



Summer

REFLECTIONS

JOURNEY THROUGH PSALMS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sessions 1-5

SESSION 1 – PSALM 139

TO BEGIN

If you found out the government was bugging your home, what would you immediately stop saying or doing?

Together read Psalm 139:1-6.

DIGGING DEEPER

In Psalm 139:1-6, we are invited into David's heart as he expresses his love towards God. Psalm 139 contains a beautiful description of David's relationship with God. David understands that God's love for him is so deep that it is overwhelming. In verse 1, David writes that God has searched him and knows him intimately. It's so easy for us to look at outward appearance, but God understands us completely, inside and out. More than we can understand or comprehend. This love is so deep and so extravagant that God knows every step he takes and every word he speaks before he even speaks it. Wherever David goes, whatever David does, God is there with him. God is so amazing, yet he shows his care and love for us in intimate ways.

- **How do you think David feels about God's total knowledge about him? Does he feel free or oppressed? How does this make you feel?**
- **Do you see yourself as God's masterpiece?**
- **According to David, what specific things does the Lord know about us?**

Have you ever been amazed by God? Have you ever had a moment where you sit back and think how incredible God is, how powerful he is, how wonderful he is?

David is so overcome with emotion that he can't take it all in!
God knows what's best for you and for me and guides us in that way. We are all valuable to God!

- **When do you feel God's presence in your life? Are there times when you don't? How can we learn to live with an awareness of God's presence day to day?**
- **How does this psalm help you to feel more loved and valued by God?**

PRAISE & PRAYER POINTS

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SESSION 2 – PSALM 145

TO BEGIN

Have you ever seen royalty in your life? What is the purpose of royalty? How do they differ from our Prime Minister?

Together read Psalm 145.

DIGGING DEEPER

When life doesn't go our way, we can often see God as unreliable. Maybe at one point you've seen God as someone who cannot be counted on. People who have experiences hurt in past relationships may ask: "How do I know he listens to me? How do I know he will answer me or help me? How do I know God will keep his promises?"

- **Have you ever asked God any of these questions?**
- **What descriptive words and phrases are used about God in this Psalm?**
- **Why does God deserve our praise?**
- **How does fame spread according to verses 4-7? How can we contribute to spreading the God's message to those around us?**

Psalm 145 is the last psalm in the book that is attributed to David. In this Psalm, David pledges to bless God and praise his name forever and ever because of His greatness. In the Bible, we read of God as is the Faithful One, the Rock, the Fortress. He is the same, yesterday, today and forever.

- **In your life, who is someone that is reliable? Describe this person and how it has impacted you?**
- **Why is it important for you to know that God is reliable?**

God's greatness will last forever and every generation gets an opportunity to praise God for his character and work. God is faithful, and he his promises never return void! Let our thoughts and words bring glory and honour to God in all that we say and do.

- Looking through verses 14-20, how does God help those who are in need?
- What does God promise to give those who call on him earnestly?
- What image of God comes through to you most clearly through these verses?

PRAISE & PRAYER POINTS

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SESSION 3 – PSALM 22

TO BEGIN

What was one of the scariest or thrilling moments in your life?

Together read Psalm 22.

DIGGING DEEPER

Psalm 22 is considered a psalm of deep lament. In other words, this psalm contains feelings of sorrow, torment, abandonment and anger.

- **When you are feeling tormented with grief, feeling abandoned by God, how do you express yourself? Is it with disbelief, tears, anger, or bargaining with God?**
- **What is David's basic struggle? What seems worse to you: God being distant or people mocking? How come?**

Many of us are familiar with the first verse of this Psalm. In the New Testament, Jesus on the cross cried out verse 1, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Maybe there has been a time in your life where you cried a similar prayer. However this prayer isn't meant to turn us away from God, but rather to point us back to him. This prayer helps us draw near to God at times when we feel most abandoned.

- **What similarities can you find between David's psalm and Jesus crucifixion?**
- **Does it help knowing that Jesus experienced despair and felt the same way?**
- **In what ways does David demonstrate his frustration with God? His trust in God?**
- **How do you demonstrate to God that you trust him?**

The first two sections of this Psalm focus on the psalmist's complaint, while the final section focuses on the promise to praise God for deliverance and salvation. When Jesus died on the cross, he became a "curse" for his people which redeemed all of humanity from the curse of the law. Those who put their faith in Jesus can be assured that they will never be cursed in God's eyes.

- **How would you describe the shift in mood from verses 1-21 and verses 22-31? What might have happened?**
- **This psalm shares images of sword fights, bull fights, dog fights and a lion's den. What scenes of violence today does this psalm remind you of?**
- **At what points can you identify with the psalmist or with Jesus?**
- **What stood out to you the most about this Psalm?**

PRAISE & PRAYER POINTS

SESSION 4 – PSALM 30

TO BEGIN

If your life was an amusement park ride, what would you be? A roller-coaster? A Ferris wheel? A slow moving train?

Together read Psalm 30.

DIGGING DEEPER

For most of us, life has these moments when our awareness of God seems to fade. God is always present whether we realize it or not and this psalm helps us understand how our feelings and perceptions can fade or weaken our confidence in God. One of our basic needs is to have security in this life. We do whatever we can to make sure our families are safe and secure. In this psalm, David helps us look to God for our ultimate security. This can be a humbling and thrilling experience!

- **What possible dangers may David have been facing when writing this psalm?**
- **Read the whole psalm again. List the different emotions that are described.**
- **How do verses 6-7 describe David's sense of dependence on God?**
- **What reasons in verses 9-10 does David present to God in favor of his deliverance?**

In Psalm 30, David is reflecting on the future temple and this helps David remember that the temple is a representation of God's presence. Our God is a God who protects, heals, restores, shows mercy, and produces joy for his people.

- **How would you describe David's relationship with God?**
What can we learn from David's relationship with God?

Difficult circumstances can cause us to reflect on the character of God. In many of the Psalms, David shares with us many of the good times and bad times of his life. As followers of Jesus we need to remember that God is with us through all the ups and downs of life.

- How does it help you to know God is with you?
- How have the circumstances of your life affected your relationship with God?

Let us give thanks to God for the ways He has been there for us!

PRAISE & PRAYER POINTS

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SESSION 5 – PSALM 46

TO BEGIN

What was one of your worst cooking experiences?

Together read Psalm 46.

DIGGING DEEPER

The word Immanuel means “God with us,” and Jesus is the image of this psalm. Jesus is our present refuge and our future victory. Even in the midst of tragedy, God’s faithfulness to His promise drives away fear. We can be confident that Jesus will be with us to the end of the age. This psalm celebrates Jerusalem as the city of God, the foundation for the kingdom of God. Today we can find spiritual strength and security in this psalm, especially when everything else around us appears to be falling apart.

- **What images of a world falling apart do you see in these verses?**
- **What truth about God is conveyed here in contrast to the world?**
- **Where does one find stillness and security in the midst of violent forces unleashed all around?**
- **What in your life is threatening or pounding away at your sense of security in God?**
- **How can you remain still and know God's fortress like strength in the midst of a world falling apart?**
- **What difference does it make to you to know Jesus is Lord over all those chaotic events?**

As God has triumphed, and will triumph, over all that wars against the city of Jerusalem and the soul of the believer, how can you exalt him among the nations? Spend some time being still and focusing on God. What's He saying to you?

- **Spend some time in prayer. As each group member shares a trouble or struggle, one member can read verse 10 in response.**

PRAISE & PRAYER POINTS

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