**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. Last week our study questions focused on the greatness of God, the extent of His authority and the response we make in worship. Today, in light of those reminders, that we are ‘flock under HIs care’, we are told ‘do not harden your hearts’. What does this phrase mean to you?
2. If you feel able to share in the group, talk of a time when you might have been hard-hearted towards someone. What were the consequences?
3. What do you think it would mean to have a soft-hearted faith? Would you be comfortable to take the risk of living like this? What do you think the rewards of living like this might be?
4. You may or may not know the stories of what happened in Meribah and Massah. If you don’t, spend time finding out about them. Here, the Lord reminds the generation of His people He is talking to not to be like their ancestors. What have you taken from your ancestors that you want to keep hold of and what do you want to remember not to emulate them in?
5. V11 is a stark ending to the Psalm ‘…they shall never enter into my rest.’ What do you think this means? Do you think that there is a risk of anything like this happening to people today? If yes, how can it be avoided?

**Something To Do This Week**

Ask God to show you what it is to have a soft-hearted faith. If anything changes in your life as a result, reflect on what you think the difference(s) are. If you feel comfortable to, share with your group, or a trusted friend.