**Autumn 2020: Time in the Psalms: Week 5 Psalm 86: Asking for Help**

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. How easy do you find it to ask for help from another person?
2. Think about what happens when you pray. How much of your time in prayer is given to asking God for help?
3. What do you think happens when we ask God for things in prayer? Does it please Him?
4. Verses 1-7 lay out David’s urgent need for God’s help. they show a persistence. David asks for help because of his devotion to God and service of Him and he asks for happiness too. The section finishes with the confidence: ‘I will call to you whenever I’m in trouble, and you will answer me.’. What do you think helps us to have this kind of confidence in God?
5. Verses 8-10 point out that only our God *is* God. He does wonderful deeds. For David, those wonderful deeds cause people and nations to bow down before God and praise His name. How do we show thanks to God when we ask Him for help and He answers us? Is there anything we could do differently to show our thanks to Him?
6. In verses 11-17, we see David asking God to teach Him how to live so that he might worship God truly, remembering the times that God has rescued him before and asking for a sign of God’s continued favour in the face of pressure. How can we help each other to remember to praise and thank God even at the times we are most under pressure?

**Something To Do This Week**

**Is there anything in your own life that you need God’s help with at the moment? What about in the life of our Church, or in the wider world? Make a list, pray for each and do your very best to keep an eye on what happens, remembering to praise God and to keep on praying!**