

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

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*Worshipping Together* is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. [frankston.rpca.org.au](http://frankston.rpca.org.au) [bit.ly/WTTrpcf](http://bit.ly/WTTrpcf)

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. [airdrierpcs.org](http://airdrierpcs.org)

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. [bit.ly/WkBbl](http://bit.ly/WkBbl) or [bit.ly/3yrBbl](http://bit.ly/3yrBbl)

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on the Psalms by John Calvin, Charles Spurgeon, and James Boice

# Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

*The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.*



*If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men\* should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father\* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

*Read, pray, repeat.*

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\* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

**Reading** Psalm 22:1-2 Forsaken!

**Notes** “My God” these days is too often simply used as casual swear expression. Even Christians sometimes imitate the world’s shortcut, “OMG.” Yet it must not be. No greater expression of faith can be made than to call the Eternal God “My God.”

And so the Psalmist, King David, begins this Psalm with that expression – repeated twice. This cry is both a great expression of faith and also the most anguished expression of being forsaken in the whole Bible. We don’t know what anguish was reflected in David’s mind as the Holy Spirit carried him to write these words. But we do see Jesus. *David and his afflictions may be here in a very modified sense, but, as the star is concealed by the light of the sun, he who sees Jesus will probably neither see nor care to see David.* (Spurgeon)

Jesus groaned these words – and perhaps the whole Psalm – on the cross. At the peak of Jesus’ humiliation on this earth He cries out with loud cries to His Father and His God, “Why have you forsaken me!” We now know, of course. God forsook Jesus on the cross, pouring out just wrath instead of compassion and help so that we might be saved. Oh, the wonder!

- Questions**
1. What cry is echoed as this Psalm begins?
  2. Who is making this cry?
  3. Why did God forsake Jesus on the cross?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 39a<sup>2</sup>
1. Rejoice with your family in God’s salvation through Jesus
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

<sup>1</sup> You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

<sup>2</sup> Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

**Reading** Psalm 22:22-31 He has done this!

**Notes** The last word uttered by Christ on the cross seem to be an exact parallel to and even a translation of the last words of the Psalm. “He has done this!” “It is finished!”

What has He done? What is finished? Remember, Christ said those words before dying and in those words and the final words of this Psalm is expressed the completion of the work of Salvation. He has done it all. The three-in-one God planned from before time began that the Son would die for the sins of His people, that the Father would pour out His wrath on the Son and accept His sacrifice as payment for the sins of all He chose to save, and that the Holy Spirit would apply that finished work of Christ to the hearts of those for whom Christ died so that they would repent and believe.

We have in Christ an atonement that really atones, a satisfaction that truly satisfies, a salvation that completely saves. Even our faith is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8) By His grace we praise Him (v.23,25), revere Him (v.23,25), seek Him (v.26), turn to Him (v.27), and bow before Him (v.29). He has done this!

Let us then trust Him, praise Him, and proclaim His righteousness even to others that they too might come and declare, “He has done this!”

- Questions**
1. How do the last words of Jesus on the cross echo the last words of this Psalm?
  2. What has Jesus done and what is finished?
  3. What will we do in response?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 39a
1. Pray that you and your family will declare Christ’s righteousness to others, with God’s help
  2. Pray for your family
  3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
  4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

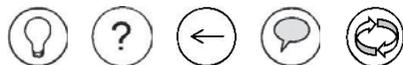
**Reading** Psalm 22:22-31 Exaltation to an ever increasing number

**Notes** After the transition of the end of v.21, the Psalm shifts. Instead of speaking of the humiliation of Christ in His death, the Psalm speaks boldly of His exaltation. Spurgeon says, *“It will be well still to regard the words as a part of our Lord’s soliloquy upon the cross, uttered in His mind during the last few moments before His death.*

And, note that these words of exaltation are expressed to an ever increasing audience. First to His brothers – His Jewish brothers likely in mind, as well as those who do His Father’s will (Matt 12:46-50) – Christ will declare God’s name. Although our sins put Him on the cross, He is not ashamed to call us brothers (Heb. 2:12) Then the Lord’s name will be praised in the congregation – those descendants of Israel will know that God did hear His prayer. Then the great congregation, using praise from God for God v.25, will be satisfied and made alive in Him. Finally the ends of the earth will hear, know, and follow the Lord. Even those yet unborn – that’s us – will be told of His righteousness.

*I think that is an absolutely wonderful thought and one that should move us to the most intent love for and devotion to Jesus Christ. You and I were in Jesus’ thoughts at the very moment of His death. It was for you and me explicitly and for our salvation from sin that He was dying.* (Boice) If we know that are we praising Him and telling of Him to an ever increasing number?

- Questions**
1. What could Christ look forward to even on the cross?
  2. To whom will His righteousness and praise be expressed?
  3. For whom did Christ die?



- Praise** Psalm 39a
- Pray**
1. Praise God with your family for the saving work of Christ
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

**Reading** Psalm 22:1-5 Groans and Prayers

**Notes** Boice notes that verses 1-21 contain 3 groans, each alternated with 3 prayers. We’ll look briefly at each of these pairs over these next 3 days. We considered the opening cry yesterday, but notice the depth of the anguish. “You have forsaken me! You are far from helping! I cry and groan, but you do not hear!”

We should be constantly overwhelmed that Christ suffered so for us. Yet too often we are like the people of Isaiah’s day who simply note (Isaiah 53) that He was afflicted by God. Too often we forget that He was wounded for our sins.

Even in His distress and affliction Christ remembers the past faithfulness of God. “You, the Holy God, cared for your people in the past. You, the Holy God, delivered our fathers. You, the Holy God, are trustworthy.” Like Job, Christ says, in effect, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.”

It’s hard to trust the Lord when things are going badly, isn’t it? Yet, might we draw comfort and help from this confidence. God is worthy of our trust – even if He seems far from helping in our time of need. How well we would do to remember, especially when things are difficult, the faithfulness of God demonstrated – from the beginning of His dealing with His people up to and including His faithful care in our own lives.

- Questions**
1. What are the different expressions of anguish in these cries?
  2. Why was Christ afflicted and forsaken by His God?
  3. What must we remember even in times of distress?



- Praise** Psalm 39a
- Pray**
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to trust God even in difficulties, with God’s help.
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

**Reading** Psalm 22:6-11 Despised and Rejected by Men

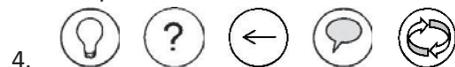
**Notes** The second pair of groans and prayers begins with the rejection of the Psalmist – and of Jesus. The taunts made against Christ while He was on the cross were prophesied in this Psalm many years prior. Yet even though the groans reflect being despised and rejected by men, there is a deeper wound. For they suggest what the first cry (vs.1-2) states – a rejection by God.

But, again, even in His distress and affliction, the Psalmist expresses hope in God. “From birth you have cared for me – I have trusted you all my life – you have always been my God. If you don’t help, no one can.” If this hope could be the hope of Christ even on the cross it must also be our hope.

Even if you came to faith in God through Christ later in life it is clear that God’s grace was working in you from the beginning. So, remember His working – the way He has cared for you. *The Holy Spirit teaches the faithful the wisdom to collect together, when they are brought into circumstances of fear and trouble, the evidences of the goodness of God, in order thereby to sustain and strengthen their faith.* (Calvin)

When you face the ridicule and rejection of men where do you turn? Might we imitate the Psalmist and the Saviour in trusting in God alone.

- Questions**
1. Who is rejecting and despising the Psalmist?
  2. What is the reason for hope even in such distress?
  3. Why did Christ face this distress?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 39a
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to trust in God, even in times of distress, with God’s help.
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

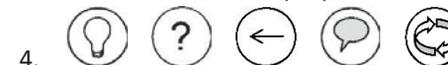
**Reading** Psalm 22:12-21 Attacked and killed

**Notes** This third pair of groans and prayers speaks clearly of the crucifixion of Jesus. The tormentors are portrayed as bulls, lions, and dogs. *The priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, rulers, and captains bellowed round the cross like wild cattle... then stamped and foamed around the innocent One, and longed to gore him to death with their cruelties... Like roaring lions they howled out their fury, and longed to tear the Saviour in pieces... the ignoble crowd, while less strong than their brutal leaders, were not less ferocious, for there they were howling and barking like unclean and hungry dogs.* (Spurgeon)

And what action did these raging enemies take against Christ? *The bones (of the hands, arms, shoulders, and pelvis) out of joint (v.14); the profuse perspiration caused by intense suffering (v.14); the action of the heart affected (v.14); strength exhausted, and extreme thirst (v.15); the hands and feet pierced (see v.16); partial nudity with the hurt to modesty (v.17) are all associated with death by crucifixion.* (Scofield, quoted by Boice) They divided His garments and put Him to death.

Yet even now He prays in confidence to God. “Stay with me! Help me! Deliver me! Save me!” His prayer ends with His hope realised – “You have answered me.” Yet we know that for Christ, that answer came only after the grave, after the torment, after the rejection and forsaking. He died – and was raised – for me!

- Questions**
1. What animal images are used to reflect Christ’s enemies?
  2. How is His crucifixion foretold in these verses?
  3. Did God answer His prayer? When and how?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 39a
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that Christ died for you
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member