

Psalms

Selections from the Book of Psalms

Course Aim:

1. To understand how to properly interpret the wisdom writings of the Bible (II Timothy 2:15)
2. To receive instruction, comfort, and hope from the Scriptures (Romans 15:4)
3. To understand the passages in the Psalms that prophetically refer to Jesus Christ (Luke 24:44-47)

Course Requirements:

1. Class attendance and notes (25% of your final grade)
2. Write a brief summary and application of each Psalm (25% of your final grade)
3. Two exams established by your instructor (50% of your final grade)

Course Resources:

1. *Psalms*, David Cloud
2. *Understanding the Bible—Job through Psalms*, David Sorenson
3. *Willmington's Guide to the Bible*, H.L. Willmington

Course Outline:

1. Introduction to the Psalms
2. Ways to the Blessings of God
3. Why God Laughs at the Nations
4. Why, God?
5. Man's Words Versus God's Words
6. Finding Refuge in the Rock
7. Knowing God
8. A Suffering Saviour
9. The Lord, My Shepherd
10. Responding to Mistakes
11. Cures for Anxiety
12. Duty or Delight?
13. The Vanity of Riches
14. Godly Sorrow Leading to Repentance
15. Casting Your Care
16. Backsliding – Even When God is Good

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17. Reaching the Next Generation
18. Pleading for a Nation
19. Making the Most of Monotony
20. Abiding Under the Shadow
21. Bless the Lord for All His Benefits
22. I Love the Lord
23. The Wonder of God's Word
24. How to Have a Happy Home
25. Applying the Attributes of God
26. True Praise and Worship

Permission is granted to duplicate or translate the following studies in their entirety for teaching and discipleship.

#1 Introduction to the Psalms

Writing of the Psalms

1. The Psalms were written from the time of Moses (Psalm 90) to the Babylonian captivity (Psalm 137). Several different human writers were used by the Holy Spirit.
 - 1.1 David (II Samuel 23:1) – at least seventy-nine are attributed to him.
 - 1.2 Asaph (I Chronicles 16:4-7; II Chronicles 29:30) – Psalm 50, 73-83
 - 1.3 Eleven are written for the sons of Korah (42; 44-49; 84-85; 87-88).
 - 1) Korah, a son of Levi, rebelled against Moses (Numbers 16:1).
 - 2) The sons of Korah were Levites who served in the tabernacle (I Chronicles 9:19).
 - 1.4 Heman the Ezrahite (I Kings 4:31; Psalm 88)
 - 1.5 Ethan the Ezrahite (Psalm 89)
 - 1.6 Moses (Psalm 90)
2. Psalms were partially gathered by the reign of Hezekiah (II Chronicles 29:30).
3. Ezra, a scribe and priest, possibly arranged the Psalms in their present form (Ezra 7:6, 10).
4. The Psalms are given by inspiration of the Spirit (Acts 1:16; II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21).

Understanding Terms in Psalms

1. *Psalms*: a psalm (from the Greek word *psalmos*) is a poem meant to be sung to various instruments (II Samuel 6:5; I Chronicles 15:16, 28; II Chronicles 5:12-14; 9:11; 20:18-22; 29:25-30; cf. Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; James 5:13).
2. *Maschil*: instruction; teaching (Psalm 32 and others) – a song or poem of contemplation
3. *Michtam*: engraven; speaking of permanence (Psalm 16 and others)
4. *Neginoth*: stringed instruments (Psalm 4 and others)
5. *Selah*: a pause or interlude (used seventy-one times)

Sections in the Psalms

1. Psalm 1 - 41—many of the Messianic Psalms are included
2. Psalm 42 - 72—Israel's remnant moves from bitter persecution to a prophetic hope of restoration (cf. Romans 9-11)
3. Psalm 73 - 89—Israel's suffering and desire for God's judgment on her enemies

4. Psalm 90 - 106—praises and prophecies related to Israel
5. Psalm 107 - 150—God reigns in Zion (Jerusalem)

Proper Interpretation of the Psalms

1. Understand Hebrew poetry and culture.
 - 1.1 Parallels of ideas, not parallels of rhythm as modern poetry
 - 1) Completive: the second part completes or explains the first (1:1; 46:1)
 - 2) Contrastive: the first part is contrasted by the second (30:5)
 - 1.2 Allow for figurative language (2:12, *kiss the Son*: place your trust in Him; reverence Him)
 - 1.3 The Psalms were written in an Old Testament Jewish context.
 - 1) Jesus Christ, the Jewish Messiah, had not yet come as the perfect sacrifice of God as pictured in the ceremonial law.
 - 2) There is a distinction between Israel and the New Testament local church (I Corinthians 10:32).
 - 3) Familiarity with Israel's history and culture is important to proper interpretation.
 - 4) Understand that some prophecies in Psalms have both an immediate event and a future prophetic event in focus (16:10 – both David and the Holy One of Israel, Jesus Christ).
 - 5) All things are written *for* us but not *to* us (Romans 15:4).
2. Compare Scripture with Scripture (I Corinthians 2:13b). Many passages from the Psalms find their fulfillment in the New Testament (Psalm 8:3-8; Hebrews 2:6-9).
3. Study the things you do not understand.
 - 3.1 Bible dictionary
 - 3.2 Concordance
 - 3.3 Cross references
 - 3.4 Commentaries (use caution in which ones you use)

Key Themes of the Psalms

1. The blessing of God upon those who live righteously (Psalm 1:1-3; 24:3-5; 32:1-2; 41:1; 94:12 [cf. Hebrews 12:6-8]; 106:3; 112:1; 128:1-6)
2. The importance of the Word of God which is inspired and preserved (Psalm 12:6-7;

- 19:7-11; 119:1-176; 138:2; I Peter 1:23)
3. The judgment of God upon the ungodly (Psalm 1:4-6)
 4. The affliction of the saints (3:1-2; 42-43; 55:1-8; 119:67, 71)
 5. Prophecy concerning the Messiah and the future of Israel
 - 5.1 Christ's earthly ministry (Psalm 69:9 and John 2:13-17; Psalm 41:9 and Matthew 26:14-16)
 - 5.2 The crucifixion of Christ (Psalm 22:7-8, 12-18)
 - 5.3 The resurrection of Jesus Christ (16:9-10)
 - 5.4 The future reign of the Lord Jesus Christ (2:6-12)
 - 5.5 Restoration of the kingdom to Israel (14:7; 85:1-3)
 6. True praise and worship of God
 - 6.1 God has dealt bountifully with us (Psalm 13:6; 103:2).
 - 6.2 God is worthy of praise (18:3; 29:1-2; Revelation 4:10-11).
 - 6.3 God has given salvation (27:1; 65:5).
 - 6.4 God has given us His Word (119:164).
 7. Vindication upon God's enemies – *imprecatory psalms* pray a curse upon a person
 - 7.1 Imprecatory psalms are justified by the promises given to Abraham (Genesis 12:3) and David (89:20-23).
 - 7.2 Imprecatory psalms are just based God's justice (58:10-11).
 - 7.3 Imprecatory psalms are based on God's special choosing of Israel as a nation (Deuteronomy 7:6-8)
 - 7.4 Imprecatory psalms are rooted in a zeal for God (139:20-21).
 - 7.5 Imprecatory psalms are dependent upon divine, not human, vengeance (35:1-17; Romans 12:17-21).

#2 Ways to the Blessings of God

Introduction to Psalm 1

Jeremiah 17:5-8 – *heath*: a small shrub that grows in the open wasteland; like a "tumbleweed" from dry wastelands, small shrubs that break loose and are driven by the wind

1. Psalm 1 is a comparison and contrast of the godly and ungodly.
2. Psalm 1 is an introduction to the whole book of Psalms.
3. Psalm 1 expresses the ways to the blessing of God.

Blessed: plural Hebrew word; multiplied blessings; happy many times over; true satisfaction

Ways to the Blessing of God

1. Separate from godless influences (1:1; I Corinthians 15:33-34).
 - 1.1 Walk not in the counsel of the ungodly.
 - 1) *Counsel*: philosophy; advice; doctrine; influence
 - 2) *Ungodly*: one living without God; morally wrong
 - Unbelievers (II Corinthians 6:14-17)
 - Psychologists who give counsel without the Word of God
 - Talk show hosts on television and radio
 - Books and magazines promoting worldly wisdom
 - Backslidden Christians who are worldly and carnal
 - Contemporary "Christian" musicians who live a worldly lifestyle and imitate the devil's music and concerts
 - 3) Godly counsel is based on the Word of God (Proverbs 20:18; 24:6).
 - 1.2 Do not stand in the way of sinners (1:1; Ephesians 5:11-12).
 - 1) *Way*: lifestyle; actions; habits; the way they live their lives (Matthew 7:13-14)
 - 2) *Sinners*: a criminal; to miss the mark; to pass the limits of the law; to violate the commands of God
 - Follow the examples and dress standards of movie stars and worldly friends based on sensuality

- Act like the world instead of Christ
 - Compromise to fit in with the world
 - Take a sinner's stand on issues (abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, voting for politicians who support wickedness)
 - Lower standards of music and modesty
- 1.3 Do not sit with the scornful (1:1; 26:1-5).
- 1) *Seat*: position of authority and influence
 - Jesus Christ is seated on the right hand of Majesty on High.
 - Pergamos was Satan's seat (Revelation 2:13).
 - 2) *Scornful*: to make mouths at; scoff and mock the things of God; arrogant and willfully ignorant; disrespectful toward authority (II Peter 3:3-7)
 - Critical and judgmental people
 - University professors who tear down the faith of students
 - Atheists and evolutionists teaching in public schools
 - Liberal, apostate ministers
 - Humanists
- 1.4 Note the downward spiritual progression – walk, stand, sit
- 1) Lot (Genesis 13:10-12; 14:12; 19:1)
 - 2) Peter (Luke 22:54-60)
2. Delight in the law of God (1:2; Psalm 19:10; I Peter 2:2).
- 2.1 Invest time in reading and studying the Bible (II Timothy 2:15). You have time for what is important to you!
- 2.2 Pray through the Bible.
- 1) Adoration of God's attributes and names
 - 2) Confession of sins
 - 3) Thanksgiving for what God has done and has allowed
 - 4) Supplication for requests
- 2.3 Meditate upon God's words day and night (1:2b; Joshua 1:8). Fill your mind with Scripture.
- 2.4 Obey the commands of the Bible (James 1:21-25).

2.5 Enjoy the Word of God (Psalm 19:10a).

2.6 Make the Word of God a priority (Job 23:12a).

Blessings of God

1. Stability (1:3; I Corinthians 15:58) – *like a tree planted firmly*
 - 1.1 Emotionally and mentally (James 1:6-8, a double-minded man is unstable)
 - 1.2 Doctrinally (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 4:14)
 - 1.3 Spiritually (Hebrews 6:19)
2. Spiritual nourishment (1:3; Isaiah 55:10-11) – *planted by the rivers of water*: having a good water supply from irrigation channels
3. Productivity (1:3) – *bringeth forth fruit his fruit in his season*
 - 3.1 Jesus refers to fruit, more fruit, and much fruit (John 15)
 - 3.2 The parable of the sower with the seed speaks of thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold fruit (Matthew 13).
 - 3.3 Galatians 5:22-23 lists the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.
 - 3.4 Fruitfulness must be seen in each of the individual seasons of life.
 - 1) Childhood: a season of physical growth and maturity up to age twelve (Luke 2:40-52)
 - 2) Preparation: a season of preparing for responsibilities of adulthood and learning a trade from age twelve to thirty
 - The silent years of Christ until He began His earthly ministry (Luke 3:23)
 - Joseph was thirty when he was promoted to vizier of Egypt.
 - 3) Productivity and work: age thirty to fifty (Numbers 4)
 - 4) Leadership and influence: a season over age fifty when maturity enables one to influence the younger generation (Titus 2:1-5)
 - 5) Old age: a season that provides the wisdom of experience
4. Vitality (1:3; Psalm 92:12) – *his leaf shall not wither*
5. Prosperity (1:3b; Joshua 1:7-8) – *whatsoever he doeth shall prosper*
 - 5.1 God wants you to reach your full potential for His glory.
 - 5.2 True prosperity does not necessarily mean wealth.

Contrast of the Ungodly

1. Insecurity and vanity (1:4, *chaff*: dry, useless husk blown away and burned)
 - 1.1 Sorrow and regret of a wasted life (Ecclesiastes 1-2)
 - 1.2 No sense of purpose or meaning to life
2. Guilt before God (1:5; Revelation 20:11-15) – note that *the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment* (1:5) and *there was found no place for them* (Revelation 20:11).
3. Hopelessness (1:6; John 3:16) – *perish*: wander away; lose oneself

Application of Truth

1. Do you understand that anyone who does not repent and believe in Christ is ungodly? A person may be religious but not godly (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 20:21).
2. Are you separated from ungodly influences?
3. Do you delight and meditate in the Word of God?

#3 Why God Laughs at the Nations

Introduction to Psalm 2

1. The second psalm was possibly written during an uprising of surrounding nations.
2. This Messianic psalm is also prophetic as it deals with the coming of Christ.
3. God severely judges rulers and nations which rebel against Him. Someone did research on thirty godless Roman emperors who persecuted Christians:
 - 3.1 One became deranged
 - 3.2 One was killed by his own son
 - 3.3 One was strangled to death
 - 3.4 One died in captivity
 - 3.5 One became blind
 - 3.6 One drowned
 - 3.7 Two committed suicide
 - 3.8 Five died excruciating deaths
 - 3.9 Five were assassinated
 - 3.10 Eight were killed in battle

God's Dealing with Heathen Nations

1. Rebellion against God's authority (2:1-3; Genesis 11:1-9)
 - 1.1 The heathen rage (2:1; 79:6; 135:15, *heathen*: pagan nations expressing hatred for God)
 - 1) Atheistic fools who oppose God (14:1)
 - 2) Humanistic educators who mock the things of God
 - 3) Ungodly politicians who oppose any influence of Christianity
 - 4) Hedonistic athletes, musicians, and actors who corrupt the morals of young people
 - 5) Liberal ministers who deny the Lord (II Peter 2:1-2)
 - 1.2 The people imagine a vain thing (2:1b; Romans 1:21).
 - 1.3 Kings and rulers conspire together against the Lord and His anointed (2:2; Joel 3:9-14; Acts 4:25-28).
 - 1.4 Casting off the restrictions of God (2:3; Luke 19:14)

- 1) Disobedience of the commands of God
 - 2) Rebellion against authority
 - 3) A removal of the Bible and prayer from schools and government agencies
2. Response of God (2:4-9)
- 2.1 God sovereignly has control (2:4).
 - 1) God is seated in the heavens, not pacing heaven nervously.
 - 2) God does not feel threatened by their rebellion.
 - 2.2 God laughs at their feeble efforts (2:4; 37:12-13).
 - 2.3 The Lord holds them in derision (2:4; Proverbs 3:34) – *derision*: to scoff, ridicule
 - 2.4 God expresses wrath and displeasure (2:5; 7:11; Revelation 14:14-20; 16:19).
 - 1) The Great Tribulation (Revelation 15:1; 16:1)
 - 2) A literal lake of fire (Revelation 14:10-11; 20:15)
 - 2.5 God's plans continue uninterrupted in spite of man's efforts (2:6).
 - 2.6 God's decree, dominion, and domination (2:7-9)
 - 1) Decree declared by God the Father (2:7; Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; 5:5)
 - 2) Dominion over the entire earth (2:8; 22:27-28)
 - 3) Domination over those who rebel (2:9; 110:5-6; Revelation 2:25-26; 19:11-21)
 - *rod of iron*: law and justice
3. Requirements upon the nations (2:10-12)
- 3.1 Repentance toward God (2:10-11)
 - 1) Be wise (2:10).
 - 2) Be instructed (2:10b).
 - 3) Serve the Lord with fear (2:11).
 - 4) Rejoice with trembling (2:11b).
 - 3.2 Reverence for the Son of God (2:12; Revelation 6:12-17)
 - 3.3 Reliance (trust) upon the Lord (2:12b).

Application of Truth

1. Are you ready to face God as the Judge of the nations? Are you sure your faith is in Jesus Christ alone?
2. Pray for government leaders who are determined to remove all influence of Christianity.

#4 Why, God?

Introduction

1. People most often ask "why?" in relation to circumstances that are hard to explain.
 - 1.1 Suffering of children
 - 1.2 The prosperity of the wicked (Psalm 37; 73)
 - 1.3 The trials of the righteous – why do good people suffer?
 - 1.4 Continued chastening from the Lord
2. People rarely ask "why?" in relation to *good* received from God.
 - 2.1 No one deserves salvation from wrath, sin, and hell.
 - 2.2 No one deserves God's blessings and provision (Psalm 103:1-5).

Passages from the Psalms

Psalm 6:3 – My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

Psalm 10:1 – Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?

Psalm 13:1-2 – How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

Psalm 42:9 – I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

Psalm 43:2 – For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

Psalm 74:1 – O GOD, why hast thou cast us off forever? why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?

Psalm 77:7 – Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favourable no more?

Psalm 88:14 – LORD, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?

Psalm 89:46 – How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?

Three Ways of Asking God Why

1. In unbelief and doubt – "I cannot believe God would allow this to happen."
2. Demanding answers from God in anger and bitterness

3. Trust in a sovereign, loving, and wise God (I Peter 4:12-19) – "When you cannot see His hand, trust His heart."

Biblical Examples

1. Moses (Exodus 5:20-23; 6:12)
 - 1.1 It is not always easy to follow the call of God. God never promised an easy life.
 - 1.2 You will not always see immediate results when doing the will of God.
 - 1) People often quit tithing when they do not receive immediate financial blessings.
 - 2) People may have to wait for years to receive an answer to prayer.
 - 1.3 Things may get worse before getting better (Exodus 3:19).
 - 1.4 "Do not doubt in the darkness what you believed to be true in the light."
2. Job (3:11)
 - 2.1 Suffering can affect our perspective and even lead to suicidal thoughts.
 - 2.2 God does not owe anyone an apology or an explanation for suffering (2:3; 42:11).
 - 2.3 God demanded an answer from self-righteous Job (Job 38:1-4; 40:1-9; 42:1-6).
 - 2.4 God has a higher purpose in mind for suffering (Job 23:8-10).
 - 1) God's glory
 - 2) Your good (Romans 8:28)
3. Jesus (Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:45-46) – The sinless Son of God asked, "why?"

When You Do Not Understand Why

1. The unexplainable "whys" of life belong to God (Deuteronomy 29:29).
2. The only way to survive the "whys" is to do what God has revealed.
 - 2.1 Obey the Word of God.
 - 2.2 Remain faithful in church to receive comfort and hope from the Word of God (Romans 15:4)
 - 2.3 Continue to walk with God in difficult times (Genesis 5:22-24; 6:9).
3. Do not wait until you know why to do what you know God wants. Obedience always precedes understanding.
 - 3.1 Joseph (Genesis 50:20)
 - 3.2 Noah (Hebrews 11:7)
 - 3.3 Abraham (Hebrews 11:8)

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4. Knowing why does not help you do what He has commanded. When a child asks why constantly, it does not help him obey.
5. If you always knew why, it would weaken your faith and character (I Peter 1:6-8; 5:10).

Application of Truth

1. Many wait to be saved until they understand all of the "whys." Multitudes are in hell today because they refused to believe until they had all of the answers to their "whys."
2. Who is not receiving the comfort they need because of your wrong response to trials (II Corinthians 1:4-6)?
3. Will you leave the "whys" with God while you do what He has revealed?

#5 Man's Words Versus God's Words

Introduction to Psalm 12

1. Psalm 12 was written for singing and was addressed to the chief Musician (see the introduction to the psalm).
2. The historical context of the psalm was possibly while David was in the court of King Saul. (I Samuel 18)
 - 2.1 Saul's servants were praising David before the king.
 - 2.2 King Saul was becoming envious of David's popularity.
 - 2.3 The psalm is a cry for help to the Lord (12:1).
3. The psalm contrasts man's words with God's words.

Man's Words (12:1-5)

1. Godly, faithful men are difficult to find (12:1).
2. Man's words are often vain and deceptive (12:2).
 - 2.1 Vanity: emptiness; deceit; untruth
 - 2.2 Flattery: false praise
 - 2.3 A double heart: having a false heart; deceitful; treacherous
3. The Lord will silence flattering, proud tongues (12:3-4).
4. God will right all wrongs someday (12:5).

God's Words (12:6-7)

1. God's words are pure (12:6; 19:8b).
 - 1.1 God's words are like silver purified in a furnace of earth.
 - 1.2 God's words are purified seven times.
 - 1) Precious metals like gold and silver are refined several times to remove impurities.
 - 2) Silver is considered absolutely pure after the seventh refining.
 - 3) Seven is also the number of perfection.
 - 1.3 God's words are free from error (Psalm 19:9b; John 17:17).
 - 1) Not just the original manuscripts – how can you trust the Bible you have today?
 - 2) Not just spiritual teaching – if you cannot trust the historical and scientific

accuracy of the Bible, how can you trust it in spiritual matters?

(John 5:46-47)

2. God's words are preserved forever (12:7; 119:89, 152, 160).
 - 2.1 The antecedent of the pronoun *them* is the words of the Lord (verse 6).
 - 2.2 Individual *words* (plural, not singular) are preserved by God (Matthew 4:4; 5:17-18; 24:35; Luke 4:4; 16:17; 21:33).
 - 1) A *jot* refers to the smallest Hebrew letter.
 - 2) A *tittle* refers to a small stroke of a pen that distinguishes one letter from another.
 - 2.3 Preservation includes accurate copies and translations (II Timothy 3:15).
 - 1) Timothy had the holy Scriptures even though he did not have the original Old Testament writings.
 - 2) The word *scripture* in the Bible most often refers to copies of Scripture.
 - 2.4 What God began in *inspiration* He continues in *preservation* (I Peter 1:23-25).
 - 2.5 Questioning the preservation of God's words is dangerous spiritually.
 - 1) It is rooted in unbelief (Genesis 3:1, *Yea, hath God said?*).
 - 2) It results in disobedience (Deuteronomy 4:2).
 - 3) It eventually leads to doctrinal error and lower standards. Liberal churches that change Bibles also change their doctrine and standards.
 - 4) It brings the judgment of God (Proverbs 30:5-6; Revelation 22:18-19).

Application of Truth

1. Beware of focusing on the wickedness of society – it will only lead to despair (12:8).
2. Would you be considered godly and faithful? How truthful are your words?
3. Do you believe God or textual critics about the preservation of His words?
 - 3.1 The Bible *critic* looks for problems in the Bible – the Bible *student* seeks for answers. Which best describes you?
 - 3.2 Many are corrupting the words of God (II Corinthians 2:17; II Peter 3:16-17).
 - *corrupt*: to retail; to peddle for profit; to huckster; intentional distortion to sell a product (Jeremiah 23:36)
4. Are you using a Bible that includes *all* of God's Words?
(Example: Acts 8:37, removed from or footnoted in modern translations)

#6 Finding Refuge in the Rock

Introduction to Psalm 18

1. Psalm 18 is very similar to II Samuel 22.
2. This psalm was written as a song of thanksgiving and praise to God for His deliverance (introduction to the psalm; II Samuel 22:1).
3. David reflects back on the victories in his life.
 - 3.1 King Saul was killed in battle.
 - 3.2 The Philistines had been subdued.
 - 3.3 Moab and Edom were in subjection to his reign.
 - 3.4 His kingdom was secure.
4. Paul refers to Jesus Christ as the spiritual Rock (I Corinthians 10:4).
5. Notice how to find refuge in the Rock of salvation, Jesus Christ.

Lessons from Psalm 18

1. Love and trust the Lord (18:1-2). Note the personal relationship David had with the Lord (*my*).
 - 1.1 Strength (18:1; Isaiah 40:28-31)
 - 1.2 Rock – a stronghold; a shelter that cannot be penetrated; "Rock of Ages"
 - 1.3 Fortress – a fortress of rock; a mountain stronghold (34:7; 61:3)
 - David may have considered the caves where he sought shelter (I Samuel 23:14, 19).
 - 1.4 Deliverer – to slip out; escape
 - 1.5 God – the Hebrew name *El*: the Almighty; the Strong One; God the Omnipotent (Psalm 57:2)
 - 1.6 Strength – a different Hebrew word than 18:1 (Psalm 73:26; Isaiah 26:3-4).
 - 1.7 Buckler – a shield and defense (Genesis 15:1; cf. Ephesians 6:16)
 - 1.8 Horn of salvation – horns were a symbol of strength and power for protection
 - 1.9 High tower – a place of defense high above the enemy
 - 1) Protection
 - 2) Perspective
2. Call upon God in times of fear and distress (18:3-6).

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- 2.1 Sorrows of death (18:4; II Samuel 22:5, waves of death) – without hope
- 2.2 Floods of ungodly men (18:4b) – possibly troops rushing on David like waves of the sea
- 2.3 Sorrows of hell (18:5)
- 2.4 Snares of death (18:5b, traps set to destroy life)
- 2.6 Distress (18:6) – crying out in desperation
- 3. Rest in the power and wrath of God (18:7-15).
 - 3.1 As demonstrated in earthquakes and volcanoes (18:7-8; Acts 16:26)
 - 1) A powerful earthquake has as much energy as a million atomic bombs.
 - 2) Strong earthquakes are similar in force to one thousand hydrogen bombs.
 - 3.2 As demonstrated in thunderstorms (18:9-14)
 - 1) Darkness (18:9, 11)
 - 2) Swiftiness (18:10)
 - 3) Hailstorm (18:12-13)
 - 4) Lightning (18:14)
 - 3.3 As demonstrated in powerful hurricanes (18:15)
 - 1) Hurricanes lift sixty million or more tons of water.
 - 2) Hurricanes generate more power every ten seconds than all electric power used in the United States in one year.
- 4. Live a life that God can bless (18:19-24)
 - 4.1 What God expects:
 - 1) Bringing delight to His heart (18:19)
 - 2) A life of righteousness (18:20a, 24)
 - 3) Cleanness of your actions (18:20b, 24)
 - 4) Obedience to the commands of God (18:21-22)
 - 5) Uprightness and restraint of iniquity (18:23, *iniquity*: perversity; moral evil)
 - 4.2 How God blesses:
 - 1) He gives space in times of pressure and crisis (18:19, *a large place*)
 - 2) He rewards and recompenses individually (18:20, 24).
 - 4.3 God deals with individuals according to their ways (18:25-27).
 - 1) God gives mercy to the merciful.

- 2) God is upright with the upright.
 - 3) God is pure with the pure.
 - 4) God deals harshly with the *froward* (devious; distorted; perverse).
5. Place your confidence in the Lord (18:28-48). God plus one equals a majority!
- 5.1 God will save the afflicted (18:27).
 - 5.2 God will bring down pride (18:27b).
 - 5.3 God gives light in dark times (18:28).
 - 5.4 God enables you to face impossible odds (18:29).
 - 5.5 God enables you to overcome every obstacle (18:29b).
 - 5.6 God protects through His perfect way and Word (18:30).
 - 5.7 God gives strength (18:32).
 - 5.8 God perfects your way (18:32b).
 - 5.9 God sets you above the enemy in high places (18:33, *hind*: small fleet-footed deer)
 - 5.10 God gives skill and strength in battle (18:34).
 - 5.11 God gives the shield of His salvation (18:35).
 - 5.12 God sustains with His right hand (18:35).
 - 5.13 God's gentleness brings honor (18:35).
 - 5.14 God gives stability (18:36).
 - 5.15 God strengthens for the battle (18:39a).
 - 5.16 God subdues the enemy (18:39b).
 - 5.17 God enables complete conquest of the enemy (18:40; Colossians 2:15).
 - 5.18 God delivers from strivings of people (18:43).
 - 5.19 God places into positions of leadership (18:43b).
 - 5.20 God avenges and subdues people (18:47).
 - 5.21 God delivers from a violent man (18:48).
6. Thank and praise God when deliverance comes (18:46, 49-50).

Application of Truth

Are you living in victory over your enemy, the devil (18:37-38)?

Romans 16:20a; I Corinthians 16:9; Ephesians 6:10-18; Revelation 12:7-11

#7 Knowing God

Introduction to Psalm 19

1. God has revealed Himself in several different ways.
 - 1.1 Through *general* revelation
 - 1) History (Acts 7)
 - 2) Creation (Romans 1:18-20)
 - 3) Conscience (Romans 2:14-15)
 - 1.2 Through *special* revelation
 - 1) The living Word of God, Jesus Christ (John 1:14, 18)
 - 2) The written Word of God (II Timothy 3:15-17)
2. God wants people to know Him.
 - 2.1 There is a generation that grows up and does not know God (Judges 2:6-10).
 - 2.2 God said, "Be still, and *know* that I am God..." (Psalm 46:10)
 - 2.3 Paul told the people of Athens that God is not far from every one of us (Acts 17:27).
 - 2.4 Paul's consuming desire was to know Christ (Philippians 3:7-10).
 - 2.5 Paul prayed that the believers of Colosse would increase in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10).
3. Notice two ways God has given for us to know Him.

Ways to Know God

1. Observe God's creation (19:1-6).
 - 1.1 The stellar heavens proclaim God's splendor (19:1a, *glory*).
 - 1.2 The expanse of heaven (firmament) shows His craftsmanship (19:1b, *handywork*).
 - 1) A glorious sunrise and sunset
 - 2) A cloudy sky
 - 1.3 Creation is an universal language (19:2-4). God communicates through creation.
 - 1) Day unto day uttereth speech (19:2)
 - 2) Night unto night sheweth knowledge (19:2b)
 - 3) All languages and dialects have the testimony of creation (19:3).
 - 4) The message of creation goes to all parts of the world (19:4a).

- 5) The energy and circuit of the sun affects all (19:4b-6).
- 1.4 God's attributes can be seen in creation.
 - 1) God is self-existent – He does not have an original cause (Genesis 1:1).
 - 2) God is eternal – He has no beginning or ending (Psalm 90:1-2; John 1:1-3).
 - 3) God is immense – He is greater than the universe (Isaiah 40:12; 48:13).
 - The hollow of the hand refers to a cupped hand.
 - The span of the hand is the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the small finger.
 - 4) God is orderly (I Corinthians 14:33, 40).
 - Rotation of the planets
 - Revolving of the earth around the sun
 - Cycles of the moon
 - Migration of the animal kingdom
 - Design of the human body (Psalm 139:14)
 - 5) God is good (Genesis 1:31; Joshua 23:14; Romans 8:28; James 1:17).
 - 6) God is triune – three Persons in one Godhead (Genesis 1:26-27, 29)
 - God the Father *planned* creation (1:1).
 - God the Son *proclaimed* creation (1:3a, *And God said*).
 - God the Spirit *performed* creation (1:2b).
 - 7) God is wise (Proverbs 3:19-20; 8:22-29; Romans 11:33-36).
 - 8) God is omnipotent – He is able to speak everything into existence (Hebrews 11:3; II Peter 3:5-7).
2. Apply the principles of God's Word (19:7-14).
 - 2.1 God's Word will change your life (19:7-9).
 - 1) The law of the Lord (19:7).
 - His revealed will and standards for living are *perfect*: unblemished, complete, without error.
 - His law brings change to the soul (emotions, thoughts).
 - 2) The testimony of the Lord (19:7b).
 - His witness to man is *sure*: certain, permanent, faithful.

- His testimony gives wisdom to the naive.
- 3) The statutes of the Lord (19:8).
 - Statutes refer to His individual precepts (Isaiah 28:10, 13).
 - His statutes bring joy to the heart (Jeremiah 15:16).
 - 4) The commandment of the Lord (19:8b).
 - His commands are *pure*: without contamination, moral, holy.
 - His commands give insight and understanding (Psalm 119:130).
 - 5) The fear of the Lord (19:9).
 - His Word teaches a fear of God.
 - His Word produces a reverential trust (Isaiah 66:2).
 - 6) The judgments of the Lord (19:9b).
 - His judgments are formal decrees and are altogether true and righteous.
- 2.2 God's Word should be desired more than anything else (19:10).
- 1) More valuable than gold
 - 2) Sweeter than honey
- 2.3 God's Word warns and brings great reward (19:11).
- 2.4 God's Word cleanses and protects (19:12-13).
- 1) Understanding of *errors*: mistake in judgment; transgression (19:12a)
 - 2) Cleansing of *secret faults*: hidden deviations from what is proper; imperfections; sins of ignorance (19:12b; cf. Leviticus 4)
 - 3) Protection from *presumptuous sins*: willful, proud deliberate violations of God's commands (Numbers 15:30-36)
- 2.5 God's Word enables your words and thoughts to be acceptable to Him (19:14).

Applying the Truth

1. Many know information about God, but few know Him personally. Personally knowing God is not attained through intellectualism (Job 11:7-9).
2. Unbelievers cannot know God (I Corinthians 2:14).
3. If you have little desire to know God:
 - 3.1 Examine and prove yourself whether you are in the faith (II Corinthians 13:5a).
 - 3.2 Examine your heart for carnality and worldliness (I Corinthians 3:1-3).

#8 A Suffering Saviour

Seven Sayings from the Cross

1. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34).
2. Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise (Luke 23:43).
3. Woman, behold thy son! ... Behold, thy mother! (John 19:26-27)
4. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46)
5. I thirst (John 19:28).
6. It is finished (John 19:30).
7. Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit (Luke 23:46).

Introduction to Psalm 22

1. Psalm twenty-two is one of the clearest Messianic psalms.
2. It was written approximately 1,000 years before Christ when stoning was the usual form of execution, not crucifixion.
3. This psalm gives a prophetic presentation of the doctrine of Christ.

The Lamentation of Christ

Matthew 26:36-39; Hebrews 5:7-8

1. Darkness was upon earth (12:00 - 3:00 pm) as the sin of mankind was placed upon the sinless Son of God (Matthew 27:45).
2. Jesus felt forsaken by His heavenly Father (22:1-2; Matthew 27:46).
3. God is holy (22:3; Habakkuk 1:13). God the Father could not look upon His Son when He became sin for us (II Corinthians 5:21).
4. Jesus was despised and mocked by the people He sought to reach (22:6-8; Isaiah 53:3).
5. Jesus' disciples deserted Him (22:11; Matthew 26:56).
6. Jesus was surrounded by His adversaries (22:12-13, *ravening*: greedily searching for prey; plundering; tearing).
 - 6.1 The religious leaders of Israel (Matthew 27:39-43)
 - 6.2 The brutal Roman government (Luke 22:63-65; 23:11, 36)

The Crucifixion of Christ

1. Jesus was poured out like water (22:14a).
 - 1.1 His sweat became like great drops of blood (Luke 22:44).

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- 1.2 His blood poured out from multiple wounds.
- 1.3 His emotional and physical strength was drained from Him.
2. His bones were dislocated when the cross was dropped into the ground, causing severe pain (22:14).
3. His heart was like wax as it worked hard to pump thick blood (22:14b).
4. Jesus experienced extreme dehydration from His loss of blood and lack of fluids (22:15, *potsherd*: sun-baked, broken piece of pottery).
5. Roman soldiers pierced His hands and feet (22:16; John 20:25-27).
6. Spectators stood around the cross staring at Him (22:17). Many in the Roman Empire entertained themselves with violence.
7. Roman soldiers gambled for His clothing (22:18; John 19:23-24).

The Resurrection of Christ

1. After the prophetic statements about the cross, David writes in future tense, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the congregation will I praise thee." (Psalm 22:22)
2. Romans 1:4 says that Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."
3. Jesus Christ's resurrection was prophesied in Psalm 16:9-10 (Acts 2:27-31; 13:35-37).
4. After Jesus preached to the saints in the lower parts of the earth (Luke 16:22), He then led the Old Testament saints to paradise (Luke 23:43; I Peter 4:6; Ephesians 4:8-10; Psalm 68:18).

The Glorification of Christ

1. Israel (and all nations) are to fear and glorify the resurrected Christ (22:23).
2. All the ends of the earth shall turn to the LORD (22:27).
3. All the kindreds of the nations shall worship Christ (22:27b).
4. Jesus Christ will return in power and great glory to establish His Millennial kingdom (22:28; 24:7-10; 110:1-7).

Application of Truth

1. Do you understand that Jesus Christ suffered as your substitute?
2. After all that Jesus suffered for you, what are you sacrificing for Christ?

#9 *The Lord, My Shepherd*

Introduction to Psalm 23

1. The twenty-third Psalm forms a trio of Psalms.
 - 1.1 Psalm 22 – the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep (John 10:10-14)
 - 1.2 Psalm 23 – the Great Shepherd of the sheep (Hebrews 13:20; I Peter 2:25)
 - 1.3 Psalm 24 – the Chief Shepherd, the sovereign king of glory (I Peter 5:4)
2. Psalm 23 is written from David's experience with shepherding.
 - 2.1 David cared for his father Jesse's sheep (I Samuel 17:15).
 - 2.2 David was called from shepherding sheep to be shepherd of the nation of Israel (Psalm 78:70-71).
3. The Bible likens believers to sheep (Psalm 100:3, *we are...the sheep of his pasture*).
 - 3.1 Sheep are helpless, defenseless against an enemy, and easily misled.
 - 3.2 Sheep need a shepherd to guide, protect, and provide for them.

The Theme of Psalm 23

1. Because the LORD is my shepherd, I shall not lack anything that I need (23:1).
2. God's name here is *Jehovah-Ra-ah* (translated as *the LORD my shepherd*).
3. There must be a personal relationship with the LORD – *my shepherd* (John 10:27).

What the Shepherd Supplies

1. Rest and refreshment (23:2a) – green pastures and still waters
 - 1.1 He *maketh* me to lie down in *green pastures*.
 - 1) Nourishment: He supplies everything you need physically and spiritually (Philippians 4:19; Matthew 6:33).
 - 2) Places to rest: God does not want you agitated (Hebrews 4:9).
 - 1.2 He leadeth me beside the *still waters*. Sheep are frightened by a raging river...
 - 1) Refreshment
 - 2) Contentment: satisfaction
2. Restoration for the soul (23:3a; I Thessalonians 5:23; I Peter 2:25, Shepherd of your *soul*)
 - 2.1 *Restoreth*: to turn back, reestablish
 - 2.2 *Soul*: inner being with thoughts and emotions (Matthew 11:28-30, rest for the soul)
3. Guidance (23:3)

- 3.1 Paths of righteousness
 - 1) Paths that are morally right – God will never lead you to violate Scripture.
 - 2) Paths that are right for His sheep – even when you do not understand His leading.
- 3.2 For His name's sake – for His glory (I Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17).
- 3.3 Sheep are led; cattle are driven! God always gently leads His flock (Isaiah 40:10-11; Genesis 33:13-14, example of Jacob).
- 3.4 Sheep will naturally go astray without the guidance of the shepherd (Isaiah 53:6).
4. Comfort (23:4)
 - 4.1 Sheep are easily frightened.
 - 4.2 *Walk* through the valley... Not running in fear (II Timothy 1:7)
 - 4.3 The *shadow* of death
 - 1) Something real casts a shadow – death is a reality in our sin-cursed world.
 - 2) Shadows will not harm a person (I Corinthians 15:54-57).
 - 3) Light must be present to cast a shadow. Focus on the "Light of the world," not the shadow.
 - 4.4 God's presence brings comfort (Hebrews 13:5-6).
 - 4.5 A shepherd's rod and staff bring comfort to the sheep (Romans 15:4).
 - 1) *Rod*: club used to fight off wild beasts
 - 2) *Staff*: a shepherd's stick used to guide and rescue from a perilous place
5. Protection (23:5)
 - 5.1 A table is prepared in the presence of enemies.
 - *table*: in keeping with the theme of the Psalm, this could refer to a tableland, plateau, or grassland
 - 5.2 Several enemies threatened sheep.
 - 1) Poisonous weeds and snakes
 - Philosophies of this world (Colossians 2:8)
 - False teaching (I Timothy 4:1)
 - Satan's deception (Genesis 3:1-5; Revelation 12:9)
 - 2) Predators (I Samuel 17:34-37; Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:28-31; I Peter 5:8)
 - 3) Parasites that burrow into the sheep's nasal cavity.

- The shepherd sometimes anoints a sheep's head with oil to protect from these parasites.
 - Oil sometimes pictures the Holy Spirit's anointing (II Corinthians 1:21-22; I John 2:20, 27).
- 5.3 The good shepherd protects your salvation (John 10:27-29; Hebrews 7:25).
6. Abundant blessings (23:5b-6)
- 6.1 Overflowing provision (23:5b, *my cup runneth over*) – God supplies more than enough. "All this and heaven too!"
- 6.2 Goodness and mercy (23:6a)
- 1) God is good all the time, regardless of circumstances related to a sin-cursed world (Joshua 23:14; Romans 8:28; I Timothy 6:17; James 1:17).
 - 2) God in His mercy does not give what is deserved!
- 6.3 Eternal life (23:6b) – *dwell in the house of the LORD forever*
- 1) Forever in the Hebrew means "to length of days."
 - 2) Eternal life refers to a quality of life, not just duration. "Abundant life, not a redundant life." (Steve Curington, Reformers Unanimous)

Applying the Word

1. Consider: the LORD is not your *shepherd* (Psalm 23) until He is your *Saviour* (Psalm 22).
2. Are you resting in your Shepherd's care?

#10 Responding to Mistakes

Introduction to Psalm 31

1. People make at least four kinds of mistakes.
 - 1.1 Mistakes prompted by panic, fear, impatience, and worry
 - 1) Abraham went to Egypt in a time of famine (Genesis 12:10 - 13:1).
 - 2) Elimelech moved his family away from Bethlehem ("House of Bread") to Moab during an economic crisis (Ruth 1:1-5).
 - 1.2 Mistakes from good intentions – Moses killed an Egyptian trying to defend an Israelite (Exodus 2:11-12; Acts 7:23-25).
 - 1.3 Mistakes caused by unrestrained curiosity – Saul contacted the witch of Endor when God was not informing him about the future (I Samuel 28).
 - 1.4 Mistakes caused by short-sightedness – Paul was not willing to give John Mark another chance (Acts 15:36-40; II Timothy 4:11).
2. Psalm 31 was possibly written after David mistakenly numbered the people of Israel at the end of his life (II Samuel 24).
3. Note from this psalm how to overcome mistakes in judgment.

How to Overcome Mistakes

1. Turn your situation over the Lord (31:1-8).
 - 1.1 Plead for God's help (31:1-4). Note several requests from David:
 - 1) Let me never be *ashamed*: confounded; disappointed (31:1b; 22:4-5).
 - 2) Deliver me in thy righteousness (31:1c).
 - 3) Bow down thine ear to me (31:2).
 - 4) Deliver me speedily (31:2).
 - 5) Be thou my strong rock (31:2c-3a, *house of defence*: a fortress; a place of safety).
 - 6) For thy name's sake lead me, and guide me (31:3b).
 - 7) Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me (31:4, *net*: traps and snares).
 - 1.2 Commit your spirit to God's safekeeping (31:5; Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59).
 - *commit*: absolute dependence; complete trust

- 1.3 Separate from vain, worthless idolatry (31:6, *lying vanities*).
- 1.4 Be glad and rejoice in God's mercy (31:7-8).
 - 1) God had considered his trouble (31:7).
 - 2) God had known his soul in adversities (31:7b).
 - 3) God had not given him over to the enemy (31:8a).
 - 4) God had set him in a place of victory and freedom (31:8b).
2. Give your emotional hurt to God (31:9-14).
 - 2.1 Plead for God's mercy in times of trouble (31:9; Hebrews 4:16).
 - 2.2 Admit your grief before God (31:9b-10).
 - 1) Grief consumed him emotionally (soul).
 - 2) Grief affected him physically (belly).
 - 3) Grief may endure for years (31:10).
 - 2.3 Trust the Lord with people who are hurtful (31:11-14). People may use a mistake against you.
 - 1) Trust in the Lord when despised by enemies (31:11, *reproach*: object of blame or scorn).
 - 2) Trust in the Lord when betrayed by neighbors and acquaintances (31:11; I Samuel 23:7-13)
 - 3) Trust in the Lord when people forget (31:12, "out of sight, out of mind").
 - 4) Trust in the Lord when many spread slanderous lies (31:13).
 - 5) Trust in the Lord when people devise physical harm (31:13b).
3. Rest in the sovereign power of God (31:15-18).
 - 3.1 God is sovereign over the events of your life (31:15, *times*).
 - 3.2 Pray for deliverance from your enemies and persecutors (31:15).
 - 3.3 Seek God's blessing and mercy in your life (31:16).
 - 3.4 Ask God to silence wicked, lying, proud tongues (31:17-18).
 - 1) Lips which speak *grievous* things proudly: harsh, painful
 - 2) Lips which speak *contemptuously* against the righteous: scornfully
4. Reflect upon the goodness of God (31:19-22).
 - 4.1 There are conditions for experiencing the goodness of God (31:19; Romans 8:28).
 - 1) Fear of God

- 2) Trust that is observed by others (31:19b)
- 4.2 God provides a place of shelter from the pride of man and the strife of tongues (31:20).
- 4.3 God demonstrates His *marvellous kindness* (31:21).
- 4.4 In times of trouble, it is easy to focus on problems (31:22).
- 4.5 Recall answers to prayer (31:22b).
- 5. Strengthen your relationship with the Lord (31:23-24).
 - 5.1 Love the Lord with all of your being (31:23; Deuteronomy 6:5).
 - 5.2 Humbly remain faithful to the Lord (31:23).
 - 5.3 Encourage yourself in the Lord (31:24; I Samuel 30:1-6).

Application of Truth

- 1. Are you currently vulnerable to making mistakes?
 - 1.1 Circumstances causing panic, fear, impatience, and worry
 - 1.2 Basing decisions on good intentions instead of the Word of God
 - 1.3 Unrestrained curiosity
 - 1.4 Short-sightedness, not seeing the long-term
- 2. Have you made mistakes in the past for which you continue to suffer consequences?
Have you committed them to God's control?
 - 2.1 Wrong decisions
 - 2.2 A lack of discernment
 - 2.3 Times of backsliding
- 3. Are you preparing for a good harvest while reaping the fruit of bad decisions in the past?
(Galatians 6:7-9)
- 4. Have you entrusted your spirit to Christ for salvation?

#11 Cures for Anxiety

Introduction to Psalm 37

1. Many turn to medications to calm their anxieties.
2. Psalm 37 contrasts the righteous and the wicked. It always pays to live rightly!
3. This Psalm gives God-honoring ways the righteous person can deal with the anxiety of living in a wicked world.

Biblical "Cures" for Anxiety

1. Fret not in evil times (37:1, 7b-8) – *fret*: to be frustrated, vexed; to blaze up in anger
 - 1.1 Do not fret over the trials of this sin-cursed world.
 - 1) Times of trouble and affliction (Acts 14:22; I Thessalonians 3:3-4)
 - 2) Times of persecution (I Peter 4:12; II Timothy 3:10-12)
 - 3) Wickedness of society (II Timothy 3:1, 13; Genesis 6:5-7, 11-12; cf. Matthew 24:37)
 - The entertainment industry's immorality and violence
 - Corruption of politicians in government
 - The business world using people for gain
 - Abortion and euthanasia – killing unwanted human beings and the cheapening of human life
 - Immorality and homosexuality
 - Violence and terrorism
 - 1.2 Do not fret over the prosperity of the wicked.
 - 1) True prosperity is not financial (37:16; Proverbs 15:16-17; 16:8).
riches (37:16): carries idea of a tumult; wild parties of the wealthy
 - 2) The wicked seem to prosper and the righteous suffer (37:7b, 35; 73:1-5, 13-14). Powerful empires have had their time to prosper.
 - Nimrod (Genesis 10-11)
 - The Egyptian Empire (Exodus)
 - Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire
 - Medo-Persian Empire
 - Alexander the Great and the Grecian Empire

- Caesars of the Roman Empire
 - Modern dictators: Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, and others
 - The coming global government of the Antichrist
- 3) God will judge the wicked (37:2, 9-10, 12-15, 17, 20, 35-36, 38; Revelation 20:7-15).
2. Trust in the Lord (37:3, 39-40).
- 2.1 Your trust must be in the Lord – *trust*: to be sure, confident, bold
- 1) Some trust in what a man can do (Psalm 60:11-12; 108:12-13; 118:8).
 - 2) Some put their trust in politicians (Psalm 146:3-5).
 - 3) Some place their trust in military might (Psalm 20:7; 33:16-17).
 - 4) Many place their trust in money (I Timothy 6:17).
- 2.2 Trust produces action – doing *good*: to do right; be morally good (Psalm 11)
- 1) If foundations are destroyed, keep trusting in the Lord (11:1-2).
 - 2) When foundations are destroyed, keep living righteously (11:4-7).
- 2.3 Trust prepares the way for God's promises (37:3b).
- 1) You will dwell in the place of God's blessing (*dwell in the land*).
 - This promise to Israel was first given to Abraham (Genesis 12). Israel has a divine right to the land of Palestine!
 - By application, trusting in the Lord and doing right puts us in the place of the blessing of God.
 - 2) You will experience God's provision – *verily thou shalt be fed* (37:18-19, 25; Deuteronomy 8:2-4; I Kings 17:8-16).
3. Delight in the Lord (37:4).
- 3.1 Delight in the Lord leads to God-honoring desires, not whatever you want.
 - 3.2 Right desires lead to fulfilled desires.
 - 3.3 Delight is shown through yielding to the will of God (Psalm 40:8a).
 - 3.4 Test your desires with the Word of God (Jeremiah 17:9; Psalm 40:8b).
 - 3.5 God wants to give you good things (John 3:16; Romans 8:32; I Timothy 6:17b; James 1:17).
4. Commit your way to the Lord (37:5; II Timothy 1:12) – *commit*: to roll; to surrender; dedicate without reservation; entrust

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- 4.1 God is trustworthy (I Peter 4:19, *faithful Creator*). "God is too wise to make a mistake and too loving to be unkind."
- 4.2 When you commit your way to the Lord, He will bring it to pass (37:5b, 23-24).
 - 1) The steps of a *good man* are *ordered* by the Lord (37:23, established, prepared; to render sure).
 - 2) God will direct you one step at a time as you acknowledge Him (Proverbs 3:5-6).
 - 3) God takes delight in the life of one who lives righteously (37:23b).
 - 4) God helps the good man to get back up when he falls (37:24; Proverbs 24:16).
 - 5) When the Word of God is in your heart, you will have stability (37:31).
- 4.3 When you commit your works to the Lord, your thoughts will be established (Proverbs 16:3).
5. Rest in the Lord (37:7a) – *rest*: to be silent; hold your peace; not agitated; quiet oneself (Psalm 46:10a; Exodus 14:13-14)
 - 5.1 Leave everything in God's hands.
 - 1) Times of crisis
 - 2) Times of uncertainty
 - 3) Unexpected trials
 - 4) Physical or emotional loss
 - 5.2 When you rest in the Lord, you will wait patiently for Him (37:7; Isaiah 40:31; James 5:7-11).

Application of Truth

1. Are you trusting in the Lord alone for salvation? Have you committed your eternal destiny to Him?
2. How anxious are you in these perilous times?
 - 2.1 Are you fretting over the condition of the world?
 - 2.2 Are you trusting in the Lord?
 - 2.3 Is your delight in the Lord?
 - 2.4 Have you commit your way to the Lord?
 - 2.5 Are you resting in the Lord?

#12 Duty or Delight?

Introduction to Psalm 40

Psalm 40:6-10; Hebrews 10:5-9

1. Psalm 40 is a Messianic psalm; the New Testament refers to this passage in reference to Jesus Christ.
2. This psalm was possibly written after Absalom's revolt against David.
3. Jesus demonstrated delight in His Father's plan.
 - 3.1 Doing the will of God (40:8a)
 - 3.2 Obeying the Word of God (40:8b)
 - 3.3 Performing the work of God
4. Many are weary of the ministry for God ("burn out").
 - 4.1 It is natural to be physically weary *in* the ministry.
 - 4.2 People many times are active in church and then quit.
 - 4.3 Young people have outward conformity without heartfelt convictions.

Duty or Delight?

1. Prayer – believers have the privilege of going to the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16).
2. Bible study
 - 2.1 Time in the Bible should be more than a reading assignment.
 - 2.2 Pray through the Bible.
 - 2.3 Enjoy the study of God's Word (Psalm 19:10).
 - 2.4 God took about 1,500 years and forty different writers to give us the Word of God.
 - 2.5 Many have sacrificed for us to have the Bible.
 - 1) John Wycliffe was opposed by the Roman Catholic Church
 - 2) William Tyndale was burned at the stake.
 - 3) Our Baptist forefathers were severely persecuted for translating the Bible into the language of people.
3. Church attendance
 - 3.1 God commanded us to assemble together (Hebrews 10:24-25)
 - 3.2 David said he was *glad* when they said unto me, *Let us go into the house of the Lord* (Psalm 122:1).

4. Soul winning and missions
 - 4.1 You have been saved from a lake of fire.
 - 4.2 You have been given a ministry of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:18-20).
 - 4.3 You have the responsibility of being a witness both locally (Jerusalem) and to the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8).
 - 4.4 If you do not go, you must pray and give so that others can be sent forth (Matthew 9:36-38; Romans 10:13-15).
5. Tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:8-10)
 - 5.1 Tithing was practiced before the Old Testament law was established with Moses.
 - 5.2 Nothing in the New Testament abolished the Old Testament tithe.
 - 5.3 The earth is the Lord's and everyone that dwells therein (Psalm 24:1-2).
 - 5.4 The tithe is the Lord's (Leviticus 27:30-33; Deuteronomy 14:22).
 - 1) It is "rent" for living on God's earth and breathing His air!
 - 2) It is a return of what God has entrusted to you as a steward.
6. Standards of separation and morality
 - 6.1 Music: emphasis should be on the melody, not the rhythm (Ephesians 5:19).
 - 6.2 Modesty for both men and women (Genesis 3:21; John 21:7; I Timothy 2:9)
 - 6.3 Moral values
 - 1) God is unchanging in His character; therefore, His moral values do not change (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8).
 - 2) What was an abomination in the Old Testament is still something disgusting to Him today (Proverbs 6:16-19; Deuteronomy 22:5)

Understanding Psalm 40:8

1. Defining terms
 - 1.1 *Delight*: to have pleasure in
 - 1.2 Will of God: anything pleasing to God
2. Delight does not necessarily mean enjoyment (Hebrews 12:2). Jesus did not enjoy the suffering of the cross.
3. Delight is having pleasure in God's will – nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else!

The Example of Christ

1. Obligation to the will of God (Luke 2:40-51, *must be about my Father's business*)

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2. Purpose in accomplishing the will of God (John 4:31-38)
 - 2.1 To do His Father's will – Jesus never followed His own agenda.
 - 2.2 To finish His Father's work (John 17:4) of reaching souls
3. Surrender to the will of God (Matthew 26:36-44; Luke 22:44; Hebrews 5:7-8)
 - 3.1 In His humanity, Jesus experienced agony over the cup of sin (Luke 22:44).
 - 3.2 It pleased Jehovah (the LORD) to bruise Him... (Isaiah 53:10a) – mocked, spit upon, beaten, scourged, and crucified

Application of Truth

1. Is the will of God and the Christian life duty or delight?
2. Where are you in relation to the will of God?
 - 2.1 Obligation
 - 2.2 Purpose
 - 2.3 Surrender (Romans 12:1)
 - 2.4 Delight

#13 The Vanity of Riches

Introduction to Psalm 49

1. Psalm 49 is applied to all classes of people (49:1-2).
 - 1.1 Both low and high
 - 1.2 Both rich and poor, together
2. Even a poor person can become materialistic and covetous.
3. Note lessons people often forget about money.

Lessons About Money

1. Money will never satisfy the inward desires of the soul (Ecclesiastes 4:7-8; 5:10-17; I Timothy 6:6-10).
 - 1.1 Wisdom and understanding are needed in relation to money (49:3).
 - 1.2 Contentment toward material things must be learned (Philippians 4:10-19).
 - 1) Contentment is being satisfied with what you already have (Hebrews 13:5)
 - 2) You learn contentment through practicing it (Philippians 4:10-11).
 - 3) Christ supplies the strength to be content (4:13).
 - 4) God supplies all that you need when you give to missions (4:14-19).
 - 1.3 Many are afraid to give to the Lord because they are fearful they will give away their source of happiness.
2. Money cannot save a soul (49:6-9, 14-15).
 - 2.1 Confidence in money is misplaced trust (49:6; I Timothy 6:17, *nor trust in uncertain riches*).
 - 1) *Trust*: be secure without fear
 - 2) The rich boast in what they have accumulated (49:6b; Revelation 3:17).
 - 2.2 Money cannot redeem a person (49:7-8).
 - 1) To redeem someone means you pay the price that is required for violation of God's law (I Corinthians 6:19-20).
 - 2) Money cannot buy a ransom from God (49:7; cf. Matthew 20:28).
 - 3) The redemption of a soul is *precious*: priceless (49:8; I Peter 1:18-23).
All the assets of the world are not worth losing your soul (Matthew 16:26).
 - 4) The soul *ceaseth for ever* (49:8b). This is the second death, not

annihilation (Revelation 20:11-15; 21:8).

- 2.3 Money cannot buy eternal life and immortality (49:9, *corruption*: decay in the grave).
3. Money does not secure your future (49:10-20).
 - 3.1 All die and leave their wealth to others (49:10, *brutish*: stupid, irrational, crude, uncivilized, beast-like).
 - 3.2 Everyone foolishly thinks that they will be the exception (49:11-14).
 - 1) They think their houses will continue for ever.
 - 2) They name their estate after themselves.
 - 3) They still die like an animal (49:12; Ecclesiastes 3:9-10).
 - Laid in the grave like sheep
 - Death shall feed on them (decay in the grave)
 - The upright shall have dominion over them
 - Their beauty consumes in the grave
 - 3.3 God alone is the one who secures your future (49:15).
 - 3.4 Earthly glory is left behind at death (49:16-17).
 - 3.5 The rich become nobodies in hell because they were not rich toward God (49:18-19; Luke 12:15-21; 16:19-25).
 - 3.6 A person in honour without understanding is like a beast that perishes (49:20).

Application of Truth

1. When do you feel most secure – when you have money in the bank? Do you have a misplaced security?
2. If you did a careful examination of your finances, what are your priorities based on how you used the money God entrusted to you?
3. No amount of money is worth your soul. Are you prepared for death with salvation through Jesus Christ?

#14 Godly Sorrow Leading to Repentance

Introduction to Psalm 51

1. God gave David about one year to repent of his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah (see introduction to the psalm; II Samuel 11-12).
2. David's sin affected him in several ways.
 - 2.1 Mentally (51:3)
 - 2.2 Emotionally (51:8)
 - 2.3 Physically (51:8b; 32:3-4)
 - 2.4 Spiritually (51:10-12)
3. David evidenced godly sorrow that worketh repentance (II Corinthians 7:8-11).
4. Note how to respond in godly sorrow that leads to repentance.

Godly Sorrow that Worketh Repentance

1. Seek cleansing from God (51:1-2, 7, 9).
 - 1.1 David confesses his sin and stops trying to cover it up (Proverbs 28:13).
 - 1.2 David begs for the mercy of God (51:1; 103:4).
 - 1) God's *lovingkindness*: tender regard
 - 2) The multitude of God's tender mercies – God abundant supply of mercy
 - 1.3 David used several descriptive phrases for spiritual cleansing.
 - 1) Transgressions and iniquities blotted out (51:1, 9; Acts 3:19)
 - 2) Washed thoroughly from iniquity (51:2)
 - 3) Cleansed from sin (51:2b; I John 1:7)
 - 4) Purged with hyssop (51:7; Exodus 12:22-23; Hebrews 9:18-22)
 - Hyssop is a small plant that often grows on a wall (I Kings 4:33).
 - It was often used like a brush in Old Testament culture to sprinkle blood in ceremonial cleansing.
 - 5) Whiter than snow (51:7b)
2. Acknowledge guilt before a holy God (51:3-5; I John 1:8, 10).
 - 2.1 Confession means to agree with God about sin (I John 1:9).
 - 2.2 David does not excuse his sin or blame others (Genesis 3:12-13).
 - 2.3 David does not rename sin.

- 1) Culture often gives less offensive names for sin.
 - A woman's choice instead of murder of an unborn child
 - An alternative lifestyle instead of sodomy and abomination to God
 - An affair instead of fornication and adultery
 - A disease instead of drunkenness
- 2) The Bible names sin for what it is.
 - *Iniquity*: something evil, perverse, and vile
 - *Sin*: an offense to God
 - *Transgressions*: violations of God's law (I Samuel 15:24)
 - *Evil*: something wrong, bad, and hurtful
- 2.4 Sin is only against God (51:4).
 - 1) God established the Old Testament laws against adultery and murder (Exodus 20).
 - 2) Psychologists tell people, "Forgive yourself." This is not biblical because it does not acknowledge violation of the laws of a holy God.
 - 3) God is just when He chooses to judge sin (51:4b). David deserved execution according to the Old Testament law.
 - 4) People often seek forgiveness from everyone but the One whose standard was violated.
- 2.5 David recognized an inherited sin nature (51:5; Romans 5:12; cf. Proverbs 22:15).

"We are not sinners because we sin, but we sin because we are sinners."
(David Sorenson, pp. 393-394)
3. Desire spiritual restoration (51:6-17).
 - 3.1 A removal of hypocrisy (51:6)
 - 1) God desires truth inwardly, not mere outward conformity.
 - 2) God makes us to know wisdom (Proverbs 9:10).
 - 3.2 Rejoicing to replace brokenness (51:8)
 - 3.3 A recreation of a clean heart (51:10a; cf. Acts 13:22)
 - 3.4 A renewal of a right spirit (51:10b)
 - 3.5 A restoration of fellowship with God (51:11)
 - 1) David feared that the Spirit would no longer use him (I Samuel 16:13-14).

- 2) In the Old Testament, there was selective indwelling of the Spirit for service.
 - 3) In the New Testament, the Holy Ghost permanently indwells believers.
 - 4) Sin affects your relationship with the Holy Ghost.
 - The holy Spirit can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30).
 - The Spirit can be quenched (I Thessalonians 5:19).
 - The Spirit of grace can be insulted (Hebrews 10:29).
- 3.6 A restoration of the joy of salvation (51:12)
- 1) David did not pray, "Restore unto me...thy salvation."
 - 2) David committed serious sins against God, but his salvation was secure.
 - 3) Sin affects the joy of God's salvation.
- 3.7 A return to useful ministry (51:12-13)
- 1) Upheld by God's *free spirit*: nobility, royalty – His noble spirit
 - 2) Sin will silence your witness for Jesus Christ (51:13; II Samuel 12:14; I Corinthians 9:27).
- 3.8 A restoration of true praise of God (51:14-15)
- 3.9 A right heart before God (51:16-17)
- 1) There were no animal sacrifices established for adultery and murder.
 - 2) The sacrifices God wants are a broken spirit and a broken, contrite heart.
4. Remember your sin affects others (51:18-19; Ecclesiastes 9:18b).
- 4.1 Sin affects other people – Bathsheba and Uriah (Romans 14:7).
 - 4.2 Sin affects the entire nation (Joshua 7; I Chronicles 2:7; Proverbs 14:34).

Application of Truth

1. Do you know the blessing of forgiveness for sin (Psalm 32:1-5)?
2. Do you postpone dealing with sin, or do you immediately confess and forsake it? David waited a whole year to deal with his sin.
3. Do you agree with God and name sin for what it is – a violation against a holy God?
4. Do you realize that your sin affects others and ultimately the entire nation?
5. Have you recognized your lost, sinful state before a holy God? Have you sought forgiveness for your sin through Jesus Christ alone?

#15 Casting Your Care

Introduction to Psalm 55

1. Broken relationships that cause anxiety affect almost every aspect of life.
 - 1.1 Anxiety controls your thoughts.
 - 1.2 Anxiety disrupts your ability to reason.
 - 1.3 Anxiety steals your joy.
 - 1.4 Anxiety affects your health.
 - 1.5 Anxiety distracts you spiritually and is a sin against God.
2. Psalm 55 was probably written during the rebellion of Absalom and Ahithophel (II Samuel 15:12).
3. Note several ways to deal with the anxiety of broken relationships.

How to Cast Your Care

1. Pour out your heart to God (55:1-5).
 - 1.1 David begged for God to hear him (55:1-2a).
 - 1) He mourned in his complaint.
 - 2) He was distressed and disquieted (55:2, *make a noise*: moan noisily).
 - 1.2 David honestly admitted he was deeply troubled and agitated (55:2b).
 - 1) The voice of the enemy
 - 2) The oppression of the wicked
 - 3) Accusations of iniquity – *cast iniquity*: dropping hints of wickedness
 - 4) Wrathful hatred
 - 1.3 David rehearsed with God what was troubling him (55:3).
 - 1) My heart is sore pained within me.
 - 2) Terrors of death: he feared for his life.
 - 3) Fearfulness and trembling came upon him.
 - 4) Horror overwhelmed him.
 - 1.4 David was honest with his fears (55:4-5).
 - 1) My heart is sore pained within me.
 - 2) Terrors of death: he feared for his life.
 - 3) Fearfulness and trembling came upon him.
 - 4) Horror overwhelmed him.
2. Beware of trying to escape reality (55:6-8).
 - 2.1 David desired to escape to a place of refuge and peace (55:6-7).
 - 2.2 David desired to hasten his escape from the storm that was erupting (55:8).

- 2.3 Many attempt to escape the reality of a troubled relationship.
 - 1) Watch television for hours
 - 2) Enter a fantasy world of fiction (romance novels)
 - 3) Irresponsible behavior
 - 4) Drugs and alcohol
3. Leave revenge with God (55:9-15).
 - 3.1 David asked God to destroy and divide the unity of his enemies (55:9-11). His enemies were seeking recruits day and night.
 - 1) Violence and strife (55:9)
 - 2) Mischief and sorrow (55:10)
 - 3) Wickedness (55:11)
 - 4) Deceit and guile (55:11b)
 - 3.2 David began to wonder who he could trust. Many pretended loyalty to him.
 - 3.3 David asked God to deal with the disloyalty of his friend (55:12-15, 20-21).
 - 1) Some believe that Ahithophel was a relative of Bathsheba and Uriah.
 - 2) Ahithophel considered the rebellion of Absalom an opportunity to turn from David (II Samuel 15:12, 31; 16:20-23; 17:1-4, 14, 23).
 - 3.4 God commands us to leave revenge with Him (Romans 12:17-21).
4. Spend more time in prayer (55:16-18).
 - 4.1 Pray more, not less, in times of anxiety (55:16).
 - 4.2 Pray fervently (55:16, *cry aloud*).
 - 4.3 Reflect upon past victories (55:18, *he hath delivered my soul*).
 - 4.4 Rest in the peace that God gives (55:18; Philippians 4:6-7).
 - 4.5 Confidently trust that the Lord will hear (55:19a).
5. Release your care to the Lord (55:22-23).
 - 5.1 Cast your burden upon the Lord (55:22, *cast*: hurl, throw, release).
 - 1) He will *sustain*: support; strengthen for endurance
 - 2) He provides stability for the righteous (55:22, *moved*: shaken).
 - 5.2 Trust in the Lord (55:23).

Application of Truth

What burden do you need to release over to the Lord's control? (I Peter 5:5-7)

#16 Backsliding – Even When God is Good

Introduction to Psalm 73

1. This psalm was written by Asaph, a musician at the Tabernacle (choir director?).
2. The psalmist recognized God's goodness, but almost slipped spiritually when he focused on apparent injustices in the world.
3. Notice several ways to avoid backsliding.

Lessons from Asaph's Experience

1. Believe that God is good all the time (73:1).
 - 1.1 God is good regardless of circumstances (73:1a).
 - 1.2 God is especially good to those who have a clean heart (73:1b).
 - 1) God is not a respecter of persons (Matthew 5:45; Romans 2:11).
 - 2) God does have respect for obedience (Genesis 4:4-5).
 - 1.3 The unchanging God is the source of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17).
2. Understand that backsliding is caused by a wrong focus (73:2-15).
 - 2.1 Backsliding results from self-pity – thinking that God has been good to everyone *but me* (73:2).
 - 2.2 Asaph was envious at the foolish when he saw the prosperity of the wicked (73:3).
 - 2.3 The prosperous wicked person does not seem to have any problems (73:4-5).
 - 1) There are no bands in their death (73:4, *bands*: bonds; pangs).
 - 2) Their strength is firm (73:4b).
 - 3) They are not in trouble or plagued like other men (73:5).
 - 2.4 The wicked blaspheme God in their pride (73:6-9).
 - 1) They proudly flaunt their sinful lifestyle (73:6, *chain*: necklace).
 - 2) They have more than their heart could desire (73:7).
 - 3) They are corrupt, wicked, cruel, and arrogant (73:8).
 - 4) They speak against the God of heaven with blasphemy and profanity (73:9).
 - 2.5 God does not seem to take notice (73:10-11).
 - 2.6 Living a life of standards does not seem worth it at times (73:12-14).
 - 1) The ungodly prosper in the world and increase in riches (73:12).

- 2) It seems vain to keep yourself clean (73:13).
 - Heart: thoughts
 - Hands: actions (cf. Matthew 27:24)
- 3) Discouragement comes from focusing on problems of life (73:14).
 - Plagued with problems all the day long
 - Chastened every morning (Hebrews 12:5-11)
- 2.7 Your attitude will affect others (73:15).
3. Spend time in the sanctuary to renew your spirit (73:16-20).
 - 3.1 Asaph's thoughts brought great pain to him (73:16, *painful*: laborious, difficult).
 - 3.2 The *sanctuary of God* helps restore your perspective (73:17).
 - 1) Time alone with God and His Word
 - 2) Time in the house of God (Genesis 35:1-13, *Bethel*: house of God)
 - 3.3 Asaph understood the end of the wicked (73:18-20).
 - 1) God has set them on a slippery slope into *destruction* – a lake of fire (73:18).
 - 2) They are brought into *desolation* suddenly (73:19).
 - 3) They are *despised* by God (73:20). Sometimes it *seems* that God is sleeping (*when thou awakest...*)
4. Repent of foolish thoughts (73:21-22).
 - 4.1 The goodness of God should lead to repentance (Romans 2:4).
 - 4.2 Asaph was convicted in his conscience.
 - 1) His heart was grieved (cf. 66:18, iniquity in the heart).
 - 2) He was pricked in his *reins*: kidneys; thought to be the seat of the emotions.
 - 3) He felt foolish, ignorant, and beastly (73:22).
5. Recognize God's working in your life (73:23-26).
 - 5.1 The continual presence of God – even when he was thinking foolish thoughts (73:23; Hebrews 13:5)
 - 5.2 Comfort, like a parent holding a child's hand (73:23b)
 - 5.3 Guidance with the counsel of God until received to glory (73:24; 119:105)
 - 5.4 Satisfaction of your heart's desire (73:25)

- 5.5 Strength when your flesh and heart grow weak (73:26)
- 6. Choose to remain close to the Lord (73:27-28).
 - 6.1 Those that are far from God perish (73:27).
 - 6.2 God punishes those who are unfaithful to Him (73:27b, *go a whoring*: spiritual unfaithfulness to God; James 4:4).
 - 6.3 As you draw near to God, He will move toward you (73:28a; James 4:8).
 - 6.4 Put your trust in the Lord God and declare His works (73:28, Adonai Jehovah).

Application of Truth

- 1. Do you *know* that all things work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28)?
- 2. Do you *truly* believe God is good (73:1)?
- 3. Do you spend large amounts of time listening to the news media which stirs up a bad spirit and causes you to backslide?
- 4. How much time do you spend in the sanctuary of God getting His perspective?
- 5. Do you believe that God will make a life of righteousness worth it all (Hebrews 6:10)?
- 6. Has God's goodness led you to repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 2:4; Acts 20:21)?

#17 Reaching the Next Generation

Introduction to Psalm 78

1. Asaph wrote Psalm 78 as a parable (78:2, *parable*: teaching of spiritual truth from history).
2. Israel was strongest when its godly heritage was taught and remembered. Karl Marx said, "Take away the heritage of a people and they are easily persuaded."
3. Israel's history was often passed on orally from generation to generation (78:3). Asaph is recording this history.
4. The next generation needs to know the praises, strength, and wonderful works of God (78:4).
5. God instructed Israel to pass things on to the next generation (78:5; Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:4-12; 11:18-19).
 - 5.1 He established a testimony.
 - 5.2 He appointed a law.
 - 5.3 He commanded the older generation to make things known to their children.
6. Several goals are stated for the next generation (78:6-8).
 - 6.1 Know how to live God's Word, not just have information (78:6; cf. Hosea 4:6).
 - 6.2 Declare truth to the next generation (78:6).
 - 6.3 Hope (confidence) in God (78:7).
 - 1) Not a politician (an election is not the answer for a country)
 - 2) Not in psychology
 - 3) Not a preacher
 - 4) Not in money (a better economy)
 - 6.4 Remember the works of God (78:7).
 - 6.5 Obey the commands of God (78:7b).
 - 6.6 Learn from history (78:8; Acts 7:51-53). "The thing we learn from history is that we do not learn from history."
 - 1) A generation that was stubborn and rebellious.
 - 2) A generation that did not set its heart aright (in the right way)
 - 3) A generation whose spirit was not steadfast (faithful) with God.
7. The rest of the psalm lists examples from Israel's history: eighty acts of God and thirty sins of Israel.

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- 7.1 Examples of rebellion and disobedience (78:10-11, 17-20, 34-37)
 - 1) Israel often provoked and grieved God in the wilderness (78:40).
 - 2) They turned back to Egypt (78:41).
 - 3) They tempted God (78:41; Numbers 14:22, ten times in two years).
 - 4) They limited the Holy One of Israel (78:41b).
- 7.2 Examples of God's wonderful works
 - 1) The plagues in Egypt (78:12, 42-52)
 - 2) The parting of the Red Sea (78:13, 53)
 - 3) God's presence in the cloudy and fiery pillar (78:14)
 - 4) Water from the rock (78:15-16)
 - 5) Manna from from heaven (78:23-25)
 - 6) Abundance of meat (78:26-29)
 - 7) God's compassion and forgiveness (78:38-39)
 - 8) Giving of the Promised Land (78:54-55)
 - 9) God's deliverance (78:65-66)
 - 10) Giving them a leader (78:67-72)
- 7.3 Examples of God's judgment and wrath (78:21-22, 30-33, 56-64; 106:15)
- 8. Israel was not successful in reaching the next generation throughout its history (Judges 2:6-10).

Young Fundamentalists

- 1. In general, Baptists are failing to reach the next generation.
 - 1.1 Many are immoral and immodest.
 - 1.2 Many are listening to the world's music.
 - 1.3 Many are prioritizing money and material things (Matthew 6:24).
 - 1.4 Many are leaving Baptist churches for unbiblical groups.
 - 1) Contemporary worship centers
 - 2) Community churches
 - 3) Cults
 - 1.5 Many are ignorant of Bible doctrine and our Baptist heritage.
- 2. Fundamentalism in general is moving its standards with the world. Christians today are doing things the unsaved thought was wicked fifty years ago.

3. A survey of young fundamentalists (18-35 years old) reveals some areas of concern.
 - 3.1 Scripture
 - 1) 5% believe there are mistakes in Biblical references to science and history.
 - 2) 12% believe the Bible becomes the Word of God when it is read by faith. (That is error from Neo-Orthodoxy that redefines terms.)
 - 3) 13% believe that there is no literal fire in hell. The language about hell is figurative.
 - 4) 16% believe that Christ is the only hope for heaven except those who have never heard the gospel. People who have never heard go to heaven another way.
 - 3.2 Spirituality
 - 1) Only 22% read the Bible every day in a week.
 - 2) 43% read the Bible three days or less (in the week before the survey).
 - 3) Only 12% spend more than thirty minutes each day in Bible reading and prayer.
 - 4) 76% prayed less than one hour in a week. They averaged eight to nine minutes per day in prayer.
 - 5) 58% claimed they were consistently growing in their Christian life.
 - 3.3 Separation
 - 1) Only ten percent would discourage a person from attending the movie *Passion of Christ*.
 - The movie was produced by Mel Gibson who has a reputation for drunkenness and immorality.
 - They celebrated the Catholic mass during the production of the movie.
 - Mel Gibson used Christ's suffering to make millions of dollars.
 - 2) 32% attended the movie or encouraged others to do so.
 - 3) Less than half believed it is wrong to attend an R-rated movie (with violence, immorality, and wicked language).
 - 4) 80% said it is acceptable to attend a movie theater.

- 5) Only 25% said it is biblically wrong to drink alcohol.
- 6) 39% said drinking alcohol is acceptable in moderation.

Stones of Remembrance

Joshua 4:6-7, 20-24

1. Our children are not asking about our Baptist heritage.
2. Many are not even interested!

Application of Truth

1. Emphasize first a relationship with God, then rules.
2. Make sure they are grounded in the inspired, preserved Word of God – the King James Bible.
3. Involve them in ministry and outreach to the lost.
4. Explain the biblical principle behind the policy.
5. Teach them how to discern between right and wrong – what the *Bible* says, not your opinion.
6. Make sure they are trusting in Christ alone for salvation, not saying a "sinner's prayer."

#18 Pleading for a Nation

Introduction to Psalm 80

1. This psalm was possibly written when Solomon's son Rehoboam was king (II Chronicles 12:1-12, *he forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel with him*).
2. Shishak of Egypt was sent by God to chasten Israel (II Chronicles 12:2-4).
3. Psalm 80 is a prayer for the restoration of the nation (80:1-3).
 - 3.1 Asaph pleads with the *Shepherd of Israel* to hear and shed His glory upon the nation (80:1, *shine forth*).
 - 3.2 Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin represent the three portions of Israel (80:2).
 - 1) Northern Israel (Ephraim)
 - 2) The other side of Jordan (Manasseh)
 - 3) Southern Israel, Judah (Benjamin)
 - 3.3 Three times he asks God to *turn us again* (80:3, 7, 19).
 - 1) Restoration of God's blessing
 - 2) Repentance of God's people
4. Note several aspects related to God's dealing with a nation.

God's Dealing with a Nation

1. National despair (80:4-6; Proverbs 29:2)
 - 1.1 God was angry against the prayer of His people (80:4).
 - 1.2 Sorrow: many tears were shed over God's judgment (80:5; cf. Luke 19:41-44; 23:27-28).
 - 1.3 Strife: Israel experienced strife with neighboring countries (80:6).
 - 1.4 Shame: Israel's enemies laughed at their calamity (80:6b).
2. National design (80:8-11)
 - 2.1 Israel was transplanted from Egypt to Canaan (80:8; Isaiah 5:1-7).
 - 2.2 The Canaanites were expelled from the land because of their wickedness (80:8b; Genesis 15:13-16).
 - 2.3 Israel prospered under David and Solomon (80:9-10).
 - 2.4 Israel's influence spread from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River (80:11).

3. National danger (80:12-16)
 - 3.1 God broke down the hedge of protection for the nation (80:12; Ezekiel 22:30-31).
A hedge was used to keep predators out (cf. Job 1:9-10).
 - 3.2 Israel experienced several dangers (80:13-16).
 - 1) They faced external dangers (80:13; I Kings 14:25-28).
 - 2) They faced internal dangers – they lost their godly heritage (80:14-15).
Asaph asked God to visit His "vineyard" again.
 - 3) They faced eternal dangers – the judgment of God (80:16; 9:17).
4. National deliverance (80:17-19; 25:22)
 - 4.1 Restoration (80:17; II Chronicles 12:6-8)
 - 4.2 Revival (80:18, *quicken*: make alive; II Chronicles 7:12-14)
 - 4.3 Repentance (80:19)

Application of Truth

1. Pray for your nation to turn back to God (80:3, 7, 19; 9:17; 50:22). Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, said, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that His justice cannot sleep forever."
2. Pray for your nation to be in a position to receive the blessing of God (33:12).
3. Pray that your nation will be exalted through righteousness (Proverbs 14:34).
4. Pray for your nation to repent of all that brings a reproach (Proverbs 14:34b, *reproach*: anything that brings shame and disgrace).
 - 4.1 Secularism and political correctness
 - 4.2 Pride, gluttony, idleness, lack of concern, and abominations (Ezekiel 16:46-51)
 - 4.3 Prayer and the Bible banned from schools
 - 4.4 Cheapening of human life through murder, abortion, euthanasia, and suicide
 - 4.5 National and personal indebtedness (Psalm 37:21)
 - 4.6 Worldliness in churches (cf. Revelation 2-3)
 - 4.7 Easy divorce and the break up of families
 - 4.8 Alcohol and drug abuse
 - 4.9 Fornication, adultery, and pornography (Hebrews 13:4)
 - 4.10 Discontentment, greed, and materialism
 - 4.11 Humanistic evolution

#19 The Search for Significance

Introduction to Psalm 90

1. This psalm was probably written by Moses during Israel's forty years in the wilderness.
2. Moses had already spent forty years watching his father-in-law's sheep.
3. This psalm teaches us how to deal with the monotony of the routine of life.

Lessons from Moses, the Man of God

1. Seek an eternal perspective from God (90:1-4).
 - 1.1 You will only get God's perspective when you remain "at home" with the Lord (90:1, *LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place*; Deuteronomy 33:27a). While Israel was homeless in the wilderness, God was their refuge.
 - 1.2 God has a perspective of many generations (90:1).
 - 1.3 God has existed from eternity past (90:2; Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2).
 - 1.4 God has sovereign control over the length of your life (90:3).
 - 1.5 God is not bound by time (90:4; II Peter 3:8).
 - 1) One thousand years are as yesterday when it is past.
 - 2) A thousand years is as a watch in the night (four hours).
2. Remember life is short (90:5-9; James 4:13-17).
 - 2.1 God carries years away like a flood that sweeps away everything (90:5).
 - 2.2 Years are as a sleep that seems to pass quickly (90:5).
 - 2.3 They are like grass that grows, flourishes, and is cut down and withers (90:5b-6).
 - 2.4 God's judgment on our iniquities and secret sins shortens life (90:7-9a)
 - 2.5 Our lives are like a tale that is told (90:9b).
 - 1) Fiction: a fake; a life of hypocrisy and deception
 - 2) Comic book: living for fun, pleasure, and leisure
 - 3) Romance novel: living in a fantasy world and make believe
 - 4) Picture book: a life with no depth or substance
 - 5) Horror story: a life that is bitter, angry, and blames others for problems
 - 6) Autobiography: a life making a difference
3. Make each day count for eternity (90:10, 12)
 - 3.1 Life is measured in days, not years (90:10; Isaiah 38:1-5). Years are simply the

accumulation of days.

- 3.2 Man's life averages seventy to eighty years (90:10).
- 3.3 A longer life only brings labour and sorrow (90:10b). Old age often brings sorrow through the death of loved ones and physical trials.
- 3.4 Do not wish your life away. *Tomorrow* never comes – it is always *today*.
- 3.5 Number your days so that you apply your heart to wisdom (90:12; 39:4-5).
 - 1) Forty years equals 14,600 days.
 - 2) Israel had a daily reminder of the shortness of life.
 - More than two million funerals in thirty-eight years.
 - This equals 144 funerals each day and twelve per hour of daylight.
- 3.6 Redeem the moments that others waste (Ephesians 5:15-17; Colossians 4:5).
 - 1) The Bible does not tell us to *manage* time.
 - 2) Ten minutes each day adds up to one hour each week.
4. Seek the blessing of God (90:13-17).
 - 4.1 Satisfaction with God's mercy (90:14)
 - 1) God gives rejoicing and gladness.
 - 2) The things of the world never satisfy.
 - Alcohol and drugs
 - Money and things (Ecclesiastes 5:10; I Timothy 6:6-10)
 - Fornication and adultery
 - Human relationships
 - 4.2 Restoration of joy (90:15; Psalm 30:4-5; 51:12)
 - 4.3 Motivation (90:16)
 - 1) God's work (Luke 2:49; John 4:34)
 - 2) God's glory (I Corinthians 10:31)
 - 4.4 Confirmation of our work (90:17; I Chronicles 4:9-10; Nehemiah 13:14, 22, 31)
 - 1) Pray for the *beauty* of the Lord upon us: pleasantness, delightfulness
 - 2) Establish the work of our hands.

Application of Truth

People search for significance apart from God. Where are you seeking for it?

#20 Abiding Under the Shadow

Introduction to Psalm 91

1. Psalm 91 was possibly written by Moses at the beginning Israel's wilderness journey.
2. Moses experienced the blessing of dwelling near the Tabernacle of God.
 - 2.1 The Tabernacle was the earthly dwelling of God's glory (Exodus 40:33-38).
 - 2.2 Moses' personal tent was pitched near the Tabernacle of God.
 - 2.3 Moses lived under the shadow of God (91:1).
 - 1) He dwelt in the secret place of the most High.
 - *dwelleth*: to settle in; take up residence; stake out a claim
 - *secret place*: within the Tabernacle of God's glory (Psalm 15)
 - 2) He lodged under the shadow of the Almighty.
 - *abide*: to lodge; tarry; rest
 - *under the shadow of the Almighty* (Luke 1:35)
3. The shadow of God's glory covered most of Israel's camp (105:39).
 - 3.1 Israel's camp was large – an estimated two million people plus their livestock.
 - 3.2 The edges of the camp were not protected from the hot sun, enemy attacks, and the judgment of God (Numbers 11:1).
 - 3.3 The safest place was near the Tabernacle of God's visible presence on earth.
4. Note several benefits of living under the shadow of God's authority.

Benefits of Living Under the Shadow

1. Protection (91:2, 4, 7, 10-12)
 - 1.1 God is a refuge and fortress (91:2; 31:20-21).
 - 1.2 God protects like a mother bird (91:4; 17:8; 63:7).
 - 1.3 God's truth is a shield and buckler (91:4b).
 - 1.4 God protects in (spiritual) battles (91:7).
 - 1.5 God protects from the plagues of the world (91:10; cf. Exodus 15:26). The land of Goshen was protected from the plagues of Egypt.
 - 1.6 God sends His ministering spirits (91:11-12; Hebrews 1:14).
2. Deliverance (91:3, 14; 34:19)
 - 2.1 God delivers from dangers (91:3).

- 1) The snare of the *fowler*: one who trapped birds
- 2) The *noisome pestilence*: a rushing calamity that sweeps things away
- 2.2 God sets those who love Him above calamity (91:14).
3. Security (91:5-6) – fearless in difficult circumstances
4. Victory (91:8, 13)
 - 4.1 Lion (I Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7; cf. Daniel 6)
 - 4.2 Adder: poisonous serpent (Genesis 3; Revelation 12:9-10; cf. Acts 28:1-5)
 - 4.3 Dragon (Revelation 12:3-10)
5. Answers to prayer (91:15; I John 5:14-15)
6. Honor (91:15; I Peter 5:5-7; James 4:10)
7. Satisfaction (91:16; 103:5; 107:8-9)

Those Who Left the Shadow of Protection

1. Adam (Genesis 3)
2. Cain (Genesis 4)
3. Korah (Numbers 16)
4. King Saul (I Samuel 15-31)
5. Absalom (II Samuel 15-18)

Application of Truth

1. Many struggle with abiding *under the shadow* of God-given authority.
 - 1.1 The wife under the shadow of her husband (I Corinthians 11:3)
 - 1.2 Children under their parent's authority (Ephesians 6:1)
 - 1.3 A pastor under the shadow of the Chief Shepherd (I Peter 5:1-4)
 - 1.4 People under the authority of spiritual leaders (Hebrews 13:7, 17)
 - 1.5 Believers under the authority of Biblical standards
2. Insecure people do not feel "at home" under the shadow of another's authority.
 - 2.1 Gang leaders
 - 2.2 Rebellious teenagers
 - 2.3 Unsubmissive wives
 - 2.4 A disobedient child of God

#21 Bless the Lord for His Benefits

Introduction to Psalm 103

1. Psalm 103 is ascribed to David, but the circumstance related to the psalm is not clear.
2. The psalm gives praise and thanksgiving to God for His goodness (Psalm 68:19).
3. We often forget to thank God for His many benefits (Luke 17:11-19).
4. Notice several ways we should respond to the goodness of God.

Responding to God's Blessings

1. Remember God's blessings (103:1-5). David exhorts his soul to give whole-hearted praise to the Lord for all His benefits (103:1-2).
 - 1.1 He forgives all your iniquities (103:3a; I Samuel 15:23, *stubbornness is as iniquity*; Isaiah 55:6-7; cf. I Timothy 1:15).
 - 1.2 He heals all your diseases (103:3b; Exodus 15:26; James 5:13-15).
 - 1) Spiritual healing now (I Peter 2:24)
 - 2) Physical healing according to His will (II Corinthians 12:7-9)
 - 3) Future deliverance from the curse of sin (Romans 8:18-25)
 - 1.3 He redeems your life from destruction (103:4a; John 3:16).
 - 1.4 He crowns with lovingkindness and tender mercies (103:4b).
 - 1.5 He satisfies your mouth with good things (103:5a; I Timothy 6:17).
 - 1) Food is given for both pleasure and health.
 - 2) A proper diet renews your strength physically (Psalm 104:15).
 - 1.6 He renews your youth like the eagle's (103:5b; II Corinthians 4:16).
 - 1) An eagle molts its feathers each year to restore a youthful appearance.
 - 2) Those who live a life of sin tend to age more quickly (Proverbs 13:15b).
2. Reflect upon God's loving ways (103:6-14).
 - 2.1 He executes justice for the oppressed (103:6).
 - 2.2 He reveals His ways to His people (103:7; Deuteronomy 29:29).
 - 2.3 He is merciful and gracious (103:8).
 - 2.4 He is slow to anger (103:8; Genesis 6:3; 15:13-16).
 - 2.5 He is plenteous in mercy (103:8, 11).
 - 2.6 His chastening has an end (103:9, *chide*: scold, rebuke; hold a controversy).

- 2.7 He does not give what we deserve – hell (103:10).
- 2.8 He removes transgressions (103:12).
 - 1) North and south meet at the poles.
 - 2) East and west never meet.
- 2.9 He has pity on those who fear Him (103:13-14).
- 3. Remain humble in your evaluation of mankind (103:15-18; 39:4-6).
 - 3.1 People often fail to whole-heartedly bless God because they have too high an evaluation of themselves.
 - 3.2 Man's life is like the grass that grows for a season and is cut down (I Peter 1:24-25).
 - 3.3 God's everlasting mercy is expressed toward those who fear and obey Him (103:17-18; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).
- 4. Reverence God as sovereign (103:19-22).
 - 4.1 God has prepared (established) His throne in the heavens (103:19; Isaiah 6:1).
 - 4.2 God rules over all (103:19b).
 - 4.3 God rules over the angelic host (103:20-21).
 - 1) Angels excel in strength (103:20).
 - 2) Angels do everything God commands (103:20b; Daniel 9:21-23).
 - 3) Angels were created to worship and serve the Lord (103:21).
 - 4.4 The works of God in all places throughout His dominion give praise to Him (103:22).

Application of Truth

- 1. The account in Luke 17 indicates that nine out of ten who receive blessings from God fail to thank Him. Do you remember to thank God for His blessings?
- 2. Do you recognize an unthankful spirit as a grievous sin (Romans 1:21, *neither were thankful*)?
- 3. Do you realize that "giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20) is evidence of the filling of the Spirit?
- 4. Do you realize that giving thanks in everything is God's will (I Thessalonians 5:18)?
- 5. Are you able to give thanks for God's unspeakable gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 9:15)?

#22 I Love the Lord

Introduction to Psalm 116

1. This psalm was probably written by King David.
2. It was written as an expression of David's love for the Lord (116:1, *I love the LORD*).
3. The Bible commands us to love the Lord with all of our being (Matthew 22:34-38).
 - 3.1 Love is not a feeling as the world commonly teaches.
 - 3.2 Love is an act of our will.
 - 3.3 Love is not true love until it is shown.
4. Notice ways to express your love for the Lord.

How to Show You Love the Lord

1. Pray about everything (116:1-4).
 - 1.1 Past answers to prayer should strengthen your love for the Lord (116:1).
 - 1.2 Past answers to prayer should keep you praying the rest of your life (116:2).
 - 1.3 The problems of life should drive you to prayer (116:3-4).
 - 1) Sorrows of death
 - 2) Pains of hell
 - 3) Trouble and sorrow
 - 4) *Then* he called on God in prayer (Hebrews 4:14-16).
2. Praise God for His attributes (116:5-8).
 - 2.1 God is gracious: God stoops in kindness to someone lesser than Himself.
 - 2.2 God is righteous: God always does what is right.
 - "God is too good to be unkind, and too wise to make a mistake."
 - 2.3 God is merciful: God withholds what we truly deserve (Psalm 136, *for his mercy endureth for ever*).
 - 2.4 God cares for those not able to care for themselves (116:6).
 - 1) He preserves the *simple*: naive, foolish, immature.
 - 2) He helps those who have been humbled.
 - 3) He resists the proud person (I Peter 5:5-7).
 - 2.5 God is good (116:7-8).
 - 1) God is good regardless of circumstances.

- 2) When you forget how good God has been, you will become agitated (116:7). In a sense, David tells his soul to "settle down."
 - 3) God in His goodness did several things for David (116:8).
 - He delivered his soul from death.
 - He delivered his eyes from tears.
 - He delivered his feet from falling.
 - 4) God's goodness should lead to repentance (Romans 2:4).
3. Walk before the Lord (116:9).
- 3.1 The word *walk* relates to your way of life or lifestyle.
 - 3.2 The New Testament mentions several ways you should walk before the Lord.
 - 1) Walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4, II Corinthians 5:17).
 - 2) Walk by faith, not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7; Proverbs 3:5).
 - 3) Walk in the Spirit to not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16).
 - 4) Walk worthy of the vocation (calling) wherewith ye are called (Ephesians 4:1).
 - 5) Walk in love, following Christ's example (Ephesians 5:2).
 - 6) Walk as children of light (Ephesians 5:8; I John 1:5-7). Separate from the darkness of this wicked world.
 - 7) Walk circumspectly (Ephesians 5:15, cautiously, carefully considering all circumstances before acting).
 - 3.3 If Jesus personally visited your home, what would change? Remember: God dwells within the believer.
4. Give God a good "return" for all His benefits (116:12-19).
- 4.1 David asks himself a question, "What can I give back to God for all His benefits?" (116:12, *render*: return; pay back).
 - 4.2 Jesus paid an unbelievable price for your body and your spirit (I Corinthians 6:19-20).
 - 1) Your body is not your own to do with as you please.
 - 2) Glorify God in your body and your spirit.
 - 4.3 David suggested several ways give God a return on His investment.
 - 1) Take the cup of salvation (116:13).

- The cup of eternal redemption
 - The cup of deliverance in crisis (*call upon the LORD*).
- 2) Fulfill your vows to the Lord (116:14, 18; Ecclesiastes 5:4-5).
- Without procrastination (*now*) – begin immediately.
 - Public accountability (*in the presence of all his people*)
- 3) Yield yourself for service to the Lord (116:16; 100:2a).
- David served the Lord in truth (116:16a, *truly I am thy servant*).
 - David was the son of a servant, implying his own servitude.
 - David was loosed from bondage of sin to serve God (116:16b).
He had an obligation to the One who set him free.
- 4) Offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving (116:17; Leviticus 22:29; Hebrews 13:15).

Application of Truth

1. Have you *left* your first love for the Lord (Revelation 2:1-4)? The church in Ephesus simply went through the motions of living the Christian life without much love for Christ.
 - 1.1 They labored for the Lord.
 - 1.2 They had patience and endurance in trials.
 - 1.3 They were separated from evil.
 - 1.4 They were sound in their doctrine.
 - 1.5 They had right motives for serving the Lord.
 - 1.6 They *left* their first love for Christ.
2. How much evidence is there in your life that you love the Lord?
 - 2.1 Do you spend unhurried time with Him everyday?
 - 2.2 Do you praise the Lord for His attributes?
 - 2.3 Does your lifestyle give evidence of your love for Him?
 - 2.4 Do you attempt to give a return to God for His benefits?

#23 The Wonder of God's Word

Introduction to Psalm 119

1. The Bible says that God has exalted His Word above His name (Psalm 138:2).
2. Even secular, unsaved university professors are recognizing the incomparable nature of the King James Bible in English.
 - 2.1 Ward Allen of Auburn University refers to the "miraculous perfection of the Authorized Version" (*Translating for King James*, p. ix).
 - 2.2 Vanderbilt University Press called the King James Bible "the most glorious document in the history of the English language" (*Translating for King James*, back cover).
 - 2.3 The King James Bible has a built-in dictionary for defining its own words.
 - 2.4 Mathematical order to the rhythm of the syllables in the King James Bible have been studied by linguists.
 - 2.5 A Smithsonian Institute photographer (Kjell Sandved) discovered that each of the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet can be seen on butterfly wings.
 - 2.6 The first and last verses of the King James Bible have forty-four letters. (*Christ* is dropped from the last verse in many of the modern translations.)
 - 2.7 Because of the shorter words used to enhance the rhythm of its words, the King James Bible has an average reading grade level of 5.63 (Flesch-Kincaid scale).
 - 2.8 The modern bibles change thousands of words that affect the miraculous structure and pattern of the words of the King James Bible.
3. Psalm 119 is devoted entirely to the Word of God.
 - 3.1 This psalm is in the form of a prayer honoring God's Word.
 - 3.2 Some believe this psalm was written by David over a lifetime.
 - 3.3 It has twenty-two sections of eight verses each (176 verses total). Each section begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
 - 3.4 This was often the first psalm taught to Jewish children.
4. We need to pray for God to restore a wonder and awe of the Word of God (119:18, 161).

Reasons for Awe of God's Word

1. The Word of God brings His blessing (119:1-6).

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- 1.1 God's blessing is on the *undefiled* (119:1, those without blemish).
- 1.2 God's blessing is on those who obey (keep) His Word (119:2-5, 8).
- 1.3 God's blessing is on those who have a heart wholly dedicated to the Lord (119:2b, 10; Deuteronomy 10:12; 11:13; Joshua 22:5).
- 1.4 There is no reason to be ashamed when you have respect unto all of God's commands (119:6; cf. I John 2:28).
2. The Word of God provides spiritual cleansing (119:9, 11).
 - 2.1 Cleansing requires personal responsibility (119:9, *cleanse his way*).
 - 2.2 Cleansing requires heart saturation, not head memorization (119:11).
 - 1) It is not enough to know facts about the Bible.
 - 2) It is not enough to memorize verses of Scripture.
 - 3) God's Word must affect your heart and be applied to your life (James 1:21-25).
 - 2.3 God's Word will give order to your life (119:133).
3. The Word of God provides strength and comfort.
 - 3.1 Nine times the psalmist prays that God would *quicken* him (119:25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159; *quicken*: to preserve, give, or revive life).
 - 3.2 God's Word gives strength in times of heaviness (119:28; Romans 15:4).
 - 3.3 God's Word encourages in times of affliction (119:92-93).
4. The Word of God is preserved forever (119:89, 152, 160; 12:6-7; Isaiah 40:8; 59:21).
 - 4.1 God's Word is preserved for ever (12:6-7).
 - 1) It is preserved from the attacks of Satan (Genesis 3:1).
 - 2) It is preserved from the corruption of Bible critics (II Corinthians 2:17, *corrupt*: to deceitfully peddle).
 - 3) It is preserved from the error of heretics (I Timothy 4:1).
 - 4) It is preserved from the distortion of scoffers (II Peter 3:15-17).
 - 4.2 God's Word is settled in heaven for ever (119:89, *settled*: to stand firm).
 - 4.3 God has founded His testimonies for ever (119:152; Matthew 24:35).
 - 4.4 Every one of God's judgments endures for ever (119:160).
5. The Word of God possesses absolute perfection (119:96, 140).
 - 5.1 Everything in life is imperfect except God's commandments.

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- 5.2 His Word has no end to its perfection (*exceeding broad*).
- 6. The Word of God provides wisdom (119:98-100; 111:10).
 - 6.1 God's Word makes you wiser than your enemies (119:98).
 - 6.2 God's Word gives you more understanding than your teachers (119:99; Luke 2:46-47).
 - 6.3 God's Word gives you more understanding than the *ancients* (119:100).
 - 1) Age does not necessarily mean wisdom (Job 32:9).
 - 2) Ancient philosophers presented an *earthly, sensual, devilish* wisdom (James 3:13-17).
 - 6.4 An understanding of God's Word results in a *hatred* for every *false way* (119:104).
 - 1) Lies, rumors, gossip, and slander (119:163)
 - 2) False teaching
 - 3) Every false motive
 - 4) Every act of hypocrisy
 - 5) Every scheme of the devil
- 7. The Word of God supplies guidance for life's decisions (119:105).
 - 7.1 Light illuminates and guides the next step.
 - 7.2 Light dispels fear.
 - 7.3 Light exposes dangers.

Ways to Show Your Awe of God's Word

- 1. Respect the Word of God (119:6, 15b, 117; Nehemiah 8:5-6).
- 2. Seek the God of the Bible with your whole heart (119:10; Hebrews 11:6).
 - 2.1 No divided loyalties (Matthew 6:24)
 - 2.2 No distractions of life (Matthew 13:18-23)
 - 2.3 No detours from God's way (119:10b, *wander*)
- 3. Study the Word of God (119:12, 33; II Timothy 2:15)
 - 3.1 The psalmist prayed nine times, "Teach me." You need a willingness to learn.
 - 3.2 Ask God to give you understanding of His Word (119:125; John 16:13).
 - 3.3 Times of affliction help us to learn God's Word (119:71).
 - 3.4 Understanding of the Bible is given line upon line, and precept upon precept (Isaiah 28:10, 13).

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4. Declare the Word of God to others (119:13).
 - 4.1 Speak the Word of God to others without shame (119:46, 172).
 - 4.2 Talk about the Bible in your home (Deuteronomy 6:4-7).
5. Value the Word of God above all else.
 - 5.1 Rejoice in the Bible more than wealth (119:14, 72, 162).
 - 5.2 Delight in God's words (119:16, 24, 47, 77, 174).
 - 5.3 The psalmist's soul had great longing for God's Word (119:20, 40).
 - 5.4 He craved God's words (119:103).
 - 5.5 Consider the Bible to be an expected inheritance (119:111).
 - 1) Many are concerned with how much money was left in a will (Luke 12:13-15).
 - 2) Our primary concern should be passing on Biblical convictions to the next generation.
6. Meditate upon the Word of God (119:15a, 48).
 - 6.1 Meditation is not the same as memorization.
 - 6.2 Meditation upon Scripture is not the same as the mystical forms of meditating with the New Age Movement ("empty your mind...").
 - 6.3 Meditating upon the Bible means to ponder, think upon it, or contemplate its truth for personal application (Joshua 1:8).
7. Serve the God of the Bible (119:17, 65).
 - 7.1 The psalmist referred to himself as God's servant thirteen times.
 - 7.2 Serving the Lord requires humility – King David considered himself a servant of the Lord.
8. Hope in the Word of God (119:49, 81, 114, 116).
9. Sing the Word of God (119:54; Colossians 3:16).
 - 9.1 Many passages of Scripture have been put to music.
 - 9.2 Music should be filled with Scripture, not the world's philosophies.
10. Obey the Word of God.
 - 10.1 There should be a sense of urgency in obeying God's commands (119:59-60)
 - 10.2 Times of affliction can drive one to God's Word (119:67).
 - 10.3 Choose friends who will help you obey God (119:63; I Corinthians 15:33).

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- 10.4 Refrain yourself from following every evil way (119:101).
- 10.5 Fulfill your vows to obey God (119:106).
- 10.6 Obey God from the heart (119:112)
- 10.7 Obedience to the Bible will lead you to separate from evildoers (119:115)
- 10.8 Grieve over people who do not obey God's commands (119:136, 158).
- 10.9 Tremble at God's Word (119:120; Isaiah 66:2).
- 10.10 Beware of going astray (119:176).
- 11. Praise and thank God for His Word (119:62, 164, 171).
- 12. Love the Word of God.
 - 12.1 Love for anything is expressed through time.
 - 12.2 You will think on what you love (119:97, 113, *vain thoughts*: philosophies of this world).
 - 12.3 Loving God's Word enables the God of peace to give you great peace (119:165).
 - 12.4 When you love God's Word, your mind is focused on the Lord (Isaiah 26:3).
 - 12.5 A person who loves the Word of God will not be offended by its commands (119:165b).

Application of Truth

- 1. How much awe and wonder do you have for the Word of God?
- 2. How important is the Bible to you (Job 23:12)?

#24 How to Have a Happy Home

Introduction to Psalm 127-128

1. Psalm 127 and 128 were written as a "song of degrees" (see introduction).
 - 1.1 This term refers to steps upward and ascending.
 - 1.2 These "song of degrees" were possibly sang by Israel as they ascended for a feast in Jerusalem.
2. Together, these two psalms emphasize God's blessing on a godly home.
 - 2.1 Psalm 127 was specifically written as counsel for Solomon (possibly shortly after it was announced that he would build the Temple in Jerusalem).
 - 2.2 Psalm 128 was often sung at Israelite weddings.
3. The University of Rhode Island completed a study on American homes. Their conclusion was that the American family was the most dangerous place to be outside of riots and war.
 - 3.1 Domestic violence
 - 3.2 Divorce court
 - 3.3 Child custody battles
 - 3.4 Children left to raise themselves
 - 3.5 Teen rebellion
 - 3.6 Teen suicide
4. Notice three ways to experience the blessing of God upon your family.

Ways to God's Blessing on the Family

1. Depend upon God's power and blessing (127:1-2).
 - 1.1 Building without God's help is vain (127:1a).
 - 1) God gave David the plans for the new Temple (I Chronicles 28-29).
 - 2) Solomon oversaw many building projects without the Lord's blessing (Ecclesiastes 2:4-6).
 - 3) Without the Lord, it is like building on sand (Matthew 7:24-27).
 - 1.2 Protecting without God's help is vain (127:1b).
 - 1) Solomon built a powerful military as king of Israel (I Kings 4:26).
 - 2) When Solomon turned away from the Lord, God stirred up adversaries against him (I Kings 11:9, 23-26).

- 1.3 Working long hours without God's help is vain (127:2).
 - 1) David was not promoting a life of laziness. He does refer to labor and watchfulness (127:1).
 - 2) God works "overtime" so you can avoid painful toil (Ecclesiastes 4:7-8).
 - Working long hours to make more money
 - Husband and wife both working long hours for financial gain
 - Families rarely together to enjoy the material blessings gained
 - 3) Jesus said to "take no thought" about needs or the future (Matthew 6:24-34).
2. Regard children as a blessing from God (127:3-5).
 - 2.1 Children are an *heritage* of the Lord (127:3, inheritance; something assigned and shared; a child is God's property entrusted to your care; cf. Matthew 18:6-7).
 - 2.2 Children are God's *reward* (127:3b, that which results from care, time, and cultivation).
 - 2.3 Children are like arrows in the hand of a mighty warrior (127:4).
 - 1) Arrows are used in warfare (Ephesians 6:10-17, spiritual battles).
 - 2) They must be prepared for spiritual battle (Proverbs 22:6).
 - Training in right doctrine (Biblical doctrine; Baptist heritage).
 - Training in righteous living (I Kings 1:5-6; Proverbs 4:1-7).
 - 3) They must accurately be released from the bow.
 - "Shot" toward the call of God upon their lives.
 - "Launched" as an arrow into marriage (Genesis 2:24)
 - "Launched" as an arrow into service for the Lord (I Samuel 1).
 - 2.4 Children should be a source of happiness (127:5; Ill John 4).
3. Fear and obey God (128:1-6; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).
 - 3.1 You will experience God's blessing upon your life and home (128:1).
 - 3.2 You will enjoy the fruit of your labor (128:2a).
 - 1) Having a good marriage and raising godly children is based on labor, not "luck."
 - 2) People want the "product" (a good marriage, faithful children) without the "price tag."

Independent Baptist Institute: Teaching the Whole Word to the Whole World

- Hard work
- Obedience to God's Word
- Biblical standards in the home

3.3 You will experience true happiness (128:2b).

- 1) The world only offers a happiness based on good circumstances.
- 2) Violation of God's Word (transgression) brings sorrow (Proverbs 13:15b).

3.4 You will enjoy a better life (128:2b).

- 1) The Bible does not promise an easy life (Acts 14:22).
- 2) Righteous living enables you to experience good days (I Peter 3:10-12).

3.5 You will have a fruitful family (128:3).

- 1) The wife as a fruitful vine
 - She will be as a pleasant, nurtured vine alongside the house.
 - The husband must kindly, tenderly, and lovingly nurture his wife (Ephesians 5:25-29).

2) Children like olive plants around the table

3.6 You will help to strengthen churches and society (128:5-6).

- 1) Both the local church and the nation are affected by the weakening of families.
- 2) God will deal with the iniquity of fathers to the third and fourth generation (Exodus 20:4-6).

Application of Truth

1. The "blueprint" for building a home is God's Word. How much are you reading God's plans for your family?
2. Do you consider children to be a blessing or a hindrance to what you want to do with your life?
3. If you did not follow God's plan for your family, are you seeking the grace of God to restore what you can?
4. The most important key to having a Christ-centered home is a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. Are you trusting in Him alone for salvation?

#25 Responding to the Attributes of God

Introduction to Psalm 139

1. This psalm was written by David and dedicated to the chief Musician (see introduction).
2. David emphasizes a response to the omni-attributes of God.
 - 2.1 Omniscience – God knows all things.
 - 2.2 Omnipresence – God as a Spirit is everywhere at the same time.
 - 2.3 Omnipotence – God is all-powerful (Revelation 19:6).
3. These attributes should bring both comfort and conviction to our hearts.

The Omniscience of God

Psalm 139:1-6

1. *Searched* indicates careful scrutiny and examination (139:1).
2. God knows everything about you (139:2-4).
 - 2.1 He knows every action (139:2a).
 - 1) The Lord searches all hearts (I Chronicles 28:9).
 - 2) God knows the secrets of the heart (Psalm 44:21; 66:18; Romans 2:16).
 - 3) The Lord searches the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart (Jeremiah 17:9-10).
 - 4) The Word of God exposes every thought and motive of the heart (Hebrews 4:12-13).
 - 2.2 He knows every thought (139:2b).
 - 2.3 He knows every activity of life (139:3).
 - 2.4 He knows every word spoken (139:4; Matthew 12:34-37).
3. God's knowledge is beyond comprehension (139:5-6; cf. Matthew 10:30, each hair has a *number*).

The Omnipresence of God

Psalm 139:7-12

1. The omnipresence of God is not the same as the New Age teaching of pantheism (God is everything).
2. There is no place you can flee from God's presence (139:7-8).
 - 2.1 Jonah failed in his attempt to flee from the presence of the Lord (Jonah 1:3).

- 2.2 God is present in both heaven and hell (139:8; Amos 9:1-4; Revelation 14:9-11).
 - 1) *Hell* refers to the underworld, the realm of death.
 - 2) If God truly is omnipresent, then He must be present in hell itself.
 - 3) It is error to tell the unsaved that they will separated from God forever if they do not believe in Christ. That is what they want!
 - 4) Unbelievers will be separated from the grace of God, not the presence of God forever.
3. Traveling at the speed of light to a remote island of the ocean cannot hide you from God (139:9-10).
 - 3.1 The Pacific Ocean covers almost sixty-four million square miles.
 - 3.2 There are thousands of uninhabited islands around the world.
4. Darkness cannot hide a person from God (139:11-12; John 3:19-21).

The Omnipotence of God

139:13-16

1. God is the omnipotent (all-powerful) Creator.
 - 1.1 It is Father God, not Mother Nature who creates mankind.
 - 1.2 God created man as the crown of creation, not the chance of evolution.
2. God possesses the immaterial part of man (139:13, *reins*). The kidney region was considered the source of emotions and affections.
3. God makes the body of each individual (139:14, *fearfully and wonderfully*: with dignity and uniquely).
 - 3.1 Each person is an unique creation of God. No two people are exactly alike.
 - 3.2 The human body contains and estimated one hundred trillion cells.
 - 3.3 Without conscious effort, the human heart beats about 93,000 times daily; 651,000 times in a week; thirty-four million times a year; and 2.4 billion times in a lifetime of seventy years.
 - 3.4 The human eye contains more than ten million photo receptor cells.
4. God is intimately involved in the development of an unborn child (139:15-16).
 - 4.1 The *substance* of an unborn child is not hid from God (139:15a).
 - 4.2 A child is *curiously wrought* in the womb (139:15b, to fabricate; embroider).
 - 1) The Hebrew word translated as *wrought* is translated in the following

ways.

- Needlework (Exodus 26:36)
- Embroiderer (Exodus 35:35; 38:23)

2) God "embroiders" together the tendons, nerves, blood vessels, and muscles of the unborn child.

3) An unborn child is not a lifeless "glob of tissue."

- 4.4 Abortion, cloning, and embryonic research is a violation of the sanctity of human life and will bring the judgment of God upon a nation.
5. God actively watches over the developing child (139:16, see: actively watch over).
- 5.1 He watches over the *unperfect* (unformed) substance of the developing child.
- 5.2 The description of your body is written in a book of "blueprints" in heaven *before* you were fashioned by God (139:16b).

Applying the Truth

1. Give praise to God because you are specially made by Him (139:14a).
- 1.1 Realize that you are God's special creation.
- 1) Evolution destroys a sense of worth – you are an accident of chance.
- 2) Creation increases a sense of value for human life – you are the crown of creation.
- 1.2 Accept the way that He made you.
- 1) Appearance
- 2) Talents
- 3) Personality
- 1.3 Recognize the worth of other people.
2. Receive comfort from God's thoughts toward you (139:17-18).
3. Separate from wicked men (139:19-22; 119:158).
- 3.1 The wicked are violent and murderous (139:19, *bloody*). Abortion is murder!
- 3.2 The wicked speak against God and use His name in vain (139:20).
- 3.3 Hatred is disapproval and disgust with a desire for justice (139:21-22).
4. Invite God to search your life and expose wickedness (139:23-24).
5. The attributes of God should lead to conversion – repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

#26 True Praise and Worship

Introduction to Psalm 146-150

1. Contemporary worship services often include "praise and worship" teams.
2. True praise and worship does not appeal to the flesh with loud music.
3. In Psalm 146-150, there are forty-four references to praise in fifty-nine verses.
4. Throughout these psalms, the *command* is given, "Praise ye the LORD."
 - 4.1 This phrase is made up of two Hebrew terms.
 - 1) *Halal*: to boast
 - 2) *Yah*: a reference to Jehovah
 - 4.2 Together this term is *hallelujah*: to boast in Jehovah. Psalm 146-150 is the Bible's "Hallelujah Chorus."
5. Notice ways to truly praise and worship God from Psalm 146-150.

True Praise and Worship

1. Focus your praise on God, not men (146:1-10).
 - 1.1 Praise God from your soul, not your flesh (146:1). The rhythm of loud music with a driving beat is from the flesh.
 - 1.2 Vow to sing praises until your last breath, as long as you have any consciousness (146:2, *sing praises*: celebrate in song).
 - 1.3 Music should be unto God (146:2; 147:1, 7).
 - 1) Christian music should not be a performance for men either in the church or concerts.
 - 2) Music was not created by God for the entertainment of men.
 - Lucifer was created as a musical creature (Ezekiel 28:13).
 - Satan has counterfeited the praise of God for a performance before men.
 - 1.4 Place your confidence in God, not man (146:3-10).
 - 1) Political leaders will disappoint you (146:3, *princes*).
 - They are inconsistent.
 - They are mortal (146:4).
 - 2) True happiness is found when God is your help and hope (146:5).

- 3) God is a faithful Creator (146:6; I Peter 4:19).
 - 4) God helps those who have been wronged (146:7, *executeth judgment*).
 - 5) God provides for the needs of the hungry (146:7).
 - 6) God releases those who are unjustly imprisoned (146:7b).
 - 7) God opens the eyes of those who are blind (146:8).
 - He has the power to give sight to the blind (Jesus in the gospels).
 - He has the ability to open spiritual eyes to see the truth.
 - 8) God raises those who are bowed down under pressure (146:8b).
 - 9) God loves those who order their lives after righteousness (146:8c).
 - 10) God preserves foreigners (*strangers*) who are unable to support themselves (146:9a).
 - 11) God relieves orphans and widows (146:9b).
 - 12) God turns the way of the wicked upside down (146:9c).
 - 13) God is eternally sovereign (146:10).
2. Sing praises unto God for His wonderful works (147:1-20).
- 2.1 God is deserving of praise (147:1).
 - 1) True praise is good.
 - 2) True praise of God is *pleasant*: sweet; delightful.
 - 3) True praise of God is *comely*: beautiful; becoming of God.
 - 2.2 God is good to righteous nations that fear Him (147:2, 12-15).
 - 1) Protection (147:13)
 - 2) Peace (147:14a)
 - 3) Prosperity (147:14b)
 - 4) The preserved Word of God (147:15, 19-20)
 - 2.3 God heals the broken hearted (147:3).
 - 2.4 God numbers and names all of the stars (147:4).
 - 2.5 God is great and powerful (147:5a).
 - 2.6 God has infinite understanding (147:5b, *infinite*: no limitations; without measure).
 - 2.7 God lifts up the meek but casts down the proud wicked (147:6).
 - 2.8 God controls nature (147:8-9, 16-18).
 - 2.9 God is not impressed with power (147:10).

- 1) Military might (strength of the horse in Biblical warfare)
 - 2) "Horse" power of sports cars
 - 3) Human strength (professional athletes and weight lifters)
- 2.10 God takes note of those who fear Him and hope in His mercy (147:11).
3. Recognize God's greatness in creation (148:1-14).
- 3.1 The psalmist calls on the heavens to give praise to God (148:1-6).
- 1) The angels were created to praise God (148:1-2).
 - 2) The universe is a testimony of God's power as Creator (148:3-6; 19:1-6; 33:6-9; Hebrews 11:3).
 - Sun, moon, and stars (148:3)
 - The stellar and atmospheric heavens (148:4)
- 3.2 The psalmist calls the whole earth to give praise to God (148:7-14).
- 1) The dragons in the oceans (148:7)
 - 2) Weather systems (148:8)
 - 3) The mountains and hills (148:9a)
 - 4) Trees (148:9b)
 - 5) The animal kingdom (148:10)
 - 6) All humanity (148:11-14)
4. Sing unto the Lord a *new song*, not the world's songs (149:1-9).
- 4.1 Praise in the congregation should be a new kind of music, not the world's music (149:1).
- 1) Different themes than the world
 - Rebellion
 - Drugs and alcohol
 - Lust, fornication, and adultery
 - Death
 - Worship of Satan
 - 2) Different style of music than the world
- 4.2 Music should be full of joy (149:2, 5).
- 4.3 Music will affect your actions (149:3; II Samuel 6:14-16, 20-23).
- 1) Music is not amoral; it will affect your morals (Exodus 32, loud music and

nakedness were together).

- 2) This does not give believers permission to go to dances (cf. I Corinthians 7:1).
- 3) This does not have reference to the rhythmic swaying in praise services.
- 4) Jews today still circle dance at the western wall of the old Temple. They intertwine their arms while singing joyful Hebrew songs.

4.4 Praise God with a two-edged sword in your hand (149:6b).

- 1) This passage will literally be fulfilled at the coming of Jesus Christ (Revelation 19:11-15).
- 2) By application, the Word of God is referred to as a two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 6:17).

5. Praise God with spiritual music (150:1-6).

5.1 Music should praise God in His sanctuary (150:1). *Sanctuary* is a Hebrew word indicating holiness.

5.2 Music should give God praise for His mighty acts and excellent greatness (150:2).

5.3 Note that drums are not mentioned in the list of musical instruments (150:3-5).

Drums are often emphasized in modern praise and worship services.

- 1) The trumpet (the Hebrew shofar; a ram's horn)
- 2) The psaltery and harp: large and small harps
- 3) Timbrel: tambourine
- 4) Stringed instruments and organs
- 5) Cymbals

5.4 Your vocal chords were given for praise of God (150:6).

5.5 Spiritual music emphasizes the *melody*, not the rhythm (Ephesians 5:19).

Application of Truth

1. Examine your musical interests. Does it follow the pattern of Scripture? Does it exalt and praise God? Have you adopted some of Satan's corrupted music?
2. The psalms were written to present salvation through Jesus Christ (Luke 24:44). As this study of the psalms comes to a conclusion, are you trusting in the Christ of the psalms alone for salvation.