**Autumn 2020: Time in the Psalms**

This autumn we are spending time looking at the Book of Psalms. Within the Psalms we find so much of life, faith, love, hope, fear, joy, anger and plenty more. Most of all, we find the key elements of worship & praise of God and trust in Him. Each week we will look at a different aspect of faith and Christian life through the lens of one or more Psalm.

**A Session Outline - 40 mins total, but can be longer or flexible if you wish**

**Introduction - 10 mins (longer if you’re in a group I suspect!)**

1. How are you?
2. What notable things have happened recently?
3. Is there anything distracting you from focusing on God today? If yes, think or talk about that and then pray and give it to God as you begin.

**Time With the Bible - 15-20 mins**

*What does this passage tell me about God?* To answer this question, you might want to think about whether the passage speaks about God directly or indirectly. Is there a prophecy quoted, or does the passage remind you of another part of scripture? If so, spend some time following the leads. How does the passage remind you of what you’ve known about God before? Does it make you think differently about God than you have done before?

*What does this passage tell me about myself?* To answer this question you might want to ask how you felt as you read the passage and how you feel as you reflect on it now. Do you identify with a particular character? Does it make you feel happy or sad, hopeful, excited, confused or any other emotions?

If you feel challenged, or as if something in the passage is really speaking to your or feels personal to you today, spend a few minutes thinking: what is it? What about it feels important to you?

*What is this passage inviting me to do differently?*

As Christians we are meant to live according to the truth that is in Jesus and to not be the same as before we knew him (Ephesians 4:20-24). As we learn the good news of Jesus and the truth about his love we are bound to change.

Spend time thinking about things in your life you might want to be or to do differently as a result of today’s study and pray about those things.

For each session, we will also provide a few questions to pick out the key elements of the passage and try and help you to be guided through the study.

**Time in Prayer - 10 mins**

Each time you meet or spend time reflecting alone, make sure you leave plenty of time to pray. You could pray about:

The Church and its leaders, both ours, Churches nearby and the worldwide Church

Situations locally or in the world around us

Things shared by people during your time together

Those who are afraid, sick or those who are bereaved

Committing to God that you will follow through on what you’ve been invited to do by today’s study.

Your neighbours and the street you live in.

Those who govern us locally, nationally and internationally.

**Study Questions**

1. First of all, which of the verses or passages in today’s Psalm was your favourite and why? Which of them most reminded you of the God you know and which of them, if any, were a surprise to you?
2. As you read the Psalm, are there any verses that you recognise as having come up regularly in the Psalms we’ve looked at over the last couple of months? Why do you think these are repeated so often throughout the Book of Psalms? What might this say to us about what could be important to us in our own lives of faith?
3. In The Passion Translation, v5 reads, ‘Your magnificent splendour and the miracles of your majesty are my constant meditation.’ We talk a lot about ‘knowing God’ and being ‘close to Him’, privileges we have because of Jesus. How do you think we can balance this opportunity for intimacy with God with remembering just how great, glorious and worthy of praise and thanksgiving He is? If you have any tips or wisdom to share, do!
4. In v8, we’re told that God is kind and tender to those who don’t deserve it and very patient with people who fail Him. If we were to live more like this, what impact might it have on how we deal with other people, or with ourselves?
5. Meanwhile in v14, we’re told that, ‘Weak and feeble ones you will sustain. Those bent over with burdens of shame you will lift up.’ How might this encourage us? What are we to do when we see those who are ‘weak and feeble’ not cared for or about?
6. Finally, read vv19-21. What are the key things you take away from this section? For me, the distinction drawn between those who love God and those who are ‘ungodly’ is quite stark and leads me to think about the priority I will aim to give to telling people about God’s love and trying to live God’s way. Your key issue might be different, though!

**Something To Do This Week**

**Think about one key difference in your life now that you follow God. Tell someone about it this week and report back to your group how it went (if you have a group).**