perhaps you could pray Psalm 119:18 – 'Open my mind, and let me discover the wonders of your Law'.

### Read

Read an appropriate section of the Bible, taking time to 'get the feel' of what is written. Sometimes you will need to read through the section several times.

### Explore

Think about the meaning of the passage. Three especially helpful questions are:

- What is the main point of the passage?
- What does the passage tell me about God? In some parts of the Bible we read only of God the Father; in others we read about Jesus (God's Son) or the Holy Spirit.
- What might God be saying to me personally through this passage? In what ways can I apply the Bible's principles in my own circumstances and relationships?

Use your notebook to write down your discoveries.

### Respond

Respond to your discoveries.

- Make your insights the basis of your prayer. Praise God

for who He is and what you have discovered about Him. Thank Him for what He is doing in your life. Apologize for your failures and ask His forgiveness. Ask Him to meet your needs and those of others.

- Meeting God is life-changing. To make your time with God worthwhile, it needs to have an impact on your daily life. Ask God to help you live out what you have learned – at home, at work, in relationships – indeed, in the whole of your life.
- Christians are not meant to live in isolation. Look for opportunities to share your discoveries about God with others, in both words and actions. You may be able to use these insights to encourage and help another person, such as a family member, another Christian or a friend who is not yet a Christian.+

\*Warren&Shell, Dynamic Bible Study Methods



# 2 Appendix

## WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A CHRISTIAN

Has anyone shared with you from the Scripture what a Christian should know?

There are five things you should believe to become a Christian:

### 1. THE PROBLEM

Everyone has sinned against God. No Exception.

*“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”  
- Romans 3:23*

### 2. THE PREDICAMENT

Payment due for our sin is eternal separation from God.  
No Excuses

*“But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”  
- Romans 5:8*

### 3. THE PROVISION

God provided the remedy for our predicament. God sent His Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross as payment for sins we can never repay.

*“But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”  
- Romans 5:8*

## 4. THE PREREQUISITE

Ask for forgiveness and turn away from your sins. Just like any gift, God's free gift of eternal life must be received through faith. It is by grace that we are saved. No one can earn it by good works.

*"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."*

- Ephesians 2:8–9

## 5. THE PROMISE

The Bible promises eternal life to anyone who will repent and believe that Jesus died on the cross to pay for their sins. He has crossed over from death to life—and will no longer be condemned.

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."*

- John 5:24

Do you believe the above affirmations from Scripture? If yes, you know what it takes to be a Christian! I encourage you to express this faith in a form of prayer to God:

*"Lord Jesus, beginning today I ask you to become the Lord of my life. I believe that you died on the cross to pay for my sins. I confess that I am a sinner and I repent of my sins. Thank you for forgiving me and cleansing me from all my unrighteousness. Thank you for the gift of Eternal Life. Help me Lord to live a life pleasing to you. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen!"*

Now that you know what it takes to be a Christian....

- **P**ray to God constantly.
- **R**ead your Bible every day.
- **E**xperience Christian worship by attending worship services.
- **S**tudy the Bible with other Christians.
- **S**hare the good news with others.
  
- **O**bey God at all times.
- **N**urture your spiritual walk.

# 3 Appendix

## SONGS OF REST

### STILL

Artist: Hillsongs/Reuben Morgan

C G/B Am  
Hide me now  
F D/F# Gsus G  
Under Your wings.  
C F  
Cover me  
Dm7 G  
Within Your mighty hand.

CHORUS: F G/B C2  
When the oceans rise and thunders roar  
F G/B Am  
I will soar with You above the storm  
F G/B C2  
Father, You are king over the flood  
F G/B F(1st time)  
C(2nd Time)  
I will be still and know You are God

VERSE 2:  
C2 G/B Am  
Find rest my soul  
F D/F# Gsus G  
In Christ a-lone  
C2 F  
Know His power  
Dm7 G  
In quietness and trust  
(Chorus)

# WHO AM I

Artist: Chris Tomlin

Intro:

G C2 Em7 Dsus 2x

Vrs 1:

G Dsus Em7  
Who am I, that the Lord of all the earth  
Dsus C  
would care to know my name  
D C  
would care to feel my hurt  
G Dsus Em7  
Who am I, that the bright and morning star  
Dsus C  
would choose to light the way  
D C  
For my ever wandering heart

Bridge:

C Dsus  
Not because of who I am  
Em7 Dsus  
but because of what You've done  
Em7 Dsus  
not because of what I've done  
C Dsus  
but because of who You are

Chorus:

G Dsus Em7  
I am a flower quickly fading  
Dsus C  
here today and gone tomorrow  
Dsus C  
a wave tossed in the ocean  
Dsus  
a vapor in the wind  
G Dsus Em7  
still You hear me when I'm calling

Dsus C  
 Lord You catch me when I'm falling  
 Dsus C  
 and You've told me who I am,  
     G C2 Em7 Dsus 2x(1st and 3rd time)  
     G Em7 C2 3x(2nd time)  
 I am yours

Vrs. 2:(same chords as 1st verse)  
 Who am I, that the eyes that see my sin  
 would look on me with love  
 and watch me rise again.  
 Who am I, that the voice that calms the sea  
 would call out through the rain  
 and calm the storm in me.

Ending:  
 G C2  
 I am Yours  
 Em7 Dsus G C2 Em7 Dsus  
 I am Yours  
 G C2  
 Whom shall I fear  
                     Em7 Dsus  
 Whom shall I fear  
                     G C2  
 'cause I am Yours  
             Em7 Dsus C2  
 I am Yours

G  
 You have my heart  
             C C/B Am  
 And I am Yours forever  
             G  
 You are my strength  
             C C/B Am  
 God of grace and power  
 PRE-CHORUS  
 G Em C D  
 Everything You hold in Your hand  
                     G Em  
 Still You make time for me  
             D Dsus4 D

I can't understand

CHORUS

G G/F#  
Praise You, God of earth and sky  
Em Em7 Cadd9 D  
Dsus4 D  
How beautiful is Your unfailing love, unfailing love  
G G/F#  
And you never change, God you remain  
Em Em7 Cadd9 D  
Dsus4 D  
The Holy One and my unfailing love, unfailing love

G  
You are my rock  
C C/B Am  
The One I hold on to  
G C C/B Am  
You are my song, and I sing for You

PRE-CHORUS/CHORUS x 2

CHORUS

Em7: 020000  
Cadd9: x32030

Copyright Credits: Written By: Chris Tomlin and Cary Pierce Copyright: ©  
2004 Sparrow Records & Six Step Records

# GOD WILL MAKE A WAY

Artist: Don Moen

G D C G  
God will make a way where there seems to be no way  
C G Am7 CMaj7 D  
He works in ways we cannot see, He will make a way for me  
G D C G  
He will be my guide, hold me closely to His side,  
C G Em7  
with love and strength for each new day,  
Am7 D  
He will make a way  
CMaj7 D G  
He will make a way.

Bridge:

Eb F Eb Bb  
By a roadway in the wilderness He'll lead me,  
Eb F Gsus G  
Rivers in the desert will I see  
C D G D/F# Em  
Heaven and earth will fade but His word will still remain  
C D E  
And He will do something new today.

(Repeat 1st stanza)



# BE THOU MY VISION

Artist: Unknown

Verse 1:

D Em G D  
Be Thou my vision, oh Lord of my heart  
A G A  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art  
G D/F# Bm G A  
Thou my best thought by day or by night,  
Bm F#m G D  
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence, my light.

Verse 2:

D Em G D  
Be Thou my wisdom and Thou my true word  
A G A  
I ever with thee and Thou with me Lord;  
G D/F# Bm G A  
Thou my great Father and I Thy true son,  
Bm F#m G D  
Thou in me dwelling and I, with Thee, one.

Verse 3:

D Em G D  
Be thou my breast plate, my sword for the fight  
A G A  
Be thou my armor and be thou my might  
G D/F# Bm G A  
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tower  
Bm F#m G D  
Raise thou me heavenward, Oh power of my power

Verse 4:

D Em G D  
Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,

Copyright Credits: Album: God Will Make A Way CCLI Song #: 458620

Written By: Don Moen Copyright: © 1990 Integrity's Hosanna! Music



# IN CHRIST ALONE

Artist: Adrienne Liesching and Geoff Moore

## Verse 1

G D G A  
In Christ alone my hope is found.  
D/F# G D/F# Em7 G/A D  
He is my Light, my strength, my song.  
G D G A  
This Cornerstone, this solid ground  
D/F# G D/F# Em7 G/A D  
Firm through the fierc -- est drought and storm.  
D/F# G D Asus A  
What heights of love! What depths of peace----,  
D G Bm7 Asus A  
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease----.  
G D G A  
My Comforter, my all in all,  
D/F# G D/F# Em7 G/A D  
Here in the love of Christ I stand.  
Dsus / D G D  
(In Christ alone...)

## Verse 2

In Christ alone, who took on flesh,  
Fullness of God in helpless Babe.  
This gift of love and righteousness  
Scorned by the ones He came to save  
'til on that cross as Jesus died  
the wrath of God was satis--fied,  
for ev'ry sin on Him was laid.  
Here in the death of Christ I live.

## Turnaround after verse 2:

D G / A / Em7 G / D Dsus /  
...live  
D G D  
(There in the ground...)

Verse 3

There in the ground His body lay,  
Light of the world by darkness slain.  
Then bursting forth in glorious day,  
Up from the grave He rose again.  
And as He stands in victory,  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me.  
For I am His, and He is mine,

D / B A

Bought with the precious blood of Christ-----  
(No guilt in life)

Verse 4

No guilt in life, no fear in death:  
This is the pow'r of Christ in me.  
From life's first cry to final breath,  
Jesus commands my desti----ny.  
No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man  
Can ever pluck me from His hand  
'til He returns, or calls me home;

Ending

D/F# G D/F# Em7 G/A D  
Here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.  
D/F# G D/F# Em7 G/A Bm  
Here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.  
D/F# G D/F# Em7 G/A D  
Here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.

Instrumental ending:

D G / A D/F# / Em7 G / Ds

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# 4 Appendix

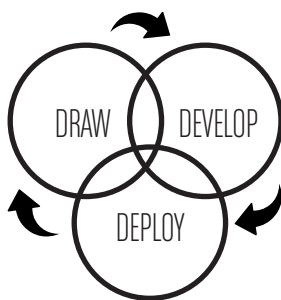
## MULTIPLYING DISCIPLE

DISCIPLESHIP is the main thing in church. Everything we do gears towards Multiplying Disciples. Paul instructed Timothy, “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). This verse gives a picture of a Multiplying Disciple—Paul discipling Timothy, Timothy discipling faithful men, the faithful men discipling others, and the others who will disciple others. Discipleship is a never-ending multiplication of Christ’s followers!

A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST is a committed follower of Christ. Jesus said, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23). As you surrender your life to Christ and experience transformation, pray God will lead you to the right people to disciple.

## DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS

A MULTIPLYING DISCIPLE finds “Timothies” who will multiply as a disciple. It requires endurance, obedience, and patience (2 Timothy 2:3-7). It involves a cyclical process of Draw, Develop, and Deploy:



**DRAW**  
Evangelizing  
Exalting

**DEVELOP**  
Enlisting  
Equipping  
Edifying

**DRAW**  
Engaging  
Enabling

- Evangelizing. Proclaim and Share the Gospel and Love of Christ
- Exalting. Worship and Praise God Together
- Enlisting. Connect and Assimilate to Growth Groups and Membership
- Equipping. Teach and Train for Service
- Edifying. Renew and Refresh for Spiritual Transformation
- Engaging. Deploy for Ministry and Send for Missions
- Enabling Serve and Support all Ministries

A PERSONAL TASK of guiding others to be a Multiplying Disciple.

## DRAW

- Share the gospel at every opportunity.
- Worship and invite people regularly in our Sunday services.
- Check up on their Sunday experience.

## DEVELOP

- Channel them to your Growth Group.
- Explain the importance of church membership.
- Stand alongside during their baptism.
- Sit beside them in equipping classes.
- Go together in fellowship groups.
- Discover and decide together in Crossroad Weekends.

## DEPLOY

- Serve together in the ministry.
- Participate together in outreach.
- Pray for each other in missions involvement.

## A COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY of Multiplying Disciples.

Each one of us has a role to play. Be one of the Multiplying Disciples of GCFSM. This is God's will for you. Be confident God will equip you as you commit and remain faithful in our pursuit of Multiplying Disciples.

<sup>20</sup>Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,<sup>21</sup> equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. - Hebrews 13:20–21



## MISSION

To Know Christ and Make Him Known

## VISION

By God's grace, we shall be a disciplemaking church reaching influencers within our community to impact the Philippines and beyond.

## CORE VALUES

- Trust based on God's Word
- Love in All Relationships
- Empowerment by the Holy Spirit
- Diligence that Leads to Excellence

## STRATEGIC GOALS

- Sustained Discipleship Process
- Continuing Leadership Development
- Everyone in a Growth Group
- Evangelism and Meaningful Worship
- Intentional Satellite Development and Support Church Planting Efforts

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"The Book of Psalms is a record of God's call and of his people's response, enacted a thousand times in history. The Psalms are a photograph album of ancient Israel in its relationship and reaction to God who summons his people and promises his presence and secures the future. Anytime we interpret the Psalms, a journal of Israel's life—so filled with joys and sorrows, inscribed with aspirations and failures—we will find ourselves experiencing a catharsis of the soul." — C. Hassell Bullock



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