

A People of the Book
8-Year Curriculum
Year 7 Quarter 4

A Study of
Selected Texts from

Psalm

Mike White

- 1. Introduction to the Psalms Study Guide**
- 2. Lesson 1 –The Blessed Man-Psalms 1, 5, & 8- Oct 6th**
- 3. Lesson 2–Our God is an Awesome God-Psalms 10,18,& 19-Oct 13th**
- 4. Lesson 3 – The Lord is My Shepherd!-Psalms 23,31,&34-Oct 20th**
- 5. Lesson 4–Trusting God No Matter What!-Psalms 37,42,&46-Oct 27th**
- 6. Lesson 5–The Loving-kindness & Mercy of God-Psalms 51&63-Nov 3rd**
- 7. Lesson 6 – The Favor of the Lord-Psalms 84, 87, & 90-Nov 10th**

- Gospel Meeting will be on Nov 17th**

- 8. Lesson 7 – The Sovereignty of God in the Affairs of Men-Psalms 92, 100, & 103-Nov 24th**
- 9. Lesson 8 – Our God is a Redeeming God – Psalms 106 & 107-Dec 1st**
- 10. Lesson 9-The Power of Righteous Living-Psalms 110, 112, & 116-Dec 8th**
- 11. Lesson 10 – The Shortest and Longest Chapters in the Bible – Psalms 117 & 119-Dec 15th**
- 12. Lesson 11-I Will Lift Up My Eyes!-Psalms 121, 127, 131, & 133-Dec 22nd**
- 13. Lesson 12-God Will Never Let You Go!-Psalms 137, 139,& 150- Dec 29th**

Welcome to our study of the Book of Psalms. It was a difficult decision for me on how to approach this study since there are 150 Psalms with each one having great spiritual meaning and encouragement. I sampled several in the congregation to determine what their favorite Psalm was. For example:

Bill Herald Jr.-Psalm 23, 46, and 100

Helen McNeese – Psalm 119

Bruce Adams – Psalm 51

Jeff Schaefer – Psalm 119

Ellen Steele – Psalm 31

Gary Wilson – Psalm 150

Jacoby Steele – Psalm 103, 34, and 27(sorry Jacoby I overlooked this one)

Diane White – Psalm 23

I should have done more sampling but I simply ran out of time. I have included all of these Psalms with the exception of Psalm 27 in the compilation of Psalms that we will study this quarter. There are 34 Psalms that will be the focus of our class discussions. I love the Psalms immensely and have used the input of the congregation above combined with my own delight in specific Psalms to select the 34 that we will study. The Psalms that we will focus on this quarter include:

Psalm 1 – The Blessed Man

Psalm 5 – How to Deal with Our Enemies

Psalm 8 – The Glories of God and the Limitations of Man

Psalm 10 – What Do You Do When God Seems Far Off?

Psalm 18 – What a Great God We Serve!

Psalm 19 – God Desires That We Know Him!

Psalm 23 – The Lord is My Shepherd!

Psalm 31 – God is My Refuge!

Psalm 34 – God is My Deliverer!

Psalm 37 – Don't Worry, Trust God!

Psalm 42 – Thirsting for God

Psalm 46 – Be Still and Know that I Am God

Psalm 51 – David's Prayer for Forgiveness

Psalm 63 – Cling to the Lord, O My Soul!

Psalm 84 – Pilgrimage

Psalm 87 – All My Fountains Are in You!

Psalm 90 – A Prayer of Moses

Psalm 92 – Growing Old in the Lord

Psalm 100 – Acceptable Worship

Psalm 103 – Our Awesome God

Psalm 106 – God is Loving and Longsuffering
Psalm 107 – Consider the Great Love of the Lord
Psalm 110 – A King and a Priest
Psalm 112 – The Righteous Man
Psalm 116 – Confidence in the Lord
Psalm 117 – The Worship of God
Psalm 119 – The Word of God
Psalm 121 – I will Lift Up My Eyes!
Psalm 127 – The Essential Lord!
Psalm 131 – How to Walk in the Circle of the Will of God
Psalm 133 – The Beauty of Unity
Psalm 137 – By the Rivers of Babylon
Psalm 139 – The Hound of Heaven
Psalm 150 – Praise Him!

As you can see I elected to direct our study toward the devotional value of these Psalms as an encouragement to our Christian walk with the Holy Father, and our service to one another. I had a lot of fun working through these Psalms and I trust you will find them useful as well because our God intended it be that way. I also plan to use several members of the class to share their thinking and emotional attachment to several of these Psalms. I know this will be enlightening and helpful for all of us. I want to thank David, many other contributors, and the Holy Spirit for their legacy of faith they left behind that we now know as the Book of Psalms.

Amen and Amen!

Mike White
Teacher

Read Psalms 1, 5, and 8**Lesson Purpose: Understanding the Ways of God.****➤ Psalm 1: The Blessed Man**

Blessing and judgment are the dual themes of Psalms 1. Nowhere is the progression of the spiritual decline of the wicked or ungodly person better illustrated than in Psalm 1. Think about it to walk, stand, and then sit describes a growing compromise, accommodation, and desire for the world and the things in it. Unfortunately, we see a prime example of this in the life of Lot (Genesis 13:12, 14:12, 19:1). God makes it very clear to us that if we walk outside of the circle of the will of God there will be consequences both immediate and eternal in judgment. God calls us to follow the pattern of the blessed man and urges us not to turn to evil or live a compromised life in this world or we will suffer the fate of the wicked ones! The way ahead to be blessed by God or to be used for God's purposes in this life is to be separated from the world or to be holy, and to be soaked in the word of the Living God! Without meeting these conditions God cannot bless us because we have not prepared ourselves to accept His blessing because it stores no value for those who will not seek Him.

The lessons from Psalm 1 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. God's people are to be separated from the world.
2. The Holy person loves the word of God and spends high quality time with it!
3. Fruit bearing is the byproduct of a relationship with God and His word.
4. The wicked or ungodly have no anchor in this life and eventually will perish.

Enjoy your Psalm 1 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What kind of man is blessed by the Lord? (Psalm 1:1)
2. What does the blessed man do? (Psalm 1:2)
3. What is the blessed man's life like? (Psalms 1:3)
4. What happens to the wicked in Psalm 1? (Psalm 1:6)
5. Does God watch over our way? (Psalm 1:6)

Thought Questions

1. What significance do you make of the use of the verbs “walk, stand, and sit” in describing the blessed man in Psalm 1:1?
2. What must be our DAILY spiritual practice to be blessed by the Lord and what are the benefits of the Christ focused disciplined life?
3. If God called you to talk to a friend in this world how would you describe the wicked person and the difficulties he or she faces?

➤ Psalm 5: How to Deal with Our Enemies

There are plenty of evil influences and evil people in this world who can be vicious and destructive in their relationship toward us. What do we do when we experience satanic attack from the hands of evil people? What should the Christian do as lies seek to smirch and destroy our character? Psalm 5 is a blueprint of how God wants us to respond in the midst of stressful and upsetting times. If we follow this godly pattern then nothing this world can throw at us will overcome us because “He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4) As you ponder what David is saying to you consider the answer to some key questions:

- Who does David turn to when in his trouble?
- What is David’s practice in approaching the Lord?
- Who does David pray to for deliverance from his enemies?
- What is David’s response upon his deliverance from his enemies?

The lessons from Psalm 5 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. When you are in trouble before you do anything, first pray to God for help.
2. It is essential that we practice Morning Prayer.
3. We must give our circumstances and enemies to the Lord and follow His lead.
4. Always honor God with a spirit of joy and confidence in Him. Don’t be sour!

Enjoy your Psalm 5 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What kind of men are creating a difficult and stressful time for David? (Psalm 5:4-6,9-10)
2. What is David's response? (Psalm 5:1-3)
3. With what manner of attitude does David approach God? (Psalm 5:7)
4. What is David's reaction when God's blesses him with deliverance from his enemies? (Psalm 5:11-12)

Thought Questions

1. Is the morning hour of intimacy with God essential or is it simply discretionary for the Christian?
2. Why is it important not to take matter into our own hands when evil people try to do harm to us?
3. Have you ever been falsely accused? How did you respond?

➤ Psalm 8: The Glories of God and the Limitations of Man

I like to think of Psalm 8 as God's Positioning System (GPS) for His creation including for each one of us as His creatures. When I read this Psalm my soul soars with what God intended for His creation and people to be in this world. Think about what this Psalm says about God's majesty as we see every night in the darkened sky with the moon, planets, and stars. But beyond the glory of the creation that so many of us are struck by and remark about, we are also overwhelmed by the sheer wonder of a child or baby in this world. All of us love

little children for God has put that into our hearts and we marvel at the purity, innocence, and wonder of a child. I know that's the way I feel when I come to Church and see the babies and children among us. Oh yes, they spur me to praise God for what marvelous things He has done! When we view God's awesome power in His creation we are struck (as was David) with God's love for man that He cares so much for us. In fact, He gave us dominion over His creation which is this beautiful world that we live in. There is only one problem that we must confront when we survey this world that God has placed us in and that is the ugliness of sin. We see the brokenness of this world caused by the sin of man that breaks people, despoils the earth, and creates futility and helplessness in men's hearts. So how is all of this to be made sense of or to be reconciled to the world Psalm 8 describes?

- Hebrews 2:6-8 uses Psalms 8 to describe the person and work of Jesus Christ because He is the answer to reconciling men to God.
- 1 Corinthians 15:27 allows us to see God's intent to be realized in Jesus Christ who has everything underneath His feet and in the last day death too will be destroyed and under Jesus's subjection.
- Only Christ is the image of the invisible God as Paul writes in Colossians 1:15, and this is precisely why Jesus could tell Phillip if you have seen me then you have seen the Father (John 14:9).

Psalm 8 describes the proper and pristine role for man in relationship to His God that was squandered by our sin and rebellion. However, in God's great love He has allowed us to recover our proper position through Jesus Christ who is the atonement for ALL sin past, present, and future. Praise God!

The lessons from Psalm 8 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. God has a place, position, and work for you to do in His world. Be useful to God!
2. Look around and you will see God in nature and in children.
3. God has made all things right in Christ if we will accept His grace by obedience.
4. Enjoy your time on this earth by being aware of the awesome presence of God!

Enjoy your Psalm 8 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What causes us to praise the majesty of God? (Psalm 8:1)
2. Why do children and babies cause us to praise God? (Psalm 8:2)
3. What is man's proper role in this world? (Psalm 8:6)
4. What should we think about as we view the elegance, beauty, and power of God's creation? (Psalm 8:3-5)

Thought Questions

1. What disappoints you most about what sin has done to the world we live in?
2. Why is Psalm 8 used by the N.T. writers as a messianic psalm?
3. What does creation teach you about God and His love for you?

Read Psalms 10, 18, and 19

Lesson Purpose: Our God is an Awesome God

Psalm 10: What Do You Do When God Seems Far Off?

For me Psalms 10 provides God's wisdom in defining the wicked person and what makes that person so. Often times we skip past the intent of the heart and move to outcomes to determine who and why a person is wicked. But God sees through sinful and destructive actions and outcomes and makes it very plain to us that all sin at its root is a heart problem. Psalm 10 lays the groundwork for this understanding in an unmistakable manner which none of us should fail to learn! David states that the wicked man is full of pride and arrogance, does not seek the Lord nor think about Him, is arrogant and unconstrained by God's word or God's power over him, and finally feels that God is not involved in the lives of His creatures because He does not care about what's happening among us (Psalm 10:11). Nothing could be further from the truth as we read in Psalm 10:12-18 where we find that God sees the trouble and grief in this world and listens to the cry of the oppressed. Since God is in control He is perfectly able to defend those who are His! So as in everything the world deceives itself into thinking God is no longer relevant in the modern era and, therefore, God should be ignored and not consulted on any matter of our lives. Psalm 10 is placed in our Bible to say that nothing could be further from the truth of God's true character and nature as an eternal God who never grows tired or discouraged in watching over us! When we are down and we feel God is far off, remember to be aware of God's presence and we will find that He is very near, and in fact His Holy Spirit is living on the inside of us.

The lessons from Psalm 10 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

5. God holds each man accountable for the conduct of their lives in this world.
6. The wicked man is filled with pride, does not seek God or think about Him, and does not believe that God is relevant to Him.
7. God is sovereign and in control and hears the cries of the afflicted and oppressed.
8. God will always be interested in our prayers and will strengthen us to win in any spiritual battle that we face.

Enjoy your Psalm 10 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. When one is filled with pride is there any room for God? (Psalm 10:4)
2. Do the wicked think that they can operate with impunity regardless of God's truths? (Psalm 10:11)
3. Does God see our trouble and grief? (Psalm 10:14)
4. Does God listen to our cries? (Psalm 10:17)
5. Is the Lord sovereign over this world? (Psalm 10:16)

Thought Questions

1. David asks God "why" three times in Psalm 10. What were these three why questions and how would you answer them?
2. David ascribes God's sovereignty and activity in Psalm 10:14ff as a God who is active and involved in the lives of His followers. Looking at Psalm 10 is God still active today in this way and manner in your opinion?
3. Can you be a member of a local congregation of the Lord's Church and still be a wicked person according to Psalm 10?

➤ Psalm 18: What a Great God We Serve!

Psalm 18 is written by a jubilant David following his deliverance from the hand of Saul recorded in 2 Samuel 22 which includes another version of this Psalm. If we are to learn any teaching from David's deliverance it is that our God must be personal to us if we are to enjoy the relationship that God has designed for us to enjoy. You cannot walk rightly with God without personal intimacy and continuous communication. Simply look at how David characterized his relationship with God on the day of his deliverance from Saul and his enemies (2 Samuel 22:1). The Lord is MY:

- (1) strength
- (2) rock
- (3) fortress
- (4) deliverer
- (5) God
- (6) shield
- (7) horn of my salvation
- (8) stronghold

You get the message from the life of David that he literally clung to God for he knew that in God alone was there hope and refuge for him. This Psalm also teaches us great truths in terms of how God operated in the life of David and how He operates in our lives today:

- (1) God is present!
- (2) God cares!
- (3) God hears!
- (4) God helps!
- (5) God's help is always sufficient!

Psalm 18 teaches us that if we are faithful to the Lord He will be faithful to us and there is nothing that we should fear with our awesome God on our side! Read Psalm 18:31-39 and see what the exciting possibilities are IF we serve God and not self. Is it any wonder that David chose God when he desperately needed deliverance from Saul? The key text of Psalm 18 is verse 46 which is a shout of victory for David but also for every man, woman, boy, or girl who puts their trust in the Lord and walks in His ways. David closes with thanksgiving to God for His unfailing kindness to His anointed one, David. Is God as personal and real to you as He was to David?

The lessons from Psalm 18 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. I must have a personal relationship with the Lord.
2. God has many characteristics as He loves and supports us in this life.
3. When in trouble pray to God for He will help!
4. God enables us to handle any circumstance, person, or thing with His strength.
5. God is the God of our salvation because He lives!

Enjoy your Psalm 18 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. How many names for God used by David do you count in Psalm 18?
2. Does God hear our prayers in our distress? (Psalm 18:6)
3. What does it mean in verse 18 that the Lord was David's support?
4. The Lord is the great enabler. How did He help enable David? (Psalm 18:28-39)
5. How did David respond to God's goodness in his deliverance? (Psalm 18:50)

Thought Questions

1. Which of the characteristics of God identified by David do you identify with and why?
2. How important was it for David to love and obey the Lord to receive His “enabling” during the stressful times of David’s life when he was on the run from Saul?
3. What does Psalm 18 say about whether it is possible to be a Christian and live a joyless and fearful life?

➤ **Psalm 19: God Desires that We Know Him!**

Psalm 19 describes how God reveals Himself to us in three ways. First, God reveals Himself in His creation. None of us can witness the heavens at night or the beauty of the mountains or the power of sea and not be impressed with some designer behind nature. How is it that through nature itself we cannot accept the creator behind it all? Paul makes this exact point in Romans 1:20 that the world around us is to bring us to an awareness and acceptance of God the creator.

Second, God reveals Himself in His word. It is not enough to worship nature without knowing the God of salvation. Psalm 19 describes the Word of God as:

- (1) The law of the Lord
- (2) The testimony of the Lord
- (3) The precepts of the Lord
- (4) The commandment of the Lord
- (5) The fear of the Lord
- (6) The judgments of the Lord

Each term provides insight into God and His word. The word and God are interconnected since it was by the Living Word that the entire creation came into being (John 1:1-3).

Warren Wiersbe the renowned Bible teacher says that “the way we treat the Bible is the way we treat the Lord, so it isn’t difficult to determine if we are rightly related to God.”

Think about that comment for a moment and consider its implications for your relationship with Almighty God. Do you desire to read the Bible? Do you find value any reading His word? Do you pay attention to what the Word tells you and act on it? Do we

have joy walking in the center of the will of God as we keep His word? As I talked to Matt Wahl today I shared with him a new thought for me which was the connectivity to learning the word of God and walking in the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit inspires the truth of the word and if we don't keep in step with the Spirit, how possibly can we KNOW the God of the word (Galatians 5:25)? So as God reveals Himself for our salvation in His word, we must understand that we will never fully understand it if we don't walk obediently in the Spirit.

Thirdly, God reveals Himself to our hearts by planting the word of God there as He guides us in this life. The word must be in our hearts for us not to sin against Him (Psalm 119:11). God reveals Himself in our thinking and decisions as we seek Him and humble ourselves before Him. David asks God to keep him from presumptuous sin so as not to have sin rule over him. David asks that God give Him the ability to make his words and thoughts acceptable to the Lord. God reveals Himself to us in our hearts if we are listening for His voice. Psalm 19 makes it clear that God reveals Himself to us by His creation, word, and in our hearts.

The lessons from Psalm 19 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. God reveals Himself in creation.
2. God reveals Himself in His word.
3. God reveals Himself personally to our hearts if we walk in His will.
4. How we treat the Bible is how we treat God.

Enjoy your Psalm 19 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What does it mean that the creation day to day pours forth speech and night reveals knowledge? (Psalm 19:2)
2. What two examples does David give about the circuitry of the sun and why does he use them? (Psalm 19:5-6)
3. What does the word of God do for man? (Psalms 19:7-11)
4. How valuable is the word of God to be to us? (Psalm 19:10)
5. What role does God play in maintaining our righteous walk before Him? (Psalm 19:12-14)

Thought Questions

- 1. Did the Apostle Paul's sermon outlines ever start with creation and move to the word of God?**
- 2. Do you agree with the position that how you treat the Bible is how you treat God?**
- 3. Do you believe that God speaks to your heart in personal ways to help your Christian walk before Him?**

Read Psalms 23, 31, and 34

Lesson Purpose: The Lord is My Shepherd!

Psalm 23: The Lord is My Shepherd!

One of the most loved Psalm's in the Book of Psalms is Psalm 23 widely known as the "Lord is My Shepherd". I'm sure all of us at one time or another has turned to this great message from our Lord to steady us and make us whole during difficult periods of our lives. My son Brad had a copy of the 23rd Psalm tucked in his combat helmet that he would read and quote to his squad prior to combat missions. The 23rd Psalm has that kind of appeal when we have hit the "wall of life" and have nowhere else to go but to the Lord! The first question that I must ask is do you need a shepherd? The answer to that question should be a resounding yes since the world we live in is so uncertain, unkind, and unforgiving with too many moving parts in our lives to negotiate all the hazards and pitfalls. Without a Shepherd which we know now in the New Testament Age is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (John 10), we will have no real direction, protection, and comfort for our lives. When we examine Psalm 23 we see all the ways that our Shepherd cares for us as he leads us gently through our lives. We must realize that sheep refuse to be driven but will be gently led. They are entirely dependent upon the protective care of the Shepherd just as we are. The problem always erupts when we resist the call of the Shepherd by refusing to listen to His voice and go our own way and endanger our lives and well-being. Let's examine what Jesus Christ our great Shepherd does for those of His flock:

- (1) Psalm 23:1-Jesus Christ provides for us!
- (2) Psalm 23:2-Jesus Christ gives us rest!
- (3) Psalm 23:2-Jesus Christ gives us peace!
- (4) Psalm 23:3-Jesus Christ restores us and heals us!
- (5) Psalm 23:3-Jesus Christ guides us in righteousness!
- (6) Psalm 23:4-Jesus Christ is ever present for us!
- (7) Psalm 23:4-Jesus Christ protects us!
- (8) Psalm 23:4-Jesus Christ comforts us!
- (9) Psalms 23:5-Jesus Christ honors us!
- (10) Psalms 23:5-Jesus Christ sanctifies us through His Spirit!

What blessings! What benefits! What guarantees! But we must first be willing to allow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to be our shepherd. How is that done? By listening to His voice which is the Holy word of God our Bibles. Secondly, we must follow the Shepherd wherever He leads by being fully obedient to Him. Life changes and so do people and circumstances but we only must remember to listen to the Shepherd's voice and follow Him. Look at the promises of following Jesus Christ our Shepherd day after day as written in Psalm 23:6:

- (1) Loving-kindness and goodness will follow you all the days of your life!
- (2) You will dwell in the house of the Lord forever or heaven. Remember Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us and He will return to take us home if we are the sheep of His pasture John 14:1-3!

Why would anyone turn their backs on a Shepherd who was willing to lay down His life so that we might be free from sin and death? My friends listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow Him!

The lessons from Psalm 23 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. We need a shepherd in this life in the difficult, tough, and tragic times.
2. Jesus Christ is our Shepherd.
3. As sheep of His flock we listen to His voice and follow Him.
4. Jesus will never let us go or leave us vulnerable to the evil of the world if He is our Shepherd.

Enjoy your Psalm 23 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. Did David have a close relationship with God? (Psalm 23:1)
2. Which function of the shepherd means the most to you in your life, if you had to choose just one? (Psalm 23:1-5)
3. What does it mean to walk through the valley of the shadow of death? (1 Samuel 23:26)
4. What does it mean for our cup to overflow? (Psalm 23:5)
5. If we follow Christ as our shepherd where are we being led to? (Psalm 23:6)

Thought Questions

1. Discuss the meaning and importance of the Good Shepherd in your life?
2. Have you ever relied on Psalm 23 at a difficult moment in your life? How did that experience affect you?
3. Why is it sometimes difficult even in the face of the overwhelming benefits to follow the lead of the Good Shepherd?

➤ **Psalm 31: God is My Refuge!**

Psalm 31 finds David under duress in his life either on the run from King Saul or as many scholars believe during the insurrection of David's son Absalom. Either way David was in a great valley of his life and he had no one to turn to but the Lord. If I believe anything about God, I believe one thing that God expects us to seek answers, help, refuge, and strength from Him, and He is disappointed when we don't since it demonstrates a lack of love and faith in Him! I must say I love this Psalm because it gives us so much insight into what God desires in a relationship between mankind and himself!

- (1) David tells it like it is that God is a rock and a fortress which is defensive military terms but God also leads and guides which are offensive military terms. (Psalm 31:3).**
- (2) David had total trust in God as revealed in Psalm 31:5 when David states into your hand I commit my spirit which was quoted by Jesus on the cross in Luke 23:46.(Psalm 31:5)**
- (3) God knows us warts and all in our good times and bad times. David said in the deepest of his valleys that God had seen his affliction and He knew the troubles of David's soul. (Psalm 31:7).**
- (4) No man or woman and boy or girl is beyond the reach of God since even in David's exhaustion, vulnerability, and grief when most deserted him and mocked him that David places all things in God's charge when he says: "But as for me, I trust in You, O Lord, I say, "You are my God. My times are in your hand;" (Psalm 31:14-15). Isn't this so true in our lives that no matter how strongly we try our lives are in the hands of God. This verse was the one I wrote out for my son Brad to refer to before jumping out of an airplane in the 82nd Airborne Division.**
- (5) Psalm 23:19-20 is one of God's greatest promises in that we find that God has stored up goodness for those who fear God and take refuge in Him. God also promises to hide us in the secret place of His presence to protect us from evil men who would seek to do us harm. Paul writes something similar in the New Testament when he says in Colossians 3:3 that we have died and our life is hidden with Christ in God.**
- (6) The Lord will never let us go and promises to preserve His faithful ones. (Psalm 31:23) Romans 8:31-39 echoes this same great truth.**
- (7) Finally we are to be strong and take courage because our hope is in the Lord! (Psalm 31:24) Let us remember that He provides strength, courage, and hope in all the difficult and hard places of life.**

- 1. Only the Lord can lead, guide, and protect us in this uncertain world.**
- 2. God knows all about us including our troubles. Never hide anything from God.**
- 3. Even in life's valley or storm remember to trust God and put our times in His hand.**
- 4. God hides us from those who would do us harm IF we will take refuge in Him!**
- 5. God alone preserves us and He alone is our strength, courage, and hope.**

Enjoy your Psalm 31 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. David talks about taking refuge in the Lord. What reasons does he give for doing that? (Psalm 31:1-4)
2. What does it mean to commit my spirit into the Lord's hand? (Psalm 31:5)
3. What were some of the conditions of David's physical, and emotional, and mental state as he suffered from others? (Psalm 31:9-13)
4. What is the secret place that God hides us in? (Psalm 31:20)
5. What did David do when he felt cutoff from God? (Psalm 31:22)

Thought Questions

1. What would be required in your life before you were willing to put your times in the hand of God?
2. A great attribute of our awesome God is displayed in Psalm 31:8 and is found only in Him. What is this attribute and how important is it to you?
3. Is anything hidden in our lives from God? Knowing this how may we encourage others to know Jesus Christ?

➤ Psalm 34: God is My Deliverer!

Psalm 34 is a shout out to God by David with praise and thanksgiving for God's deliverance in the life of David following his escape from King Achish of Gath also known as Abimelech. This event is recorded in 1 Samuel 21:10ff. Notice David says that his praise will be continuous! You want to be near to God? Then you must be like Him and this requires us to be in continuous awe, thanksgiving, and praise before God! When David feared for his life before Abimelech he began to act like a madman which caused the king to release David. Look at verse 4 of

Psalm 34 and you can see clearly how David thought and acted. David consulted or inquired of God and God answered him and delivered David from his fear of Abimelech! Look at verse 6 and 7 and see the confidence in God meeting David at his point of need BECAUSE David cried out knowing God would hear him and act on his cry. Today we must have this same confidence of faith to seek refuge in God first when we face our troubles! David also ascribes his deliverance to a camp of angels who encamp around those who fear God. This is another text that correlates with Hebrews 1:13-14 on the presence and function of angels in protecting the faithful.

As we examine Psalm 34:8-10 take note of what God does for those who seek Him:

- (1) Blessed is the man who takes refuge in the Lord.**
- (2) Those who fear the Lord there is no want.**
- (3) Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.**

Psalm 34:12-16 records David's guidance to young people of how to lead a successful life in this world by fearing or respecting the Lord.

- (1) Desire what is good. (verse 12)**
- (2) Speak what is true. (verse 13)**
- (3) Pursue what is right. (verse 14)**
- (4) Expect what is best from the Lord. (verses 15 and 16) NO CHRISTIAN SHOULD FEAR THE FUTURE IF THEY OBEY GOD!**

What great advice for young people and really for all of us no matter how young or old we are.

Psalm 34:17-18 demonstrates truth that we must act on all the days of our lives because our God hears us and will deliver us from all our troubles. Our God is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. What a great hope we have to encourage ourselves and others by when we are hurting. Praise God!

Psalm 34:19 is one of my favorite verses in the entire Bible because it was the favorite of our late great Brother Jack Hoskins who told me that he loved this promise of God to deliver the righteous from all their afflictions. I loved Jack and I love this verse but it does point out that God doesn't promise the Christian that there will be no afflictions in their lives. No what He promises is that there will be MANY afflictions but God will deliver us from every one of them! Praise God!

Psalm 34:22 points out one of the great themes of the Christian walk which is redemption. Notice what David says about God that He redeems the souls of His servants and that God will not condemn any servant who takes refuge in Him. The longer I live I know we will never properly understand people, ourselves, or our circumstances unless we view all things through the prism of Jesus hanging on the cross. If we don't

“get” three words we will never properly interpret what is happening in other people’s lives, our own lives, and the circumstances we are living through. These three words are: (1) REDEMPTION, (2) MERCY, and (3) GRACE. We ALL have a desperate need for the blood of Christ as we stand at the foot of the cross.

The lessons from Psalm 34 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

- 1. Praise God continuously.**
- 2. God operates in our lives to help us, deliver us, and sustain us even in troubled times.**
- 3. You are never too far or too late or too bad not to cry out to God for deliverance!**
- 4. Afflictions will come but God will deliver the righteous from them all.**
- 5. To make a difference in another person’s life remember REDEMPTION, MERCY, & GRACE**

Enjoy your Psalm 34 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. What should we do for the Lord? (Psalm 34:1-3)**

- 2. To be saved from our troubles what must we do? (Psalm 34:6)**

- 3. Did David believe in angels? (Psalm 34:7)**

- 4. What must a man do to be blessed? (Psalm 34:8)**

- 5. The Christian is promised no afflictions after they are baptized into Christ. True or False**

Thought Questions

- 1. God places great emphasis on crying out to Him just as David did when he feared Abimelech. Will God still deliver us from our troubles if we choose not to cry out to Him?**

- 2. How should we use Psalm 34:18 in comforting and ministering to those who have suffered pain, loss, and death?**

- 3. Does Psalm 34:22 give you confidence in knowing of your eternal salvation?**

Read Psalms 37, 42, 46

Lesson Purpose: Trusting God No Matter What!

Psalm 37: Don't Worry, Trust God!

If there is one practical instruction that we are given over and over again it is not to worry but to trust God. Psalm 37 makes this message clear as does Jesus Christ in the Sermon the Mount (Matthew 6:25-34). What does it mean to fret and why is it such a damaging and painful habit to get into? Fret means to burn or to get heated up and this can only happen when we focus on the world and the things in it and not on God. If the Christian has one foot planted in the kingdom and another in the world, then there will be envy for what others have which is the highway toward fretting, frustration, disappointment, and depression in this life. The "wicked" are mentioned 14 times in Psalm 37 because when we fret over what the wicked have, what the wicked do, how the wicked enjoy, and how the wicked treat others there will be constant envy and irritation for the one who frets. David is in a position to give good advice about not fretting because he was put to the test by the wicked King Saul as he ran for his life over many years. What advice does David give? DO NOT FRET! How do we avoid fretting?

- (1) Trust in the Lord and do good! (Psalm 37:3)
- (2) Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:4)
- (3) Commit your way to the Lord for He will do it! (Psalm 34:5)
- (4) Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him.(Psalm 34:7)
- (5) Cease from anger and forsake wrath-give it over to God and don't take matters into your own hands.(Psalm 34:8)
- (6) Wait for the Lord and keep His way! (Psalm 37:34)

What is clear on all of this is that we better get our eyes off the world and the things of the world or we are doomed to a life of frustration, envy, and sorrow by majoring in the passing things of the world. Please read 1 John 2:15-17. But we serve a patient God who always sends messages of hope to those who seek Him. There are three points God wants us to know about being secure in our relationship with Him:

- (1) God is in control and the wicked are going down so don't fret! (Psalm 37:15)
- (2) God watches over our steps and He will break any falls we might have! (Psalm 37:23-34)
- (3) God will always be there for us to meet us at our point of need! (Psalm 37:25-28)

In Psalm 37:35-38 our God is also a God of justice and He compares the wicked to a luxuriant tree that passes away and is no more. While the righteous will be saved by the

Lord for He is their strength in time of trouble (Psalm 37:39). Finally the secret of the righteous is found in Psalm 37:40 when David says God helps, delivers, and saves them from the wicked WHEN they take refuge in Him. When God is on our side to fret over the things of the world is indefensible and really quite shameful.

The lessons from Psalm 37 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

- 1. Do not fret over the world and the things of the world.**
- 2. Focus on God by trusting God, delighting in God, committing to God, resting in God, and waiting on God.**
- 3. God will never let the righteous fail if we take refuge in Him.**
- 4. Our salvation is from the Lord and He is our strength in time of trouble.**

Enjoy your Psalm 37 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. What is fretting? (Psalm 37:1)**
- 2. If you delight in the Lord what will He give you? (Psalm 37:4)**
- 3. Which is better to have the abundance of the wicked or to be content with the little of the righteous? (Psalm 37:16)**
- 4. What is one characteristic of the righteous person? (Psalm 37:21)**
- 5. If we are not to slip what must we have in our heart? (Psalm 37:31)**

Thought Questions

1. David gives several prescriptions for not envying the wicked person in Psalm 37. Which one of these prescriptions has been most helpful to you in encouraging you not to fret?
2. My Dad's favorite verse was Psalm 37:25 because he had experienced that in his own life. Have you experienced the same in your own life, and if so what does this tell you about God?
3. What does it mean to you to wait on the Lord and keep His way in Psalms 37:34? Why is this important?

➤ Psalm 42: Thirsting for God

Psalm 42 is much beloved by those who seek the Lord because it highlights the overwhelming need all of us have for Him. The Psalm is penned by a descendent of Korah who was destroyed in the desert for challenging the authority of Moses. Apparently the author lived in a foreign land (Psalm 43:1) and was inhibited from leading procession of believers to the house of God. This was a tragic and devastating blow to this priest who thirsted for the presence of God in His temple and to lead a procession to Jerusalem. In this Psalm there are three great spiritual characteristics of those who walk in God's righteousness. Let us examine ourselves to see if we too long for the presence of God in our lives.

- (1) First, the righteous long for the presence of God continually in their lives. The author was under great oppression and ridicule (Psalm 42:3), and he wanted/needed the presence of God more than a deer must have water on a hot summer day. Yes as a deer pants for the life giving water those who are righteous must desire the presence of God more than any other thing in their lives! Do you need God or do you use God for your convenience and benefit?
- (2) Second, the righteous remember God and turn to Him whenever they are in despair or disturbed in soul because they know that God is where their relief and help will come from. The ability to repent and focus not on the world and our circumstances but the power and hope of God in our lives is liberating and transforming freeing us from the shackles of sin and self! (Psalm 42:5-6, 11)
- (3) Third, the righteous trust God in the most difficult times of their lives when "deep calls to deep" and God's breakers roll over them as they cling to God

and refuse to let Him go. (Psalm 42:7) Because they find the comfort of God in their suffering they learn and know of His love and power to deliver them at their point of need every time. As a result the righteous walk with boldness in the Lord because of the Lord's loving-kindness during the day and God's song in them at night. The righteous stay continually connected to their God through prayer. (Psalm 42:8) For an example of this time of testing see Genesis 32 and Jacob wrestling with God all night at the ford of the Jabbok later called Peniel (I have seen God face to face yet my life has been preserved).

When we enter the darkness of the night where Satan lurks and we begin losing our grip of reality with sorrows building it is then that we must circle back to Psalm 42 and read it over and over. The message is clear that if we seek God, depend upon God, and cling to God and never let go that God will deliver us through any and all circumstances that we might face. Just remember that when you are down it is precisely the time to sing a song of praise or be thankful in prayer for when you do you shall experience the deliverance of God in your lives! Amen!

The lessons from Psalm 42 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

- 1. A Christian should thirst for the presence of God as a deer thirsts for water.**
- 2. Whenever we are discouraged turn to God and get our minds off self through prayer and praise to Him.**
- 3. Never go it alone at the darkest moments because you will only make it w/God.**
- 4. God is a 24/7 God so carry His love during the day and His song at night!**

Enjoy your Psalm 42 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. How bad does a deer need water in the desert heat of Israel? (Psalm 42:1)**

- 2. What was the state of mind of the Psalm's author? (Psalm 42:5)**

- 3. What does deep calling to deep and God's breakers and waves rolling over the author mean? (Psalm 42:7)**

- 4. What does the Christian have from God during the day and night? (Psalm 42:8)**

5. Do you think Psalm 42 and 43 go together? (Psalm 43:5)

Thought Questions

1. If an unbeliever ask you where is your God (Psalm 42:10), how would you respond?
2. What does this Psalm 42 teach us about how important attending worship is to the Christian?
3. What should a Christian do when experiencing discomfort, loneliness, despondency, or depression in their lives?

➤ Psalm 46: Be Still and Know that I Am God

Psalm 46 is one of the highlights of the entire Psalms to me because it is founded on the historical event of Sennacherib the King of Assyria besieging Jerusalem during the kingship of Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet (2 Kings 18-19, 2 Chronicles 32). What we know is that Sennacherib led the most powerful army in the world to the door steps of Jerusalem and demanded its surrender. King Hezekiah and Isaiah prayed to God for deliverance by divine intervention. God heard this prayer and one angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrians in one night which caused Sennacherib to flee back to Nineveh. Psalm 46 commemorates what happens when God's people are in trouble which means in a tight place (Psalm 46:1). Have you ever been in a tight place with no way out? I hope in that moment you turned to the living God for help and deliverance.

Psalm 46:1 begins with the powerful promise that our God is a refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. God is our refuge and He will hide and protect us. God is our strength and He will help us. Verses 2 and 3 tell us that we will not fear even when our world is falling down around us because we are in God, with God, and for God. Nothing can get to us through the love of God. Remember when we come to God it is never to escape but to be refreshed and refitted for the battle for Christians are engaged daily in a holy war against Satan and his evil supporters (Ephesians 6).

Psalm 46:4-7 focuses on the besieged city of Jerusalem whose water supply came from a spring through a tunnel into a reservoir inside the city walls. But the writer of this Psalm knew that God was the living water for the city and it was His stream that made the city

glad. Hezekiah and Isaiah both knew what each of us must learn that if God is in us who can defeat us? As Paul wrote in Romans 8:31: “If God is for us, who is against us?”

Psalm 46:8-9 describes the devastating scene of the ruin of the Assyrian Army outside the walls of Jerusalem from one angel. Sennacherib fled back to Nineveh only to be assassinated by his own children. God the commander of the armies of the Lord can do marvelous things!

But the highlight of Psalm 46 is verse 10 where we are commanded to be still or cease striving and know that I am God. What this means is that we are to take our hands off, and go limp and trust God to work through our circumstances. Unfortunately many of us cannot and moreover will not let go and trust God because we want control. What Psalm 46 teaches us is that if we do not put our trust in God and turn over control to our Lord then there is no way out and no real hope for us because we lack faith in our God to intervene in our lives.

The lessons from Psalm 46 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. God is the only answer to life’s problems, difficulties, and tight places!
2. We go to God not to escape from life but to be refitted, renewed, and recharged to go back into the battle.
3. Never allow the circumstances of life to overwhelm you and render you clueless and helpless when you can turn it over to God in prayer.
4. Psalm 46:10 tells us to “Be still and know that I am God”. What that means is to let go of the controls of our life and turn them over to God!

Enjoy your Psalm 46 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What is God to us in moments when everything is unraveling in our lives? (Psalm 46:1)

2. Why are we not to fear when it seems the whole world is going crazy and our lives are turned upside down? (Psalm 46:2-3)

3. **Where do we go for living water that will never run dry or dirty? (Psalm 46:4)**

4. **Is anything impossible for God? (Psalm 46:8-9)**

5. **What is the significance of the name Lord Almighty or Lord of hosts? (Psalm 46:11)**

Thought Questions

1. **What encouragement does this Psalm give people who are trapped in a corner of their lives and see no way out?**

2. **We are told to “Be still and know that I am the Lord.” This means take your hands off and turn it over to the Lord. Can we follow Christ and refuse to do this in our lives?**

3. **Why is it important not to fear even when things are coming undone in our lives?**

Read Psalms 51, 63

Lesson Purpose: The Loving-kindness and Mercy of God

➤ Psalm 51: David's Prayer for Forgiveness

Psalm 51 is one of the great insights into the heart of man and what sin does to his life. Of course this Psalm was penned by David after breaking down following the Prophet Nathan's confrontation with him about his sin before God in his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah (2 Samuel 11-12). All sin is terrible but this sin of David's seems particularly egregious since in 1 Kings 15:5 it is pointed out that David did what was right in the sight of the Lord EXCEPT in the case of Uriah the Hittite. We all know David's doing in this episode but we also know that he paid the full measure for his sin in its consequences within David's family. David lost the support of Bathsheba's grandfather and his chief advisor Ahithophel, and the fidelity of his son Absalom who led a rebellion supported by Ahithophel that almost toppled the throne of David. This sin colored everything that David did going forward in his life, and although he was forgiven by God for it the consequences were played out over the rest of David's life. David covered up this sin before God for nearly a year and it took a heavy toll on his mind, body, and soul as we read in Psalm 51. But when confronted by Nathan with the reality of what he had done, David's heart was broken and through cries and tears he sought reconciliation with the Lord. This prayer before God is recorded in Psalm 51 and it gives us a useful understanding of the corrosive power of sin in our lives and what to do about it.

David first appeals to God's loving-kindness and great compassion as he comes before God to request that God blot out his sin. This term refers to cancelling a debt someone would owe another. David also requests that God wash his sin away which refers to washing dirty linen so that they could be used to be worn on a new day. In essence David was seeking a new start in life with a change to new clothes which would signal the start of a new day. Finally, David pleads that God would cleans him of his sin like a leper would be cleansed and made whole.

I understand where David was as he recognized that the biggest casualty of our selfish sin is our relationship with God. David admits what we all know to be true which is our sin is against God alone and we must accept all the consequences of God's judgment on it. David recognizes that his heart had been the problem when he brought Bathsheba to him at the palace. What truly God desires is that all of us know His truth in our inner most parts. God expects us to have integrity of mind that we might focus on Him and not the world to avoid the devastating pitfall of sin. The purity of our heart is crucial since our heart affects our eyes; what we love in our heart, we will seek with our eyes (W. Wiersbe). David is desperate for God's mercy and grace, and he pleads to God that he be purified by hyssop. The hyssop plant was used by the Israelites to spread the blood on the doorposts to protect the firstborn from death. David also pleaded with God that he be

washed so that he might be whiter than snow. David didn't want this awful stench on his name and in his life to continue to prevent the intimacy and fellowship that he had known previously with God before his unrepented sin. David asked God to hide His face from his sins and iniquities. In Psalms 51:1 he also referred to his transgressions. When you examine David's sin with Bathsheba and against Uriah you see clearly how sin is a process that provides off ramps if we will get our eyes off self and focus them back on God. David uses three different words for what he did. Transgressions refer to rebellion against God. Sin means to miss the mark and iniquity reflects on the crookedness of the sinner. David understood at long last what he had done and what sin had done to him. David was ashamed, pained, weak, and fearful in his current state and more than anything in the world he wanted to be made right with God. Little did David know that God's forgiveness and acceptance of him was to be based on an event a thousand years into the future consummated at the cross of Calvary when Jesus Christ of the line of David and the Son of God shed His precious blood that we might be set free from this world of sin and death! Praise God!

David then turns to address what he has lost in his transgression, sin, and iniquity before God. In Psalm 51:10 David asks God to clean his heart and renew a steadfast spirit within him. David knew that he had defiled his own heart, and he also knew that the heart was the wellspring of life or the source of action, thinking, and speech. (Proverbs 4:23) David also knew that his spirit had been weakened by his sin and rebellion against God and he cried out that God renew a steadfast spirit within him committed to following God obediently. When we read Psalm 51:11 we can imagine David quaking in his shoes remembering when God took His Holy Spirit from King Saul (1Samuel 16:14). David knew as we all must that the Holy Spirit of God is received at baptism to guide, help, and strengthen us as we live in this world. The Holy Spirit in our lives guides, protects, and enlightens us in making wise choices and good decisions in circumstances and with people. David grieved in thinking that his wretched sin might result in the loss of God's Holy Spirit which he mightily depended on for his very life. David also knew that for life to be lived boldly in joy, power, and peace that he must stay near to God. David pleaded not to be removed from God's presence. The presence of God and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit are essential to the power, effectiveness, peace, and joy of the Christ centered life. David knew this and he wanted to RESTORE MY SOUL RESTORE! DAVID WANTED BACK HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD MORE THAN THE AIR HE BREATHED OR THE WATER HE DRANK! In Psalm 51:12 David asked God to restore the joy of his salvation and sustain him with a willing spirit. When we lose our joy we lose our enthusiasm and energy to minister for the Lord. David desperately wanted that back. Always remember that the sooner we get on our hands and knees and confess our sins the sooner God will restore us to Him as in David's life. David would demonstrate his new found reconciliation with God by teaching transgressors the ways of God so that sinners would be converted to God. (Isn't it significant that David is stimulated to share his faith once he has been reconciled to God? Brethren you cannot hold it in if you are on fire for the Lord!) In Psalm 51:14 David asks God to deliver him from his bloodguiltiness of killing Uriah the husband of Bathsheba. David had to give this to the Lord or he could not

function properly in the temple worship before God. David knew what he had done and he realized that he needed freedom from guilt and sin. None of us can function in joy and peace if we are burden by the shackles of sin. David learned this the hard way. David also learned that God would forgive him, but the consequences of his sin he must face day by day. Sin is death to us and we must turn away from it! (Romans 8:23)

Finally, in Psalm 51:15-17 David comes full square to the truth of the entire matter of his sin when he states that God will only be satisfied with a broken and contrite heart. This message is learned over and over again in the Bible most elegantly in Micah 6:6-8. My friends you cannot be healed if your heart is not broken by your sin against God and against man.

Psalm 51 speaks to the horror of sin and the agent of dealing with it who is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:21 states it perfectly: “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”
YOU CANNOT READ PSALM 51 WITHOUT SEEING THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS COVERING THE PAGE!

The lessons from Psalm 51 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. Sin is a deceitful process that creates no winners only damaged losers.
2. The consequences of sin are devastating and must be faced!
3. It is important that when we sin we come immediately before to God to confess it.
4. Only a broken heart can God heal. It is futile to think we can play games with sin and avoid its consequences. (Galatians 6:7)

Enjoy your Psalm 51 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What did David ask God to do with his sin? (Psalm 51:1-2)
2. David admitted that all sin is against_____. (Psalm 51:4)
3. What did David ask God to do in Psalm 51:10 and why is this request so important to any Christian?
4. Why was it so important for David to stay in the presence of God and to maintain the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? (Psalm 51:11)
5. What are the pleasing sacrifices to God? (Psalm 51:17)

Thought Questions

1. Does sin really cost us something since His blood continually cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7)?
2. Sometimes I refer to the Holy Spirit as the Holy Guest. Why was David so afraid that God would take His Holy Spirit from him? Are you afraid of this happening to you when you sin?
3. Psalm 51:5 is somewhat controversial in the Churches of Christ. Why is that and how would you explain its appropriate interpretation?

➤ Psalm 63: Cling to the Lord, O My Soul!

Psalm 63 occurs during the time of Absalom's rebellion when David fled for his life to the desert from his own child. But what you will not find in Psalm 63 is any complaints or pity focused on self. David looks up to God and puts his life and times in the hands of the living God. I believe that just prior to this Psalm we find David crossing the Kidron Valley ascending to the Mount of Olives in shame and disgrace because of his own sin. His son Absalom is set to take his father's life and those who are following David out of Jerusalem are weeping as they go (2 Samuel 15). David stops and commands the High Priest Zadok to return the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. Then David speaks truth to the nation, himself, and God as he hits rock bottom for he has come to the end of himself for there are no more excuses, devices or expedients for David stands open before the Lord God. What David says represents his giving himself over to God 100% and signals his commitment to serve the Lord although he will never fully lose the trail of consequences with his sin with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah her husband. David said: "If I find favor in the sight of the Lord, then He will bring me back again and show me it (ark) and His habitation. But if He should say thus, 'I have no delight in you, behold here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him.'" Do you see it? It is the exact moment David experiences the broken life and places himself totally in the hands of God. All of us must get to the same place if we are to bring our broken life to Him so that we might be healed!

Psalm 63 opens and David tells God that he will **SEEK HIM** earnestly because his soul thirsts for God, yearns for Him in a dry and weary land with no water. Only the presence of God will do for David under the stress of the most difficult and shameful times of his life.

In Psalm 63:2-3 David states that because of God's loving-kindness and mercy that he will **PRAISE HIM**. David also said that he would **BLESS HIM** since his soul is satisfied and he offers praises with joyful lips. What I sense in this Psalm is a man who has turned it all over to God and leans on His strength. There is no pretense or self-control left with David at this point in his life because he trusts God to determine whether or not he will be delivered through this great crisis in his life.

Then in Psalm 63:6-8 we have some practices of David that we need to learn from and apply to our lives. I think it doubly important that we focus on David's thinking and actions when he is wholly dependent on the Lord to care for him, sustain him, and deliver him from those who would take his life and destroy Israel. If ever we see David in the crucible of crisis we see him now so it is instructive to examine how David responded:

David **REMEMBERED** God on his bed through the watches of the night as he meditated on God's presence and help toward him in loving-kindness.

- (1) David always had a song of joy in his heart as he thought about God's extraordinary inner workings in his life. Recall James 5:13: "Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise." Positivity trumps negativity every time and to get to the overflow you must have the abiding of God's spirit which requires a right focus and proper mindset on God and not the limited frail powers of self.
- (2) Finally David says my soul **CLINGS** to God and God's right hand upholds him. What the verb cling means is that David and God are "stuck" together. David has grabbed God and will not let go just as Jacob wrestled with God at Peniel and would not let go without being blessed. (Genesis 32)

There you have it! When David gave up on himself and turned it over to God he did several things. (1) David sought the Lord, (2) David praised the Lord, (3) David blessed the Lord, (4) David remembered the Lord, and finally (5) David clung to the Lord. I would say David was fully committed to God and because of his full obedience David could say boldly in Psalm 63:11: But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by God's name will praise him, while the mouths of liars will be silenced." When we have hit the wall or reached the end of ourselves, please turn it over to our loving God who cares for us (1 Peter 5:8). **AMEN!**

The lessons from Psalm 63 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

- 1. David wrote Psalm 63 in the deepest valley of his life.**
- 2. God stabilized, sustained and delivered David from the treachery of Absalom his son in spite of David's sin.**
- 3. David focused on God in total trust by seeking God, praising God, blessing God, remembering God, and clinging to God.**
- 4. When we are in trouble and in hard places cling to God and never let go!**

Enjoy your Psalm 63 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. What did David's soul need in the desert on the run from Absalom? (Psalm 63:1)**
- 2. What did David see in the sanctuary? (Psalm 63:2)**
- 3. Why is David's soul satisfied? (Psalm 63:5)**
- 4. What does the shadow of God's wings mean? (Psalm 63:7)**
- 5. What will happen to Absalom and all those who sought David's life? (Psalm 63:9-10) Why was this going to happen?**

Thought Questions

- 1. Are you thirsty for God? How do we go about developing a greater thirst for God?**
- 2. David's soul clung to God or they were stuck together. What are some of the reasons that we don't cling to God through the watches of the night?**
- 3. What does David do, think, or say that is most useful to you in working through difficult times?**

Read Psalms 84, 87, and 90**Lesson Purpose: The Favor of the Lord****➤ Psalm 84: Pilgrimage**

As we read Psalm 84:1-2 we come face to face with a man who truly loves God and desires to worship Him at the Temple in Jerusalem. Apparently this man cannot attend one of the feasts so he penned this Psalm to give full expression to his love and devotion to God. At the time this Psalm was written Israelites were commanded to attend three feasts in Jerusalem and often whole villages would ascend the hills to Jerusalem to worship at the Temple. It is clear that this person had a great need to be in the presence of God so that he could sing songs of joy to the living God. The author even mentions the birds that were permitted to nest in the temple courts and he clearly envied them since they were so close to the altars of God. Our author knew what we all must learn that since we are recipients of God's grace and love, we must possess a real drive to worship God and be blessed by being in His presence (Psalm 84:2-4).

In Psalm 84:5-7 we read a great statement about a Christian's pilgrimage in this life. Let's breakdown what the Psalmist says here:

- (1) How blessed is the man whose strength is in the Lord and he is focused on the highways that lead home to God. If we are not dependent on the Lord or seeking to be with Him we will never arrive home to be with God.
- (2) All Christians on the way home to the Father pass through the Valley of Baca which means "weeping" in Hebrew. None of us avoid the valley of tears in this life and the only way we pass through it is with the help of the Lord. When we are in our valley of tears let us be a blessing to others by leaving a blessing behind for others (2 Corinthians 1:3-5).
- (3) When God is our strength and we depend upon Him to pass through difficult times by never being overwhelmed but sharing God's blessings with others, we will go from strength to strength as we arrive to end our pilgrimage in the presence of God.

What an awesome God we serve by being beneficiaries of His great promises! In Psalm 84:10 he shouts out that he would rather be one day in God's courts than a thousand years anywhere else. He also states that he would rather be a doorkeeper in the Temple than dwell in the tents of the wicked. There is clarity in his devotion to God that all of us who love God must aspire to as we prioritize what truly is important in our lives. Notice what the Psalmist ends this Psalm with:

- (1) The Lord bestows favor and honor, no good thing does He withhold from those whose walk is blameless.
- (2) Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord

**How possibly can we not have our life's battery recharged after we have read Psalm 84?
Our life's destiny will be shaped by our desire to be in the presence of the Lord**

The lessons from Psalm 84 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

- 1. Blessed are those whose strength is in the Lord and have set their hearts on pilgrimage.**
- 2. Blessed are those who trust in the Lord.**
- 3. Blessed are those who dwell in the house of the Lord.**
- 4. Even though we go through the Valley of suffering, our God will take us from strength to strength so that we will see God one day.**

Enjoy your Psalm 84 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. Who did the Psalmist envy that had found a home near the altar of God? (Psalm 84:3)**
- 2. We are promised to be blessed for three reasons, what are they? (Psalm 84:4, 5, 12)**
- 3. Would you enjoy being a doorkeeper for the Lord's House rather than to live in splendor and wealth? (Psalm 84:10) Explain your answer.**
- 4. What does the Lord bestow on those whose walk is blameless before Him? (Psalm 84:11)**
- 5. Is it mandatory that those on pilgrimage go through the valley of Baca? (Psalm 84:6)**

Thought Questions

- 1. The writer of this Psalm longed for the courts of the Lord. If you were absent from church for an extended period of time, what would you most long for?**
- 2. The Valley of Baca represents the hard and difficult times of life. Why are they so important in our lives if we are to go from strength to strength to meet God?**

3. **Is it easy to be a doorkeeper anywhere? What would have to be our focus in life if we were to do it in the House of God?**

➤ **Psalm 87: All My Fountains Are in You!**

I love Psalm 87 for it tells us about the City of God, Jerusalem. This Psalm can be read on two levels one focused on the Kingdom of God when all worshipers will come to Jerusalem referring to the Church Age. But also it can be read referring to the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21 or heavenly Zion. But there are three great truths for the people of God in this Psalm:

- (1) **The foundations of the City are built by God and God loves this City more than all others. Look at what happened in Jerusalem over the years starting with God sparing Isaac's life as Abraham pulled back the knife. The Temple of the Lord was there. Christ was sacrificed for the sins of all men outside its city walls, and Christ ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives next door. Heavenly Zion is our goal as Christians to spend an eternity with God in this heavenly city. I want to be there, don't you?**
- (2) **The City is inhabited only by the people of God. We are special, special, special people because of what Christ did at Calvary. Soon and very soon it will be the most important thing to us to be a citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20). In Psalm 87:5-6, God Himself will write in the register of the peoples: "This one was born in Zion!" People will know who was born in Zion and who was not. We must be in Christ if we are to be in heavenly Zion!**
- (3) **We will sing shout all of our fountains are in you (Psalm 87:7). Will there be any negative, backbiting, self-defeating, criticizing, joyless, sour people in heavenly Zion? I think not because those in Zion will SING ALL MY FOUNTAINS ARE IN YOU! In Proverbs 4:23 we are told to guard our heart for it is the well spring of life. Jesus said in John 7:37-38 "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." God's people in Zion will love to sing and they will sing from the overflow of their hearts because all their fountains are in the Lord. Christian choose to be a spring or a fountain, but never choose to be a cistern!**

The lessons from Psalm 87 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

5. God built Zion and He loves it more than all other cities.
6. We want to be citizens of heavenly Zion and have our name written in the book that we were born there.
7. If we are citizens of heavenly Zion then we are in Christ! Look at Galatian 3:27 for how one gets into Christ.
8. If we are citizens of Zion then we will sing from the overflow of our hearts that all our fountains are in you!

Enjoy your Psalm 87 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. Who built Zion? (Psalm 87:1)
2. Will people know who was born in Zion? (Psalm 87:5-6)
3. Will people be happy, full of joy, and singing songs in Zion? (Psalm 87:7)
4. What will they be singing? (Psalm 87:7)

Thought Questions

1. We have several references throughout the Bible of our names being written down by the Lord. What significance and meaning do you associate with this practice?
2. Clearly citizenship in heaven is essential to enjoy the benefits of new Zion. How does one become a citizen of heaven?
3. What does it mean to you that all your fountains are in God?

➤ Psalm 90: A Prayer of Moses

Psalm 90 is the oldest Psalm and was written by Moses. Many scholars are of the opinion that the context of Psalm 90 was at Kadesh-Barnea in Numbers 13-14 when Israel refused to enter the Promised Land even to the point that they were ready to stone Moses and Aaron. Moses intervened on their behalf so God would not kill them immediately, but

because of their unbelief those over 20 years of age were not allowed into Canaan. So Moses led a funeral march for 40 years as the unfaithful generations died in the desert. Many think at this point Moses wrote this Psalm as he faced God in the desert. In fact Moses was abiding with God in the tent of meeting when the Israelites showed up to stone him. If you are going to be attacked by anyone a good place to be is abiding with God in the shadow of His wings. Moses was hidden in the refuge of God so no harm was going to come to him, and it didn't.

Psalm 90 should make us sober and reflective about what life is and isn't. This Psalm has resonated among the nations during the most difficult of times because it properly describes the frailty of our humanity. As I walked through the cemetery in Dahlem a suburb of Berlin Psalm 90:12 was used on tombstones more than any other quote. First, Moses states what is important for all human beings to acknowledge that God is eternal and man is not. God resides outside the boundaries of time which control and dominate man's thinking. Psalm 90:4 states that a thousand years in the sight of God are like yesterday or a watch in the night. God turns man back to the dust from which he came for we are frail and fragile before Him.

Second, in Psalm 90:8 Moses points out that God knows us intimately and nothing gets pass God's observation not even our secret sins. We are an open book and we lay fully transparent before our God so we must recognize that He knows us and our motivation of heart. We will not fool God about ourselves. We often fool others and sometimes even ourselves but God will not be fooled.

Third, in Psalm 90:9-10 Moses makes two crucial points: (1) that life is lived out as we age and our power, thinking, and abilities surrender to old age and we finish our years with a sigh. Moses comments (2) that our lifespan may be 70-80 years but they are soon gone and fly away.

Fourth, in Psalm 90:11-12 Moses recognized that we must be taught by God to number our days so that we might get a heart of wisdom. Time is precious to mankind and Moses emphasized a great truth that was retaught by Jesus in the Sermon the Mount. The lesson is that we live one day at a time and if we don't do that we will never get a heart of wisdom. I call it the boundary of the day. We live in the day, meet God in the day, and make our impact for the Lord in the day. We are not to live in yesterday or in tomorrow but we are to live in today because that is where and when we meet our God!

Fourth, in Psalm 90:13-17 Moses appeals to God that each morning men are satisfied with the loving-kindness of the Lord so that we might sing for joy and be glad all our days. Moses knew what we all must learn which is that life is short and God wants us to be satisfied, filled with joy and gladness as we live out our lives before Him. Remember that God loves us and He will satisfy us IF we will love and obey Him. The choice is simple: are you in a funeral march or are you going home to the heavenly Father? The answer to that question will determine your joy quota in this life. Finally Moses requests the FAVOR of the Lord which is the daily blessing of our God on our lives. There is only blessing for the day just as there was only manna for the day. Moses also asks that the

work of his hands be confirmed that his ministry would mean something. Do you know that God answered that prayer for Moses as written in Deuteronomy 34:10; “Since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face...” If we will follow God as Moses did then God will answer that prayer for us as well....confirm the work of my hands! AMEN!

The lessons from Psalm 90 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. A thousand years with God is like yesterday.
2. God know us intimately even our secret sins cannot be hidden from Him.
3. Our life span is very short 70-80 years so we must be taught to number our days to gain a heart of wisdom. We live in the day not the years!
4. God is the source of human satisfaction, joy and gladness so we must serve Him.
5. Always seek the FAVOR of the Lord.

Enjoy your Psalm 90 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. Where did men come from? What are we turning back to? (Psalm 90:3)

2. What is the brevity of man’s life compared to? (Psalm 90:5-6)

3. God knows everything about us? True or False (Psalm 90:8)

4. Why is it important that we live a day at a time? (Psalm 90:12)

5. Who brings satisfaction, joy, gladness, and favor? (Psalm 90:14, 17)

Thought Questions

- 1. This Psalm may be associated with Israel's tragic decision at Kadesh Barnea in Numbers 13-14. What does this Psalm teach us about making godly choices?**
- 2. Since life is short how does one number their days aright?**
- 3. Do you find comfort from Psalm 90:1 that our dwelling place is with the Lord? Explain your answer.**

Read Psalms 92, 100, and 103

Lesson Purpose: The Sovereignty of God in the Affairs of Men

➤ **Psalm 92: Growing Old in the Lord**

When you read Psalm 92 it is obvious that it comes from a man who was confident in the sovereignty and purposes of the Lord. This is one of my favorite Psalms because it teaches all of us lessons of spiritual practice that we must apply to reach God's potential for us! So what are these points of spiritual practice that make Psalm 92 so important for the man or woman of God?

- (1) **Psalm 92:1-It is good to praise God! We must have a heart of praise to be properly oriented with our mind and speech if we are to make a difference for Christ in this world. If we are praising God then we don't leave room for negativity coming from a self-focus!**
- (2) **Psalm 92:2-We must proclaim the loving-kindness of the Lord in the morning and His faithfulness at night. This is a spiritual rhythm that is essential to living the holy life. David's practice of taking his prayers to God in the morning hours (Psalm 5:3) and declaring the loving-kindness of the Lord in praise to Him while awaiting with great expectation what God would do on his behalf during the day. At night David would declare the faithfulness of God for answered prayer and God's providential intervention in his life for that day. What a great practice of the disciple to honor God and build faith.**
- (3) **Psalm 92:5-6-The spiritual man seeks God's face by seeking understanding from God who is the source of all knowledge, insight, and wisdom. The spiritual man concludes how great the works of God are and how deep His thoughts. This is compared to the secular or profane man who does not understand nor has knowledge essential to know the ways of God!**
- (4) **Psalm 92:8-The spiritual man recognizes the sovereignty of God by stating "But You, O Lord, are on high forever." The Christian must accept many things if he or she is to walk close to God, and one of the most preminent is that GOD IS IN CONTROL!**
- (5) **Psalm 92:10-The spiritual man recognizes that God has anointed him which has given him a new perspective and a fresh approach to life. Although many in the Church of Christ fight the concept of an anointing simply look at 1 John 2:20,27 which flatly states that if we are in Christ we have an anointing from the Holy Spirit that we receive at baptism and the Spirit abides in us! Those of us in Christ have extraordinary access to the awesome power and strength of God, so why in the world would we choose to walk as feeble and fearful people in this world?**

- (6) **Psalm 92:12-15-The spiritual man understands the connectivity between walking with God and resiliency in old age to allow service to the Lord to continue to bless others.**
- a. The righteous will flourish like a palm tree.
 - b. The righteous will grow like a cedar of Lebanon.
 - c. The righteous are planted in the house of the Lord and they will flourish in the courts of our God.
 - d. The righteous will still yield fruit in old age...they will be full of sap and very green. Why does God do this for the righteous? So that we can praise God and testify to His greatness.

Our vitality, energy, and purpose for living are all made real and fulfilled as we become spiritual men and women of God. Psalm 92 lays out for us how and why this can be done. I want to yield fruit in old age and be full of sap and be very green because I want to serve God and others even as I grow old and gray, don't you too?

The lessons from Psalm 92 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. Wake up every morning and praise God!
2. Pray in the morning putting your requests before a loving God, and thank Him in the evening for what He did in your behalf.
3. Recognize that God is in control!
4. Resiliency and relevance in old age is tied directly to seeking God's face and being used by Him for His purposes.

Enjoy your Psalm 92 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What is good to do for the Lord? (Psalm 92:1-2)

2. What two characteristics of the Lord are important? (Psalm 92:5)

3. How does the unspiritual person respond to these characteristics? (Psalm 92:6)

4. Who is on high forever? (Psalm 92:8)

5. What are the righteous in old age to declare about God? (Psalm 92:15)

Thought Questions

1. What benefit is it for any person to wake up thanking God and praising God?
2. The wicked are compared to grass and the righteous like a palm tree. Do you agree with these comparisons and what it means for old age?
3. Do you practice bringing requests before God and reviewing what God has done in His faithfulness toward you at night?

➤ Psalm 100: Acceptable Worship

Psalm 100 is the worship psalm. If there is any passage of scripture that completely captures the mind of God on the importance, attitude, and method of worshipping God it is Psalm 100. Although this psalm is brief it is jam pack with meaning and challenge for the Christian living in the modern era. Let's examine the truth we can glean from this great psalm. Psalm 100 has been used to write many hymns. Thomas Ken's "Doxology" is a great favorite of many and its number is 66 in our song book. What a marvelous psalm is the 100th!

Psalm 100:1-Who is to worship holy God? The entire world must worship God. All peoples are to worship the Creator. How are we to worship God? Joyfully! God expects our attitude of heart to be positive, thankful, and filled with joy when we worship Him. Attitudes of negativity, selfishness, and casualness are not acceptable in our worship to God.

Psalm 100:2-Again we are commanded to serve the Lord with gladness and come before Him with joyful singing. Singing is a big part of worship and when we sing we are to be joyful. Singing sets the tone and environment for worship, and requires our full involvement to be acceptable to God. (Colossians 3:16)

Psalm 100:3- Worship requires that we be submissive to God as our Creator, Shepherd, and Father. Arrogance and pride have no place in the worship service. Letting our minds wander, falling asleep, and being a distraction are the opposite of submissive which as worshippers we cannot allow ourselves to fall into these traps.

Psalm 100:4-When we are in worship God expects our attitudes and actions to reinforce one another to be acceptable in His sight. God expects we enter worship with a thankful heart which praises and gives thanks to our Holy God as we sacrifice our time, energy, and money for Him. Our refrain is to bless His name for He has blessed us overwhelmingly in Christ. Our public prayers, communion service, singing, giving, and preaching are interconnected and must serve to raise blessings to God by recognizing what blessings He has bestowed upon us individually and congregationally.

Psalm 100:5-Why do we worship God? Because of His goodness, loving-kindness, and faithfulness which is eternal and unchanging! What an awesome God we serve!

When we read these verses they are so perfect, complete, and instructional on the who, the how, and the why of worship it seems to me that we ought to make it our practice in the Church of Christ to read it publically prior to beginning the worship service.

The lessons from Psalm 100 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

- 1. Who is to worship? The whole world. All peoples.**
- 2. How are we to worship? By serving, by singing, by submission, by sacrificing with joy and gladness in our hearts.**
- 3. Why are we to worship? The Lord is good, loving, and faithful in all things, at all times, in all places.**
- 4. Psalm 100 should be read in our public worship for it defines acceptable worship before God.**

Enjoy your Psalm 100 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. What should our attitude be when we worship God? (Psalm 100:1-2)**

- 2. Give three reasons we ought to submit to God? (Psalm 100:3)**

3. How should we enter the worship assembly? (Psalm 100:4)

4. Why do we worship God? (Psalm 100:5)

Thought Questions

4. Do you feel that we are worshipping God at this congregation of the Lord's body with the attitude of heart the Psalmist describes in Psalm 100?

5. When we worship our focus must be on the Lord's goodness, love, and faithfulness. In order to worship properly we must experience for ourselves these traits of God. As you come to Sunday school what one thing has God brought into your life this week that creates a need for you to worship Him?

6. How would you describe joyful singing which is essential to acceptable worship?

➤ Psalm 103: Our Awesome God

Psalm 103 is one of my favorites because it highlights all that God has done for His children. Written by David it is a psalm of praise highlighting who God is and what He does for us. If you will prayerfully and carefully read this psalm you will be struck on how essential God is to our health, happiness, well-being, and salvation. The Psalm starts and ends with the proper response to God by His creatures: "Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

Psalm 103:2-5 – David implores us to forget none of God's benefits. The decision to become a Christian through baptism into Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:27) is rewarded with every spiritual blessing in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:3). But in our Psalm 103 we also have a list of God's great benefits for those of us in Christ:

- (1) God pardons all our iniquities.
- (2) God heals all our diseases.
- (3) God redeems our life from the pit.
- (4) God crowns us with loving-kindness and compassion
- (5) God satisfies us with good things.
- (6) God supplies us with His inexhaustible energy (Isaiah 40:28-31)

God's blessings are so vital to living the powerful life that to avoid God or deny His call to us places us in a dead end of life without purpose, hope, or a future. Choose God's benefit plan and become a Christian.

Psalm 103:8-12- These verses describe the character of God our Father:

- (1) God is compassionate and gracious.
- (2) God is slow to anger and abounding in loving-kindness.
- (3) He has not dealt with us according to our sins.
- (4) He has not rewarded us for our iniquities.
- (5) God's loving-kindness for those who fear Him is as high as the heavens are above the earth.
- (6) God has removed our transgressions far from us as far as the east is from the west.

Psalm 103: 13-18-The Lord has compassion on all those who fear Him just as a father has compassion on his children because He knows who we are for He made us and knows we are but dust. Although mankind is like grass or as a flower in a field here today and gone tomorrow, God loves those who fear Him from everlasting to everlasting and His righteousness to their children's children. How can we not respond to the love of the Lord? Why would we turn our backs on his call to our hearts? With everything to gain and nothing to lose we must make a decision to choose life by fearing God and obeying Him!

Psalm 103:19- The preeminent spiritual truth about our great God is that He is in control and sovereign over all. Verse 19 makes this categorical announcement about the sovereignty of God. Daniel the man of God told the great Nebuchadnezzar to his face in Daniel 4:25 that the "Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes." Underline Psalm 103:19 for it is a key text of the entire Bible.

Psalm 103:20-22-We have another reference to angels who serve God by doing His will. Nothing is impossible with God and He uses His angels to achieve His purposes. I cannot tell you how but I know that angels serve those in Christ to be sure! (Hebrews 1:13-14). What is our response to be to all of the above our Father the Lord God Almighty does for us? BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL!

The lessons from Psalm 103 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. Bless the Lord, O my soul! This thought should leave our lips a lot.
2. Always remember the benefits of being in Christ!
3. God is a compassionate Father who has dealt with our iniquities, transgressions, and sins fully, completely, and eternally through Christ's death on Calvary's cross.
4. God is in control and He is sovereign over all!

Enjoy your Psalm 103 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What are God's benefits? (Psalm 103:2-5)
2. What are some characteristics of God? (Psalm 103:8)
3. What is the Lord compared to? (Psalm 103:13)
4. Who is in control? (Psalm 103:19)
5. Are angels real? (Psalm 103:20)

Thought Questions

- 1. If God is in control is He to blame for all of our problems, difficulties, and trials?**
- 2. Are you comforted by God's comparison to an earthly father? Explain why or why not.**
- 3. What practical advantages in old age does a believer have that an unbeliever lacks? What do you admire most about elderly believers?**

Read Psalms 106 and 107**Lesson Purpose: Our God is a Redeeming God!****➤ Psalm 106: God is Loving and Longsuffering**

Psalm 106 tells a story of grace for the Israelite nation before Almighty God. God is loving and longsuffering with all men for He does not wish for any to perish but all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). Psalm 106 is chock full of Israel's sin and shortcomings, but this is not the focus of this Psalm rather it is on the longsuffering love of our Lord who loved Israel as He loves each one of us unconditionally. We must only read John 3:16 to see the reality of God's great love, patience, and mercy for all mankind. To validate what I have highlighted simply read Psalm 106:43-48 to see his compassion for Israel and through them to us. Every time Israel failed God would deal with them with justice, mercy, and love. How God puts up with us can only be answered in one way: Christ became sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21). My friends it all starts and ends with the cross of Jesus Christ and if we lose that picture then we will lose our way as Israel did so often. Let's examine what Psalm 106 teaches us about God's longsuffering love.

- (1) Psalm 106:1-6- Psalm 106 begins with PRAISE THE LORD! Why? Because the Lord is good and His loving-kindness is everlasting. As the Psalmist highlights each one of us is totally dependent upon the Lord for both favor and salvation (Psalm 106:4). Without God's redemptive plan there is no hope for anyone of us. This thought is said best in Psalm 106:6: "We have sinned like our fathers, we have committed iniquity, and we have behaved wickedly." This Psalm was written most likely after the Babylonian captivity and details nine serious offenses of the Jewish nation against God, and yet God preserved the seed of the Savior through even these sinful and rebellious people, because of His longsuffering love for mankind.

- (2) Psalm 106:7-12- The first offense occurs in Exodus 14 with the Pharaoh and his army in hot pursuit of Israel to bring them back to captivity. Seeing the Egyptians they (Israelites) quaked with fear and begged Moses to go back to Egypt. God had another plan for them and Moses shouted out not to fear, but stand by and see the salvation of the Lord. Already the Israelites had forgotten the love and power of God that would assure their escape from Egypt. The Lord swept back the sea as Moses stretched out his hand over it with a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land allowing the safe crossing of Israel. However, the Egyptians followed them into the sea, but were confused by God and when Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; the

mighty Egyptian army was lost forever. It was then that the Israelites BELIEVED God's words, and PRAISED Him in song for their deliverance.

- (3) Psalm 106:13-23- The second offense occurs when the Israelites craved meat to eat and longed for the onions, garlic, cucumbers, melons, and leeks they use to eat in Egypt (Numbers 11). Grown men and women were crying in their tents because they craved meat to eat. So the Lord sent quail and plenty of them to eat. As the people were eating the quail, the anger of the Lord burned against them and He sent a wasting disease on them which killed those who had been greedy craving the foods of Egypt. They called this place Kibroth-hattaavah or the "graves of greediness". The third offense occurs in Numbers 16 and it is known as Korah's rebellion. This rebellion was against the authority of Moses which meant the people were rebelling against the authority of the Lord. To make a long story short Korah and those supporting him were consumed when the ground opened up and swallowed them including their families. It is unwise to challenge the authority of God. The fourth offense occurred when Moses was on Sinai receiving the Law and 10 Commandments, and the Israelites had Aaron build them a golden calf to worship. When Moses came down from Sinai his anger burned and God prepared to smote the people and make a great nation of Moses. But Moses interceded for Israel and stood in the "breach" for his people. It is recorded that the Lord changed His mind because of Moses's intercession for the people (Exodus 32:14). Moses did go through the camp and killed 3000 men that day. Moses dedicated himself to the ministry of intercession and stood in the "breach" for others. Are you willing to stand in the "breach" for others?
- (4) Psalm 106: 24-27 - The fifth offense occurred at Kadesh Barnea on the border of the Promised Land when the Israelites refused to believe God and grumbled in their tents in fear believing the majority report from the spies instead of Joshua and Caleb. The people started crying and were ready to stone Moses and Aaron. Again God determined to destroy them and again Moses interceded for his people and God relented from destroying the Israelites. Unfortunately, because of their unbelief all people over 20 years of age could not enter the Promise Land, and the Israelites walked around in the desert for 38 more years as the older generation died off.
- (5) Psalm 106: 28-33-The sixth offense and seventh offense occurred when the Israelites joined themselves to the Moabites and failed to keep themselves separate, and when Moses in his pride spoke harshly to the rock in direct disobedience to the instructions of God. There are always consequences to sin and this sin cost Moses his opportunity to enter into the Promise Land.
- (6) Psalm 106:34-39-The eighth offense occurred as the Israelites entered the Promise Land and failed to eradicate the people as God had directed them to

do. The ninth offense occurred when the Israelites violated God's command and sacrificed their own children to false gods.

- (7) Psalm 106:40-48 –With the many sins of the Israelites, God in His anger would give them over to their enemies who would oppress them. The Israelites, a rebellious people, then would sink down in their iniquity and sin. But God is a gracious God and He would hear the cry of Israel in their suffering, and God would respond by delivering His people. Why would God do that? Because He remembered His covenant for their sake and relented according to His loving-kindness. God would save His people over and over again. The Psalm ends with blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel because He was longsuffering with His people and would in compassion deliver them even after they had sinned.

The lessons from Psalm 106 that we must all learn are shown below:

1. The Lord is longsuffering and is great in His loving-kindness.
2. Israel failed miserably in the desert and in the Promise Land by its sin and only the grace of God delivered them.
3. Moses stood in the "breach" and interceded for his people....so should we!
4. God will always honor His covenant and it is something we can count on.

Enjoy your Psalm 106 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What is the Lord? (Psalms 106:1)

2. This Psalm was written after the Babylonian captivity and the Psalmist admitted one very important fact which was what? (Psalm 106:6)

3. What is a "wasting" disease spiritually speaking? (Psalm 106:15)

4. Why did Moses fail at Meribah? (Psalm 106:32-33)

5. When we rebel what inevitably occurs? (Psalm 106:43)

Thought Questions

4. In Psalms 106 ingratitude and grumbling had devastating consequences for Israel. Why are these habits so destructive?

5. Psalm 106:21 explains Israel's lapse into idolatry. What application should we make in our own lives of verse 21?

6. God disciplined His people severely in the desert and Promised Land for their sins. Do you believe that God disciplines His people today and if so, how? How can we avoid such discipline?

➤ **Psalm 107: Consider the Great Love of the Lord**

Psalm 107 must be included in any compilation of those Psalms which have the most impact on the life of the pilgrim as he/she sets their heart on pilgrimage. This Psalm describes five specific situations that men face in this life and what must be done to respond to them. At the end of the Psalm there is a superb exhortation for those who are wise to heed: Consider the great love of the Lord. Yes, the love of the Lord is the theme of Psalm 107 but the message of this Psalm is in its practical application of what must be done when mistakes are made, plans are flawed, events overwhelm, our strength fails, or we lose our way. None of us are better than the other because we all stand equal at the foot of the cross and when we look up then we know that we stand in NEED OF REDEMPTION! As Psalm 107:1 puts it: "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever." It is this love that we find essential to our walk through this world because "stuff" happens and we all depend on God's redemptive grace to move forward in our lives.

- (1) Psalm 107:4-9 – Here we find Israel wandering in the desert because they are lost and need a way home. They were hungry and thirsty, and their soul fainted within them because they stood in need of help. What was their response in their time of fainting? Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble! Isn't that what the Bible teaches us in James 5:13? "Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray." The Lord heard their cry of distress, and He led them to a straight way to an inhabited city. God will never let us lose our way if we will humble ourselves and call out to Him. When God performs His great work for us then let us PRAISE His loving-kindness for He will satisfy us with every good gift.

- (2) Psalm 107:10-16- There were prisoners in chains and in misery in fact in the shadow of death for they had lost all freedom. They were there because of their own rebellion and sin, and failure to listen to the word of God. They deserved to be there and they were in great suffering because of it. The burden was so great that they stumbled and there was no one to help. Their sentence was beyond what they could bear so they cried out to the Lord and He saved them and brought them out of the shadow of death and broke their chains apart. The Lord freed them just as He does today when we are in bondage to sin IF we will humble ourselves and cry out to Him for our present relief. What is to be our response when God acts on our behalf? We are to give thanks to the Lord for His loving-kindness.
- (3) Psalm 107:17-22-They were fools because of their rebellious ways and they were sick and could not bear food. Alone and hurting they were fast losing their ability to sustain themselves for they abhorred all kinds of food for their health was failing as they drew near to the gates of death. Then they came to their senses and cried out to the Lord in their trouble! He saved them and healed them. The Lord heard and answered them even at death's doorstep and the Lord saved them! Blessed be the name of the Lord for he heals all our diseases! Let us give thanks to the Lord for His loving-kindness and tell of His works with joyful singing!
- (4) Psalm 107:23-32- Then there were those who went to sea only to find themselves in the fiercest of storms (have you ever seen the movie the Perfect Storm?), and the terror of the storm was so great that even hardened seaman were in misery and they reeled and staggered like drunken men without hope for rescue. They were at their wits' end and then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and He caused the storm to be still so that the waves were hushed. They were glad because all was quiet and the Lord guided them safely to port! Oh, let us give thanks to the Lord for His loving-kindness.
- (5) Psalm 107:33-43-The Lord has the capacity to make a home where there is none, to make a wilderness into a pool of water, and a dry land into springs of water. The Lord God makes the hungry dwell there within, and plants vineyards and sows fields for them. The Lord assures a fruitful harvest and no decrease in cattle. For those who are homeless the Lord makes a home and sets the needy on a high hill away from affliction. The Lord pours contempt on the princes and the oppressors who bring nothing but sorrow and misery. What is our response if we are wise? Give heed to those who had lost their way, lost their freedom, lost their health, lost their hope, and lost their home, and consider the loving-kindness of our Lord. PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME!

The lessons from Psalm 107 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. When you are in trouble then you must pray!
2. Nothing is impossible with God no matter what extremity you find yourself in.
3. Have you lost your way? Have you lost your freedom? Have you lost your health? Have you lost your hope? Have you lost your home? If you have CRY OUT TO THE LORD!
4. Give heed to what God can do and consider His loving-kindness before you take any action.
5. Never. ever. never give up on God!

Enjoy your Psalm 107 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What is everlasting? (Psalm 107:1)
2. Did the people deserve to be in these predicaments that they faced in Psalm 107? Yes or No (explain your answer)
3. In each case what was required to turn the person's situation around?
4. Does this Psalm teach that the Lord listens to us?
5. If we are wise what are we to give heed to? (Psalm 107:43)

Thought Questions

1. Psalm 107 talks a lot about hardship and how to respond to it. How do you respond to hardship, defeat, and pain in your own life?
2. Do you believe all things are possible with God even when all seems beyond hope?
3. What do you find objectionable or appealing about the predicaments of Psalm 107?

Read Psalms 110, 112, and 116

Lesson Purpose: The Power of Righteous Living

➤ **Psalm 110: A King and a Priest**

Psalm 110 is a Messianic Psalm and is often quoted in the New Testament including by Jesus Christ. It is very important that we carefully study Psalm 110 for its meaning as to the person and work of Jesus Christ. It is important to examine these short seven verses in full view of how they are used in the New Testament to bring forth a full appreciation for the meaning of this great Psalm.

- (1) **Psalm 110:1-This verse is quoted some 25 times in the New Testament including by Jesus Christ to defend His deity before the Pharisees (Matthew 22:46ff). Jesus also answered the High Priest when being questioned during His trial with an allusion to this verse (Matthew 26:64). What is a key about the Messianic implications of this verse is that David called His Lord, Lord which brings us to point of how is it that he (Messiah) could be David's son as well as His Lord? The only answer was by the preexistence and incarnation of the Son of God. That God would be born into the world as a human baby was totally off the charts of any self-respecting Jew. When Jesus ascended in Acts to heaven He sit down at the right hand of the throne of God just as Peter preached in the first sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2:25). There couldn't be any more important prophetic text that supports Jesus claim to the throne of God!**
- (2) **Psalm 110:2-3- In these verses God makes two promises about the Messiah to extend His kingdom and give Him a victorious army. The kingdom of God is universal and it is His church that transcends time and space. The victorious army is made up of volunteers or those who have named the name of Christ in baptism and have been added to the Church. Secondly the army is in holy array which aligns with God's kingdom and priests of Revelation 1:6. Finally, this army will be a multitude like the dew which signifies that the Messiah's army will be great indeed. Jesus Christ will defeat every enemy at the end of time including death.**
- (3) **Psalm 110:4-This is a key verse since it announces that the Messiah King will also be a priest as attested to in Hebrews 5 which includes a quote of this verse in that chapter. Since Jesus was from the tribe of Judah His priesthood had to be after the order of Melchizedek since He was not of the tribe of Levi. (see Hebrews 7) The Messiah was to be a great king but in Psalm 110:4 we find that He also will be a priest. This is essential when we read Hebrews 7:25 because "He lives to make intercession for us." Where would we be without Christ as our high priest?**

- (4) **Psalm 110:5-7- The Messiah will be a victorious conqueror over the nations and over the evil one and sin. The ultimate and eternal victory belongs to Jesus Christ who will judge the nations. There can be no doubt about God's direction and plan for history's climax. Why would we not choose Christ to have "Victory in Jesus"? Verse 7 refers to a warrior King who is in pursuit of the enemy of God's people to destroy them and He only takes a short pause before continuing. Our Lord, King, and Priest is a vigilant warrior that we are compelled to follow.**

The lessons from Psalm 110 that we must all learn are shown below:

- 1. Psalm 110 is a Messianic Psalm and is often quoted in the New Testament.**
- 2. The only way Psalm 110:1 can be valid is through the preexistence and incarnation of Jesus Christ.**
- 3. The Messiah is also a High Priest as revealed in Psalm 110:4 and addressed in Hebrews 5 and 7.**
- 4. Jesus Christ has been, is, and will be victorious. Follow Him!**

Enjoy your Psalm 110 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. What question did Jesus ask the Pharisees in Matthew 22:41-46 and why did He ask it? (Psalm 110:1)**

- 2. Who was Melchizedek and why was the Messiah to have a priesthood like his? (Psalm 110:4)**

- 3. What is the general message of Psalm 110 regarding the work and ministry of the Messiah our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? (Psalm 110:5-7)**

Thought Questions

1. Psalm 110 was written 1000 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. What prophetic elements do you find most faith building in this Messianic Psalm?
2. Why is the office of High Priest so essential to Jesus's role for His church today?
3. Explain why "Victory in Jesus" would be a good theme song for Psalm 110?

➤ Psalm 112: The Righteous Man

Psalm 112 builds on Psalm 111 which exposes the character of God. Psalm 112 gives a great description of what the godly person is like. Clearly the godly or righteous person exemplifies the character and nature of God described in Psalm 111. I think the true value and benefit of Psalm 112 is to compare our character and the workings of our lives with that of the righteous person in Psalm 112. I think it is useful to breakdown the character and life practice of the righteous person:

- (1) The righteous person begins the day with PRAISE for the Lord! (Psalm 112:1)
- (2) The righteous person fears the Lord! (Psalm 111:10 points out that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and obeying His commandments result in understanding.)
- (3) The righteous person greatly delights in the Lord's commandments!
- (4) The righteous person is gracious and compassionate! (Psalm 112:4)
- (5) The righteous person lends and freely gives to the poor. (Psalm 112:5,9)
- (6) The righteous person is stable and does not fear bad news because he trusts in the Lord! (Psalm 112:7)
- (7) The righteous person will be opposed by the wicked but he will not fear and he will be upheld.(Psalm 112:8)

What a wonderful insight into the righteous man who stands firm in the storm anchored by God and His word. My favorite thought is found in Psalm 112:7: "He (righteous man) will have no fear of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord." (NIV) The righteous man fears the Lord and trusts Him and therefore fears no man or circumstance

because he is confident in God's power to strengthen him in all his troubles. The righteous must face the challenges and uncertainties of life like other men but they always do it with God's help. In Psalm 112 the righteous must face darkness (verse 4), bad news (verse 7), and opposition (verse 10) so clearly they are not immune from life's troubles.

The righteous person is always characterized by three big and active areas of their lives which are found in all righteous men and women: (1) the righteous are generous with their material wealth. (2) The righteous are courageous and fear God but not man or circumstances as they depend on God's strength. (3) The righteous are worshippers who have a great desire to praise and honor God.

Psalm 112 is a marvelous template on what we need and ought to be to live successfully before our Lord in this world.

The lessons from Psalm 112 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. The righteous praise God, fear God, and delight in His commands!
2. The righteous are generous with material wealth and concerned about the poor.
3. The righteous trust God and do not fear the uncertainties of life because they are confident in God's ability to deliver them.
4. The righteous will face in this life darkness, bad news, and opposition, but they know God will deliver them from it all.

Review of the Reading

1. What is the fear of the Lord? (Psalm 111:10)

2. A man is blessed if he _____ the Lord. (Psalm 112:1)

3. A righteous man is generous with material things because he cares about other people? (Psalm 112:9)

4. Why will the righteous person not fear bad news? (Psalm 112:7)

5. If we are righteous then we are protected from any bad or negative thing in our lives? True or False (Explain your choice)

Thought Questions

1. What does it mean to fear the Lord and to greatly delight in His commandments?
2. When we are shaken by darkness, bad news, or opposition in our lives does that mean we have no faith or little faith?
3. Do you agree that you cannot be blessed unless you are generous with your material possessions (2 Corinthians 9)?

➤ Psalm 116: Confidence in the Lord

Psalm 116 should open our eyes as to just how important our relationship with God is to our peace of mind, overall well-being, and life sustainment in this world. The Psalmist openly bears his fragile emotional state that has been rubbed raw by the lies of others (Psalm 116:11). In fact things got so desperate that he neared death because of the terror that came on him (Psalm 116:3). The Psalmist was at low ebb of distress and sorrow in his life. His back was against the wall and his life was spinning out of control and there was nothing he could do under his own power to stop it. But the Psalmist was a man of faith and he knew deep within him the person and power of God that he relied on with his life in the balance (Psalm 116:1-2):

- (1) He knew that he loved the Lord and had an intimate relationship with Him.
- (2) He knew that the Lord would hear his voice and his supplications before Him
- (3) He knew that the Lord was interested in him and what he had said because He would incline His ears toward Him.
- (4) He knew what he must do in his distress: Call on the Lord!

God expects us to call on Him when we are in trouble (James 5:13). Failure to act in faith in this regard will always lead to defeat and an unsatisfied life. What was his prayer? "Save my life!" What did the Lord do? He saved the life of the Psalmist! What we know is that the Psalmist honored and thanked God by calling Him gracious, righteous and compassionate. He knew that God preserved him because he was simple minded

(trusting) and he relied completely on God. Having been delivered his soul could be at rest (Psalm 116:7). How sweet it is to experience the believer's rest (Hebrews 4).

The Lord rescued his soul from death and he was enabled to walk in the land of the living. Having been delivered by his God he asked "what shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" The answer is very revealing:

- (1) I shall lift up the cup salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. (Psalm 116:13) Are you confident in your salvation? How can you be sure of your salvation if you can't even trust God to deliver you at the moments of stress in your life?
- (2) I shall pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people. We are in a covenant relationship with God and we must obey His commands to fulfill the vows of our covenant relationship.
- (3) I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord! Oh may we ever have a spirit of thanksgiving for all of God's blessings on us. (Psalm 116:17)

Nestled in verse 15 is a wonderful promise of God to all His saints: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones." God loves His people intimately, individually, and unconditionally. This verse tells me that no death of a saint is an accident but an appointment (Psalm 139:16). God will take us home when our work is done on this earth. This fact should bring courage to our hearts and zeal to our spirits to love God and serve Him!

Is anyone in trouble? Let him pray! Amen!

The lessons from Psalm 116 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. If you are in trouble....pray! Call out to the Lord for His help!
2. If you seek the rest of God you must first receive His help!
3. If we are to honor God for his benefits (blessings) then we need to depend upon God (Call on His name), value our salvation (lift up the cup), offer thanksgiving sacrifices (give thanks to God), obey God (pay my vows to God).
4. The death of God's saints is not by accident but by appointment!

Enjoy your Psalm 116 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. Why did the Psalmist love the Lord? (Psalm 116:1-2)
2. What does it mean to be simple-hearted? (Psalm 116:6)
3. What do you think the “rest” of the Lord means? (Psalm 116:7)
4. How did Paul use Psalm 116:10 in the New Testament?
5. Name some things that we should render to the Lord for how he blesses or benefits our lives? (Psalm 116:12ff)

Thought Questions

1. Do you agree or disagree that the death of a saint is not an accident but an appointment?
2. Why is it so important that we be simple people before God? How can someone really smart and intellectual lead a life of childlike faith?
3. If you don't believe in the power of God to call on Him during the most difficult of times can you be sure of your salvation?

Read Psalms 117 and 119**Lesson Purpose: The Shortest and the Longest Chapters in the Bible****➤ Psalm 117: The Worship of God**

Psalm 117 is the shortest psalm but also the shortest chapter of the Bible. But in two short verses it reveals great truths about our God and those who would worship Him. Let's examine what this short but powerful psalm tells us.

- (1) As worshippers we must PRAISE the Lord. This psalm begins and ends with the exhortation to PRAISE the Lord! Remember PRAISE can only be delivered by a heart full of joy with thanksgiving. PRAISE requires a joyful attitude and a thankful spirit before God to be pleasing to Him.
- (2) God is the God of all peoples! All peoples have a responsibility to laud and PRAISE His name. God's Church is universal, timeless, and evangelistic. God expects the gospel to be preached to all nations (Matthew 28:19-20), and desires all men to be saved (2 Peter 3:9). God is in the people business which means all peoples in all places at all times. Christ died for all sins which means all men (1 Peter 3:18). The Church is beyond the southern U.S., the Church is beyond the borders of the U.S., the Church is in all nations with men and women and boys and girls for whoever will call on the name of the Lord!
- (3) God is a God of love and His loving-kindness is great! 1 John 4:8 states "The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love." If you are a worshipper of God you must be motivated, sustained, and controlled by the love of God or you are not His!
- (4) God is a God of truth, and His truth is eternal and His words will judge us on the last day (John 12:28). God is a God of truth and we as worshippers need to know the truth since the truth will set us free (John 8:31-32). What a great Psalm!

The lessons from Psalm 117 that we must all learn are shown below:

1. Praise God at every opportunity.
2. God loves us.
3. The truth of God matters.
4. God is the God of all nations at all times in all places. Don't put God in a box!

Enjoy your Psalm 117 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. God's loving-kindness is _____. (Psalm 117:2)
2. God's truth is _____.(Psalm 117:2)
3. The Lord is Lord only of members of the Church of Christ who live in the southern U.S., and everyone else is on their own. True or False

Thought Questions

1. How often do you praise the Lord for His love?
2. Which is more important the love of God or the truth of God?
3. Would you be willing to talk to Jesus Christ if he physically walked into this auditorium as he dressed in His life, smelled in His life, and as He would have looked as a poor middle-eastern man?

➤ Psalm 119: The Word of God

Psalm 119 is the longest psalm and chapter of the Bible and its sole purpose is to highlight the role of the word of God in the spiritual development of His believers. Psalm 119 is an acrostic with eight lines in each section and the sections follow all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Whoever wrote this Psalm knew the word of God, but more than that the word of God was his life and you can see the wonders leap out of the page of Psalm 119. This is my favorite Psalm as it is for many at Summit. We are a people of the Book or the word and nowhere else in the written word do we find such a wonderful compilation of just how vital, valuable, and life giving is the Holy word of the Living God.

The major themes in this Psalm from Mike White's perspective:

- (1) God and His Holy Spirit play an active role in teaching us His word and will. Over and over again we find references to "teach me your statutes" or "Open my eyes" or "Give me understanding"; this is a direct reference to the role that

the Holy Spirit plays in our education in Christ. Do you for a moment think it is all about you in the study and absorption of the word? I answer an emphatic no for God teaches us through the word, people, and circumstances His truth and direction for our lives. Simply look at Hebrews 4:12 for validation of this point. Do you pray before you open the word of God, or hear a Bible lesson, or listen to a sermon? We glean truth not simply because we are so smart or so learned or so intelligent, but rather we learn truth when we submit ourselves humbly and quietly to listen to what God wants us to know from His word and His word can open us up and cut us to the bone! Psalm 119 gives us insight to the importance of God's word in our lives. My favorite verses in this regard are found in Psalm 119:18-19: *"Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from your law. I am a stranger in the earth; Do not hide your commands from me."*(NASB)

- (2) We must mediate on the word of God to have God teach us His word and will. Mediate or meditation is mentioned eight times in Psalm 119. Meditation is the act of focus and reflection on the word and what it says and what it means for our lives. We are to mediate on His precepts, statutes, wonders, law, testimonies, and His word. The Lord tells us to meditate all the day. Why is it so important to meditate on the word of God?
- (3) We must delight ourselves in the word of God! Delight is mentioned seven times in Psalm 119 when it comes to our attitude before the word of God. What are we to delight in? We are to delight in His statutes, commandments, and law. Our attitude of heart must be one of joy and gladness to enter into a study of God's word!
- (4) The word of God is supernatural, life changing, and soul saving IF it is applied to the hearts of men. Notice some key verses in Psalm 119 on the importance of the word for deliverance from tight spaces in this world:
- *Psalm 119:11*-*"Your word I have treasured in my heart that I may not sin against you."* How to you fight sin? Read the word of God!
 - *Psalm 119:28*-*"My soul weeps because of grief; strengthen me according to your word."* The word will give you strength in your grief.
 - *Psalm 119:71*-*"It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn your statutes."* Sometimes in the crucible of pain and affliction our hearts are wide open to God's powerful messages. Why? Because on our bed of affliction we are open to listen.
 - *Psalm 119:83*- *"Though I have become like a wineskin in the smoke, I do not forget your statutes."* Even though I may shrivel up and be of no use to nobody, even then I will not forget the word of the Living God for it is my LIFE!
 - *Psalm 119:105*-*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."* The word of God directs us in the path we should go in and lights our way so that we will not stumble or fall. The greatest time saver in life is to follow the word of God thereby avoiding the detours, pitfalls, dead ends, and the ditches of life.

- *Psalm 119:165 – “Those who love your law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble.”* If you love the word and spend time it then you don’t have to stumble and fall because God goes with you!
- (5) When we spend time in the word of God we secure some awfully good things for our lives:
- *Psalm 119:2- “How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, who seek Him with all their heart.”* Do you want the blessed life? Then seek God through His word.
 - *Psalm 119:9-“How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to your word.”* The word of God will protect us IF we follow its teachings by keeping our minds focused on right things and our ways on straight paths.
 - *Psalm 119:25-“My soul cleaves to the dust: Revive me according to Your word.”* The word of God can revive us at the low points of life if we open our hearts up to it.
 - *Psalm 119:54-“Your statutes are my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.”-* Our attitude will be positive as we travel through this world if the word of God is in our hearts then we will have songs in our lives.
- (6) The word of God provides wisdom, insight, and understanding to make us wiser than our enemies, more insightful than our teachers, and more understanding than the aged (Psalms 119:97-104). But we must keep His word and not turn away from His ordinances.

Let us close our summary of Psalm 119 by looking at verse 160 which states “The sum of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.” The word of God is truth and it is eternal. Why wouldn’t we spend time in learning its eternal truths?

The lessons from Psalm 119 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

1. Psalm 119 shows the importance of the word of God to our spiritual vitality.
2. God is personally involved in training us in the School of Christ by teaching us through His word.
3. We must spend time in the word of God in meditation to absorb its truths. There is no drive by learning in the School of Christ!
4. When we are down, depressed, deserted, or defeated always turn to the word of God for revival.

Enjoy your Psalm 119 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. How may we avoid sin in our lives? (Psalm 119:11)**
- 2. Does the word of God free us to do great things in this life? (Psalm 119:32)**
- 3. The psalmist asks that the Lord teach him two things in Psalm 119:66. Why are these two qualities so important?**
- 4. Is it possible that we must be afflicted before we will pay attention to God's word? (Psalm 119:75, 92)**
- 5. What advantages does the word of God give us? (Psalm 119:97-104)**

Thought Questions

- 1. How do you differentiate between reading God's word and meditating on it?**
- 2. What verse in Psalm 119 best indicates your need for God's word?**
- 3. We are commanded to delight in the word of God. What are some of the evidences that we delight in the word of God?**

Read Psalms 121, 127, 131, and 133

Lesson Purpose: Staying Close to God

➤ **Psalm 121: I Will Lift Up My Eyes!**

This Psalm was sung by pilgrims as they made their way through the hill country toward Jerusalem to worship at the Temple. Ascending to Jerusalem for worship required both commitment and courage for those who would make the journey. Slips and falls, cold nights, and robbers were all road hazards on a journey to worship Almighty God. But when you read this Psalm it becomes clear that what is on the mind of every pilgrim is not the obstacles but the opportunity to be in the presence of the Lord. Do you desire to worship your God on Sundays or are there too many obstacles that get in the way? For these pilgrims it was a joy and a privilege to worship God and they were not going to allow opposition, danger, or bad weather to keep them from it.

How could these pilgrims make the trip to Jerusalem with joy in their hearts and praise on their lips? I think there are four reasons:

- (1) **These pilgrims as they walked toward Jerusalem focused on God and not their own circumstances and shortcomings.** Psalm 121:1 reads I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come? It is clear to me that these pilgrims were going to keep their eyes on the presence of their Lord who would be both their helper and keeper or over watcher. We read in Hebrews 12:2 that we must fix our eyes on Jesus so that as we follow Him we will not grow weary and lose heart.
- (2) **These pilgrims knew that their help would come from the Lord who made heaven and earth.** They relied on the help of God and not the expedients of men.
- (3) **These pilgrims knew that God would watch over or keep their souls as they made this dangerous journey.** What were the promises of God to these pilgrims which are the very same promises to you and me today?
 - Psalm 121:3-God will not allow our foot to slip. God will stabilize us and protect us IF we keep focus on Him and not self!
 - Psalm 121:7-The Lord will protect us from all evil for He will keep or over watch our soul. Recall 2 Thessalonians 3:3 “But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.” God has got our back in this world IF we are focused on Him and following Jesus Christ day by day.
 - Psalm 121:8-The Lord will guard our going out and our coming in for as long as it takes until the trumpet blows! Is it not a wonderful thing for the Christian that God surrounds us with His protective love?

- (4) **God never takes a holiday leaving His children alone and vulnerable for He never slumbers or sleeps (Psalm 121:4).** How great is the love of God? Whether it is day or night or going out or coming in or satanic attack or moments of weakness our great God will be there for those who are His.

I believe if there is not a song in our heart and praise on our lips as we ascend to worship our Lord then our attitude of heart is not what it should be. The reason is simple and it is that our eyes are not looking above they're turned inside on self. A joyless spirit is a self-made problem. The Rx is straightforward: "Lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come from?" The answer is God for it surely is not self.

The lessons from Psalm 121 that we must all learn are shown below:

5. Get your eyes off of self and on to God.
6. God is our helper and keeper. God will not fail us IF we trust Him with everything.
7. In this evil world we need the protection of God.
8. God is 24/7 and His protection is comprehensive and complete. Trust Him with it all!

Enjoy your Psalm 121 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. Where should our eyes be if we are pilgrims in this world? (Psalm 121:1)

2. Explain the comprehensive protection of God from this Psalm.

3. What will God do for our soul? (Psalm 121:7)

4. Does the Lord ever take time off? (Psalm 121:3)

Thought Questions

1. How secure do you feel in this world? Explain your answer.
2. The Lord is your shade on your right hand. The sun will not smite you by day nor the moon by night (Psalm 121:5-6). Does this assurance guarantee that nothing will hurt you?
3. Do you believe that your attitude determines your altitude in this life?

➤ Psalm 127: The Essential Lord!

Psalm 127 is testimony to the great truth of Jesus Christ as expressed in John 15:5 “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.” Psalm 127 echoes John 15 with the thought that if God is not a part of it then “it” is going nowhere fast and most likely will be an obstacle and an impediment in your life. A similar thought was expressed by Paul’s Pharisaic teacher Gamaliel who when speaking of the young Church in Jerusalem told the Sanhedrin in Acts 5:38-39: “So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be fighting against God.” You simply can’t go against God in any endeavor of life, and on the flip side is the great truth that you and God make a majority and His help will be sufficient. Paul says in Philippians 4:13 “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” The Lord is essential to any task, activity, or work that we do in this life. This is the essential message of Psalm 127.

Psalm 127:1 is the verse that we often quote about building anything whether it is a nation, or the walls around Jerusalem that had fallen down, or our own families. Although this Psalm is ascribed to Solomon, I am more persuaded that it was written during the time of Nehemiah given the language that was used which seems to come more easily from that time period. The BIG TRUTH is that if God is not involved nothing we attempt to build or create will be sustainable. We can work and work and work BUT if God is not involved our work is futile. Similarly, unless the Lord is our guard and over watches us the watchman’s work is in vain. Whether in building, guarding, or anything else you might think of if the Lord is not a part of it then all our efforts will turn to dust!

This is why nothing should be done without first praying to God for His involvement and help before beginning anything.

Psalm 127:2 emphasizes that our individual and collective efforts without God's blessing and support can be like pushing a rock uphill only for it to roll back downhill. Man needs the favor of the Lord to achieve the Lord's purposes for him and without God's favor we labor in vain.

Psalm 127:3-5 speaks to the importance of children who are a gift from the Lord. If you have experience with those young families who seek to have child, but have difficulty then we can better appreciate what a blessing a child represents. It is a strange place when babies are killed in the womb for convenience which is a practice that does not honor the nation that allows it. God's opinion on this matter is quite clear: blessed is the man who has many children (Psalm 127:5).

The bottom line is that we need God in every crack and crevice of our life, and without Him we have no possibility of achieving what He has called us to.

The lessons from Psalm 127 that we must all learn are shown in the box below:

- 1. The Lord's involvement is essential in anything man does for it to be a success in God's sight.**
- 2. Prayer should precede anything that we do since God's participation is essential.**
- 3. Building a strong family doesn't happen by accident but requires the full participation and partnership of God.**
- 4. Children are a blessing from God! They are to be loved, cherished, protected, and trained as they grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord!**

Enjoy your Psalm 127 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. If you build anything what should be done first?(Psalm 127:1)**

- 2. Can we protect ourselves from the world's uncertainties by our own strength? (Psalm 127:1)**

- 3. How important is God's favor? (Psalm 127:3)**

4. Who is the blessed man? (Psalm 127:5)

5. How important are children to God? (Psalm 127:3)

Thought Questions

4. What do you believe distinguishes a home whose builder is the Lord?

5. How do we involve God best in our activities if He is essential to them?

6. If children are a gift from the Lord what responsibility do we have for all children not just our own?

➤ Psalm 131: How to Walk in the Circle of the Will of God

Psalm 131 was written by David who we know to be a spiritually sensitive man and one who was a God seeker. I can only imagine David hearing a conversation between a child and his mother that would cause David to use that experience as he penned this short but powerful Psalm. In a brief three verses David in my mind's eye describes what is essential in our attitude and spiritual practice to walk in the center of the will of God.

(1) **Psalm 131:1-If we are to walk in the circle of the will of God we must have a heart of humility. We should never elevate ourselves or push ourselves on others but allow God to take us to those heights and places he wants for us. Notice what David writes that he is not proud, nor haughty, nor presumptuous, nor overconfident in his own person and abilities. Without humility no one can walk with God in the circle of His will. God will place us where we need to be, when we need to be there, for His purposes IF we will humble ourselves for Him and follow in His footsteps (1 Peter 2:21). I love Jeremiah 45:5 when God tells Baruch the young secretary to Jeremiah in a doomed Jerusalem: "Should**

you then seek great things for yourself? Seek them not.” Baruch had a lot of ambition but God is not seeking ambition, God is seeking humble servants that God will raise up and establish on His terms in His way.

- (2) **Psalm 131:2-If we are to walk in the circle of the will of God we must have confidence in His ability to take care of us.** David states that our soul must be quiet and rest against the Lord like a weaned child rests against his mother. The ability to relax in the Lord and not be controlled by anxious thoughts or envy for the wicked marks the righteous one confident in the Lord. All of us must be weaned in both physical and spiritual terms so that we might walk in the circle of the will of God. Think about what it means to be in the Lord’s rest absolutely confident as to whatever comes up that you and the Lord can deal with it victoriously.
- (3) **Psalm 131:3-If we are to walk in the circle of the will of God our hope must continuously be in Him.** What does this mean? It means that we keep our eyes steady focused on God who is the source of all hope (Romans 15:13). If we keep our eyes focused on the hope of God then joy and peace will abound in our life which is essential to staying in the center of the circle of the will of God. It is important that we keep our mind uncluttered and sober minded so we can maintain the prayer life essential to the overcoming of life’s challenges (1 Peter 4:7).

Psalm 131 provides a great checkup for spiritual health. Are you:

- Humble and honest with both yourself and God?
- Confident in God’s ability to take care of you?
- Assured of God’s hope that gives you joy and peace?

If you can answer yes to all three questions above then you are likely walking in the circle of the will of God.

The lessons from Psalm 131 that must be learned are shown in the box below:

1. Humility is essential to walking with God.
2. God expects us to lean on Him so that we trust Him to get us through any momentary trouble we may face.
3. Hope is critical to the spiritual person because it motivates us to endure through tough and difficult times.

Enjoy your Psalm 131 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

- 1. What does it mean that “I do not involve myself in great matters or things too difficult for me?” (Psalm 131:1)**
- 2. How important is it that we have a quiet soul? (Psalm 131:2)**
- 3. Why is hope in the Lord so important in staying within God’s will for our lives? (Psalm 131:3)**

Thought Questions

- 1. What quality of David displayed in Psalm 131 to you think would be most important to your walk with the Lord?**
- 2. Do you think it is up to you to decide on how you best should be used by God and then work toward that end so you can be used most effectively by God?**
- 3. What is a quieted soul?**

➤ **Psalm 133: The Beauty of Unity**

Psalm 133 is a special Psalm written by David for it addresses the theme of unity among brothers. It was a Psalm that was sung as pilgrims made their way to Jerusalem to worship at the Temple. David's life was filled with strife and disunity as we see even when he was anointed to be king by Samuel. His brothers were disdainful of him as well as his own father which is clear when you look at these events and his trip to the frontlines when he killed Goliath. David was on the run from King Saul and his life was constantly threatened. When he finally became king he had to fight his way into Jerusalem to reconcile the nation under his leadership. It must have been a wonderful time in David's reign when this Psalm was written for it speaks to the hope of unity among brethren. Unfortunately David enjoyed little of it in his own family as son murdered son. Even so this little Psalm gives us a picture of what brotherly unity is like and why God loves it so. Paul writes in Colossians 3:14: "Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity." The reason unity is so important is because it demonstrates the love of God. Unity is difficult and it is not earned by man but is given by the Spirit and we must diligently preserve it by being peace makers in the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:3). This cannot be achieved when there are differences as they always will be without humility, gentleness, patience, and tolerance for one another because of our love for the brethren. It is an ugly thing to see a split in the Lord's Church or friction among brethren, but it can only occur when we do not have the love of God in our hearts. David experienced first-hand the destruction of the unity of his family and the nation, and much of it came from his own sin.

So when we read Psalm 133:1 we take notice that unity among brothers is good and pleasant and should be seen as a great blessing in our lives. In fact, Psalm 133:3 states that the blessing of God with life forever depends on our desire, sacrifice, and commitment to live in unity with our brothers. We cannot be full of self and expect for unity and harmony to reign when there is no love for one another for love is a prerequisite for unity. The world is filled with disunity, spite, and hate, and men are brought into the Church to enjoy the joy of unity born of love. If we lose unity in the Body of Christ it is a dreadful and sorrowful thing that will cost the souls of men. Let it not be! Remember the words of David: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell in unity!" David didn't say uniformity, rather he said unity and unity requires the acceptance of diversity in God's people. You cannot possibly be up for this spiritual test unless you are controlled by the Holy Spirit and motivated by the love of God. Amen!

The lessons from Psalm 133 that must be learned are shown in the box below:

1. Unity among brothers is a great thing seen from the eyes of God.
2. Unity can only be achieved if there is the love of Christ in men's hearts.
3. Unity is a blessing and that blessing is eternal life.
4. Have you considered that fractious disunity will cost the souls of those who practice it?

Enjoy your Psalm 133 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. What does unity mean? (Psalm 133:1)
2. Does unity mean that we are all alike? (Psalm 133:2)
3. Can we enter into eternal life if we practice strife, disunity, and disharmony within Christ's Church? (Psalm 133:3)

Thought Questions

1. What benefits arise from church unity?
2. What causes disunity in the church?

Read Psalms 137, 139, and 150

Lesson Purpose: God will Never Let You Go!

➤ **Psalm 137: By the Rivers of Babylon**

I must admit that I fell in love with this Psalm after hearing Daniel O'Donnell sing "By the Rivers of Babylon" based on this great Psalm of faith. Have you ever lost something because of your own fault? The Jews had lost everything because of their continuous sin and rebellion against God, and to preserve the seed (Christ) for the salvation of the nations the Jews had to be purged of their vile wickedness and lack of faith. The Lord appointed the great Nebuchadnezzar to lead the Babylonian Army to Jerusalem and destroy the city, Temple, and its walls. King Nebuchadnezzar achieved God's purposes but he was overly brutal with God's people, and God had determined that Babylon would receive just retribution which occurred when the Medes and the Persians stormed the city through the dry River Euphrates whose waters had been diverted. Always remember what goes around comes around. Matthew 7:1-2 speaks to this spiritual reality. Psalm 137 is a Psalm about remembrance on days gone by and life lost so it is a poignant reminder to all of us to never take our faith and well-being in God lightly as the Jews did before their exile.

Psalm 137:1-4-The Jews would sit by the canals that intercrossed Babylon bringing fresh water to dry lands, and would weep as they remembered Zion. Upon the willows they would hang their harps. I have tried to picture that scene in my own mind using the canals around Yuma, Arizona as my mind's picture, and I must say that it must have been a spot for sober, deep, and penetrating prayer as to what had happen to them as a people of God. However, their contemplation and worship was broken into by Babylonian guards tasked to keep watch over these Jews who tormented them demanding songs of Zion. The guards knew this cut deep to the bone with the Jews but did they ever enjoy making fun of their sad predicament. Of course the Jews were not about to sing religious songs of joy concerning Zion in front of their pagan tormenters. If this sight doesn't get the hair on the back of your neck to stand up then I don't know what will. These Jews were at the depths of pain and despair with nowhere to go but to the Lord. The same is true for all men, in all places, at all times, in all circumstances for we each stand in desperate need of God!

Psalm 137:5-6-God gives us memory and what a great thing it is. Sometimes memories are all we have to live on as it was for the Jews during the period of their exile. But when we take a wrong turn or lose our way it is important that we remember God and return to Him. These Jews thought every day of Jerusalem and the Temple, and they grieved for what had been lost. But it is always important to remember God the Father because we never go too far or sink too low or lose so much that we can't reverse it all with one

decision to return to the Father (Luke 15:11ff). Go back and look at Psalm 107 to see this truth vividly displayed for those of God's people who had reached the end of their rope and feared for their death. Jesus Christ understood the importance of memory and instituted the Lord's Supper for His people to remember His sacrifice on Calvary for all our sins.

Psalm 137:7-9- This part of Psalm 137 is neither well understood nor accepted by most of us. What we must remember is that these events took place between the nations and God loves His people the Jews. So when Edom took delight when Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B.C. that sealed their fate with Almighty God. Please read the Book of Obadiah to get the full story of God's vengeance on the Edomites. God also intended to bring down Babylon for what they had done to the Jews and we know from Psalm 103:19 that God is sovereign over all things on this planet. Babylon when their time of sin was ripe was defeated and destroyed by Darius the Mede as Daniel had prophesied (Daniel 5:31). Verse 9 is problematic for us because how anyone can be used "blessed" for those who would take the lives of innocent ones? What we must accept is that God's thinking is superior to ours, and the Babylonian nation had to experience the retribution for what they had done at Jerusalem and throughout the ancient world as they pursued brutal all-out war on the peoples of the region. Listen to the song "By the Rivers of Babylon" and you will instantly understand the sadness and wistfulness of Psalm 137 most likely written by a priest after his return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.

The lessons from Psalm 137 that we must all learn are shown below:

1. It is a terrible thing to turn our back on our relationship with God because of sin.
2. Remember God even when you have made great mistakes. Return to Him!
3. No one on this side of death is without hope since you are only one decision away from life!
4. By faith accept that God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are His ways our ways. (Isaiah 55:8-9)

Enjoy your Psalm 137 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. Why were the Jews weeping? (Psalm 137:1)

2. What did their tormenters want from them? (Psalm 137:3)

3. Were the Jews going to cast their pearls to the swine and sing songs of Zion in a foreign land? (Psalm 137:4)

4. Did the Jews want to forget what they had been through? (Psalm 137:5-6)

5. Why would Edom hate the Jews so much that they gloated when the Babylonian Army was razing the city? (Psalm 137:7)

Thought Questions

1. Remember and forget are found a number of times in this Psalm. In spiritual terms what should we forget and what should we remember in our lives?

2. Can a Christian have the same attitude as the Psalmist had against Edom and Babylon?

3. What would you say in your own life the “Rivers of Babylon” refer to?

➤ Psalm 139: The Hound of Heaven

Have you ever read the “Hound of Heaven” by Francis Thompson? If you haven’t, you must read this poem that pictures God as a blood hound chasing after man. It was written by Francis Thompson a tortured soul who battled addiction, poverty, and depression. But he understood the great truth about our God that He will never let us go. Francis died when he was 48 years old but he left us one of the greatest of poems that is closely correlated with Psalm 139. Today I was driving by a church sign and it read: “When God saw you at birth it was love at first sight.” Why shouldn’t that be? For we read in Psalm 139:13 that God formed my inward parts and wove me in my mother’s womb. Verse 15 furthers this thought by stating that God skillfully wrought me in the depths of the earth. This word skillfully wrought refers to embroidered. Think about how

intricate and wonderfully made we are. God doesn't make junk and it is with the mind of Christ that we see the value in each and every person we meet (2 Corinthians 5:16). God expects His love to channel through His people directly to the souls of others. Francis Thompson understood this and so must we because we have no right to give up on anyone because God doesn't.

Psalm 139 is so rich in describing who God is, how He operates, and how He values mankind. It is beautiful to read and powerful to understand because when you do so you will be brought to your knees in honor and praise for God.

David wrote this Psalm and that makes sense to me since David had one of the most intimate relationships with God of all of time. David begins with the acknowledgement that God KNOWS him. What does that mean? David says You know when I sit down and when I rise up. You know my thoughts and are intimately acquainted with all my ways. God knows us far better than we know ourselves. I don't recall my time in the womb or my birth, but my God does for He was there!

Psalm 139:7-12- Is a great section of this chapter because it flatly states that we cannot escape from His Holy Spirit nor flee from His presence. Wherever we go whether down to the depths of Hell or to the heights of heaven God is there. I cannot hide in the dark or deceive God because He loves me and will not let me go. Humans will let people go even Christians let people drift, but not God. The cross of Christ is the greatest testimony as to why God will not let us go.

Psalm 139:13-15-If there is any argument against abortion it is these set of verses by David that demonstrate with great precision of who is at work in the womb. Make no mistake about it; God's hand is on every human being brought into this world. Examine what David says here: (1) God formed our inward parts. (2) God wove us in our mother's womb. (3) We are fearfully and wonderfully made. (4) We were skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth. Can there be any doubt as to when life begins and who is in control? God doesn't make junk and God doesn't make mistakes with human birth and we need to approach this subject with an awareness of God's role in our lives from the beginning through physical death to eternal life.

Psalm 139:16 makes a bold statement that God knows the days that were ordained for each one of us. God knows what He wants us to achieve for His glory and our good, and He knows what our time on this earth is to be. Think about it when you are deciding which god to serve: yourself or Almighty God. It should be a very clear decision for each one of us.

Psalm 139:23-24-David asks God to see him as he is because he knows that God wants the very best for him. It is important for all of us to be transparent before God and to desire to be so. Only God has the power to change us, transform us, reroute us, and redeem us. David practiced the presence of God and so should we. Our attitude should be that of David's reflected in verses 23-24.

When we read Psalm 139 written by David we know that God loves us and will never let us go. Please get a copy of the poem the “Hound of Heaven” and read it to understand what a broke, depressed, addict learned about God and his love for him. God doesn’t make mistakes and God never gives up on people nor should we.

The lessons from Psalm 139 that we must learn are shown in the box below:

1. God knows me personally, intimately, and individually, and we can never deceive God for He is omniscience.
2. We cannot run away from God for He is omnipresence.
3. God knows us because He made us in our mother’s womb and He knows when we will die because He is omnipotent.
4. Be like David who was transparent before God

Enjoy your Psalm 139 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. Can we escape from the presence of God? (Psalm 139:7)
2. Was God involved in our development in the womb? (Psalm 139:13)
3. Does God know how many days we will live? (Psalm 139:16)
4. Did David hate those who hated God? (Psalm 139:21) Is this a righteous attitude?
5. What is David really asking God for in verses 23-24?

Thought Questions

1. Why does it make no sense to run from God but perfect sense to run to God?
2. How does this Psalm ask you to see your body and other people's bodies?
3. Do you think that God gives up on people, and therefore we are justified to give up on people who continually disappoint and fail?

➤ Psalm 150: Praise Him!

Brother Gary Wilson influenced me to put Psalm 150 in the set of Psalms we focused on in our study this quarter. But Psalm 150 provides a fitting end to the both our study and the Book of Psalms. The theme of Psalm 150 as is easily seen is PRAISE with the word praise mentioned 13 times in six verses. Hard to miss the importance of praising God in this capstone Psalm is it not? In fact the last verse of the entire Book ends with "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!" After all has been written and after all those including David had been inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the Psalms, the last admonition and encouragement to us as a congregation of the Lord's people is to "PRAISE THE LORD!" Amen and Amen!

Psalm 150 begins in the same exact manner it ends with the command to "Praise the Lord!" But it answers several questions about praise to His name that are important to properly praise Him.

- (1) Psalm 150:1-Teaches us that we can praise God anywhere at any time for the Psalmist mentions the sanctuary and His mighty expanse of creation. The Apostle Paul on Mars Hill made a point to the Athenians in Acts 17:24 that God made the world and since He is Lord of heaven and earth He does not dwell in

temples made with hands. Sometimes we inhibit our praise to God because we redefine Him to be put in a box that we use at our whim and convenience. Our God is a BIG God and He will not be defined in His infinite greatness, love, and mercy by finite and sinful man! So whether you are golfing, camping, setting in a pew, or driving a truck we can worship God by praising His name at any time or place.

- (2) **Psalm 150:2-When we think of why we should praise God this verse shouldn't be lost on us. We praise Him because of WHO HE IS and WHAT HE HAS DONE! Psalm 150 speaks to mighty deeds and excellent greatness as words to describe the indescribable. Can anyone of us not appreciate how God has carried us through in difficult times and kept us humble in the good times for our own benefit. Walking with God is a magnificent opportunity for it is how we are trained in the School of Christ to be more like Him. When we pray to God and He intervenes in our lives then praise is the natural and just release of our love and devotion to our Heavenly Father. Think on your blessings and consider where you would be and what you would be without Jesus Christ. Every Christmas I see the show it's a "Wonderful Life" starring Jimmy Stewart who in a moment of depression was going to take his own life only to be saved by an angel who showed him what his hometown Potterville would be like without him. Think about that movie and your life as Potterville, what would your life be without Jesus Christ?**
- (3) **Psalm 150:3-5-This passage speaks to how we are to praise Him and in this context we have mention of many instruments of music. Let me say that there is no New Testament authority for the use of instruments as Colossians 3:16 makes clear. But don't lose sight of what the Psalmist is telling us in these verses that our praise of God demands all that we have and all that we are. The worship of God as Psalm 100 presents is to be full of joy, commitment, and delight before our God. If you attend a service and it is without joy in people's hearts then I say that the worship service is not conducted decently and in good order because without joy in the heart there is NO worship of God.**
- (4) **Psalm 150:6-Finally, we are told that EVERYTHING that has breath should praise the Lord! Thank you Lord that you love me individually, personally, and intimately even though you know the condition of my heart and my secret sins. I thank you for the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses me of all sin and the promise of eternal life as I follow you and obey you in this life. Everything I have and every good gift I have received has been from Your hands to my heart, and I know that You will never leave me or forsake me. For all these blessings and more in my life, dear Father I PRAISE YOUR HOLY NAME! AMEN!**

The lessons from Psalm 150 that must be learned are shown in the box below:

1. The great Book of Psalms ends in praise to the Lord.
2. We are to praise God anywhere at any time for any reason.
3. We praise God for His mighty works and excellent greatness. God deserves our praise.
4. Praise to God requires everything we have, because without Him we would be nothing.

Enjoy your Psalm 150 study and may God richly bless you as a result.

Review of the Reading

1. God can only be praised in a church building. True or False (Psalm 150:1)
2. Give two reasons why God should be praised. (Psalm 150:2)
3. Why is it important to praise God while you have breath? (Psalm 150:6)

Thought Questions

1. Why is this Psalm so fitting to conclude the Book of Psalms?
2. How important is spontaneous praise to God in leading a Christ-focused life of a happy servant?

3. How do you reconcile the instruments mentioned in Psalm 150 with only the use of acappella singing in the New Testament Church?

A People of the Book

8-Year Curriculum

	January - March	April - June	July - September	October - December
2007	Matthew	Genesis	Galatians & Ephesians	Isaiah
2008	Exodus	I & II Timothy, Titus	Hebrews	Minor Prophets I (Hosea-Obadiah)
2009	Mark	Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	Romans	Jeremiah & Lamentations
2010	I & II Thessalonians	Joshua, Judges, Ruth	James, I & II Peter	Minor Prophets II (Jonah-Habakkuk)
2011	Luke	I & II Samuel	I Corinthians	Daniel
2012	Acts	Special Study: The Foundations (Psalm 11:3)	Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther	Minor Prophets III (Zephaniah-Malachi)
2013	Gospel of John, I, II, & III John	Job	Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon	Psalms
2014	Philippians, Colossians, Philemon & Jude	Kings & Chronicles	Revelation	Ezekiel
2015	II Corinthians			

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