

Study Guide - 24 May, 2020

Series: Psalms

Text: Psalm 143



This guide will help you facilitate a clear understanding of the Bible passage with a focus on applying God's truth to our lives together. You should spend at least half your time discussing questions that are application focused. Look at the Big Idea and What your CG Must Take Away sections at the beginning of the guide to keep the discussion focused.

Introduction and Series Overview

The purpose of this series is to teach the church to delight in God, enjoy our walk and relationship with him, and see him as our joy in all situations, through the 4 Psalms (34, 33, 13, 143). It is our hope that these Psalms will teach us what it means to truly experience the joy of the Christian faith, because God is our delight.

Text Structure

Structure

1. Crying to God for mercy (v1-4)
2. Stretching our hands to God/ Active Faith (v5-8)
3. Trusting in God's deliverance (v9-12)

Chiastic structure

V1-2: God's righteousness and his servant

V3-4: Pursued by the enemy

V5-6: Reaching out and thirsting for God

V7-8: Active petition and crying out for God

V9-10: Deliverance from enemy

V11-12: God's righteousness and his servant

Big Idea

Looking to God and appealing to him based on his mercy and trusting him in our current situation because of his righteousness.

CG Takeaway

Actively meditate on God's past faithfulness in times of trouble.

1. On what basis does the psalmist appeal to God? (v1-2)
2. What is the psalmist's situation, and how does he describe his desperation? (3-4)
3. Compare v1-2 with v11-12, and v3-4 with v9-10: What differences do you see in the Psalmist's tone and attitude?
4. The Psalmist moves from despair at his affliction in v1-4 to trust a confident trust in God by the end of it. How does he get there? What does the Psalmist do that helps him to move from despair at his affliction to trust?
5. How does remembering and concentrating on God's past deliverances help us to trust him in affliction?
6. On what basis can we be even more confident of God's deliverance for us, when we face affliction?
7. How can affliction drive us to a deeper experience of God?

Apply Practically: Reflecting on the Circuit Breaker

In the last few weeks, we have been studying how the psalms can help to shape how we process and respond to our circumstances and our conversations with God about our circumstances. As the Circuit Breaker nears its end, we want to take some time to apply what we've been learning in the psalms to process our experiences of this season.

Part 1: Lament (10 mins) -- Breakout Groups

The psalms have shown us that we can bring our anguish and sorrows to God honestly. As we speak to God, we invite him into our pain. We do so with the confidence that our faithful Father listens to His children when they cry to him (Ps 143:1, Ps 13:1-2, Ps 34:6, Ps 33:18) and wait expectantly on His Spirit to respond to us.

- *What have you grieved over during this Circuit Breaker?*
- *What did you find particularly difficult, whether from external circumstances or internal struggles with your own flesh?*
- *How did you feel about God during those moments?*

*Possible suggestions -- plans that were frustrated, loneliness, financial difficulties that made, feeling that God had abandoned/forgotten us, feeling that God was distant

Part 2: Remember (10 mins) -- Breakout Groups Cont'd

After we have brought our circumstances before God, we fix our gaze on Him: We remember how He has been good and faithful to us (Ps 34:8-10,Ps 143:5), how He has loved us with a steadfast love and saved us (Ps 13:5-6, Ps 33:18-19).

- *How have you seen God's faithful and loving hand during this season -- how has he protected, provided, cared, comforted, or delivered you?*
- *What can you be thankful for, as you remember Christ's death and resurrection during this time?*
- *What do you hope to remember about God's faithfulness when you look back on this season?*

Part 3: Rejoice & Hope (10 mins) -- Large Group

Although our circumstances might not be drastically different, our hearts are in a different state from where we were when we first began. From despair in our circumstances, we now hope and rejoice in God's coming deliverance. We wait on God expectantly and joyfully, knowing that He is at work to make all things new. (Ps 143:12, Ps 33:20-22)

- *What were some of your reflections in your breakout groups?*
- *How has God been encouraging you during this season?*
- *What were some of the thanksgivings your group shared?*

Pray for each other and remind each other that our confidence to pray to God and to trust him in our prayers is because of Jesus' victory for us.