

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?

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

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 all taken from chapter 1, *Suffering and Psalm 119*, in David Powlinson’s book, *Speaking Truth in Love: Counsel in Community*. See [bit.ly/Ps119Pwl](http://bit.ly/Ps119Pwl) for a version of that chapter

# 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 to 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.*

\* 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 119:1-8 I will praise You

**Notes**  
(Notes this week are all taken from *Suffering and Psalm 119*, by David Powlinson)

When you hear the words “Psalm 119,” what are your first associations?...

[Some reactions are] It’s long... It’s repetitive and general... The parts seem unconnected... it’s a tightly structured acrostic... It’s about God’s Word... many people feel burdened by it... perhaps you think of a beloved verse or two...

Let’s begin with a question: “What words are most frequently repeated in Psalm 119?” ... Far and away the most common words are first and second person singular pronouns: I, me, my, mine, and you, your, yours. Psalm 119 is the most extensive I-to-you conversation in the Bible. Only the first three verses talk about people-in-general, about God, and about the Word, stating propositions and principles in the third person: “Blessed are those who observe his testimonies, who seek him with all their heart.” The fourth verse begins to personalize things: we stand accountable to you. After that, for the next 172 verses, I, your servant, talk to you, LORD, who speaks and acts, whom I need and love.

**Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What do you first think when you hear “Psalm 119”?
2. What words are most frequently repeated in Psalm 119?
3. What is Psalm 119 about?

4.     

**Praise Pray**

- Psalm 132b<sup>2</sup>
1. Commit you and your family in prayer to talk to God who speaks and acts, with His help
  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 119:169-176 I wander...Seek Your servant

**Notes**  
(Notes this week are all taken from *Suffering and Psalm 119*, by David Powlinson)

STRAND 4: “I AM COMMITTED TO...”

We’ve seen three things: “You are...I’m facing...I ask...” Now, fourth, “Here I stand.” Psalm 119 makes numerous statements of faith. This man states his convictions. He knows who he is and whose he is. He is a child of the light. He will never forget the light and aims to serve it.

A Christian conscience can say the following things in the same sentence: “Lord, you seek me out and show mercy because you are good [strand 1]; I have gone astray like a lost sheep and I feel battered and vulnerable [strand 2]; seek your servant [strand 3]; I do not forget your commandments [strand 4].” Living faith includes a simultaneous awareness of God’s grace, besetting evils, deep need, and indwelling radiance. “You are merciful,” “I am the chief of sinners,” “That hurts,” “Have mercy,” and “I am yours” go well together.

Finally, this honest man voices his delight. Within the conversation of Psalm 119, he gets a lot of what he asks for: firmly anchored joy, clear-sighted direction, utter delight. This man experiences grace working within him. He has been changed, is being changed, and will be changed. He experiences consolation and protection amid his troubles. He has a vivid sense for how God’s good purposes work out. Twofold grief over evil drove him in anxious need to the Lord. Twofold delight at good animates his joy. Some forty times, he rejoices, delights, loves, gives thanks, marvels, and sings praise!

**Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What are some of the convictions of the Psalmist?
2. What does living faith include (about God and about us)?
3. What should be the response to grace working within us?

4.     

**Praise Pray**

- Psalm 132b
1. Pray that you and your family will be changed by God’s word
  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 119:105-112 Teach me Your judgments

**Notes**

(Notes this week are all taken from *Suffering and Psalm 119*, by David Powlinson)

**STRAND 3: "I NEED YOU TO..."**

*So far we've heard two things. A man speaks to God about God and about his struggle with evil. He puts the two together. The result? Some eighty or ninety requests for specific help. This is astonishing when you think about it.*

*First, what is the usual effect of sufferings, troubles, and threat? We turn in on ourselves. We brood about what's happening and our world shrinks... Second, what is the intrinsic effect of sin and wandering? We turn in on ourselves and away from God. Even the "little" sins, like complaining, expunge the Lord from his universe. Sin curves in on itself... Third, in those with an active conscience, what is the usual aftereffect of sin, that painful sense of coming up short? Again, we turn in on ourselves. We brood about what we've done. We hide from God, or despair, or mumble apologies, or redouble good intentions. In short, all evils tend to create monologues in the theater of our own minds.*

*But Psalm 119 creates a dialogue in the theater of the Lord's universe. We hear cries of specific need in the face of sufferings and sins. This man takes God at his word and asks for what God alone can do. His requests align with his struggles against sin and pain. He wants mercy in both senses of the word. He wants mercy for his sin. He wants mercy in his suffering.*

**Questions**

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How does the Psalmist respond to his struggle with evil?
2. What is the usual effect of sufferings, troubles, and threat?
3. What does the Psalmist want for his sin and suffering?

4.     

**Praise Pray**

- Psalm 132b
1. Confess, with your family, how much you need God's help and mercy
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

**Reading** Psalm 119:9-16 I have sought You with all my heart

**Notes**

(Notes this week are all taken from *Suffering and Psalm 119*, by David Powlinson)

*Psalm 119 is actually not about the topic of getting Scripture into your life. Instead, it is the honest words that erupt when what God says gets into you. It's not an exhortation to Bible study; it's an outcry of faith...*

*Psalm 119 springs from a man already persuaded. He simply talks, fusing his intellect, will, emotions, circumstances, desires, fears, needs, memory, and anticipation. He's keenly aware of what he's really like and what's happening to him. He's keenly aware of the Lord and the relevance of what God sees, says, and does. This makes his heart tumble out in passionate requests and affirmations*

*Psalm 119 is torrential, not topical. It's relentless, not repetitive. It's personal, not propositional... So this is what we hear in Psalm 119. A person who has listened opens his heart to the Person who has spoken... And this is what he says: 1) He boldly asserts who the Lord is, 2) He lays his life on the table, both his inner struggle and what comes at him from the outside, 3) He pleads for God's help in life's fundamental troubles, and 4) He asserts his core convictions, affirming his identity, his hope, and his delight.*

**Questions**

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What is the response of the Psalmist to God's Word?
2. What is the Psalmist in Psalm 119 listening to?
3. Having listened, what does the Psalmist do?

4.     

**Praise Pray**

- Psalm 132b
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to listen to God and open your heart to Him, with His 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 119:89-96 You established the earth

### Notes

(Notes this week are all taken from *Suffering and Psalm 119*, by David Powlinson)

**STRAND 1:** "YOU ARE... , YOU SAY ... , YOU DO... "

*This speaker describes God to his face: what you're like, what you say and do, who you are. Many psalms develop one memorable theme. Psalm 119 scatters truths with abandon.*

*Imagine Psalm 119 as a crowded wedding reception, held in a vast banquet hall from which numerous doors lead to other rooms. People you mostly don't know are sitting at tables for eight. The seating arrangement is odd. The bride's grandmother is sitting next to the groom's college roommate, simply because their last names both start with S! How will you ever get to know all those individual faces, names, stories? But stop at each table. Ask questions, listen, and get acquainted.*

*You discover that a rich confession of faith is strewn throughout Psalm 119. Its form is startling. It's not phrased as the faith you profess: "I believe in God the Father. I believe in Jesus Christ. I believe in the Holy Spirit." It's faith heard in the act of confessing: "You are my Father. You are my Savior. You are my Life-giver."*

*The Lord has arranged the conditions of my existence... The Lord speaks wonders... The Lord destroys evil... Yet the Lord is merciful to me.*

### Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How does the Psalmist describe God?
2. How do we find out what God is like?
3. What is the significance of The Lord destroys evil, Yet the Lord is merciful to me?

4.     

### Praise Pray

Psalm 132b

1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that though the Lord destroys evil, He is merciful to you
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

## Reading

Psalm 119:97-104 How I love Your instruction

### Notes

(Notes this week are all taken from *Suffering and Psalm 119*, by David Powlinson)

*Psalm 119 breaks out toward the rest of Scripture. How did this man learn to say with all his heart, "You are good and do good"? Where did he learn, "I am yours"? Psalm 119 carries you to the rest of God's revelation and to all of life. Eight summary words for his words, each used about twenty-two times, act as pointers.*

*Two of the eight words simply mean word, everything God talks about. His words are all he says and writes...He tells us who we are, why we do what we do, what is at stake in our lives, what he made us for.*

*Another of the eight words is law...We tend to mishear law when we read Psalm 119. We depersonalize it into a law code unrelated to God's gracious rule... We forget that the law of Moses includes teaching like ...Ex. 34:6—7... To obey God's will is to love well because you are loved well...*

*Judgments (or "ordinances") put the emphasis on how God evaluates things... In God's judgment, he alone is the only wise God... And so it continues, each synonym adding its richness to the unified picture... How do we react to all these things? The verbs in Psalm 119 are consistent: "I keep, I seek, I love, I choose, I remember, I do, I believe, I rejoice in, I meditate on, I cling to, I delight in, I do not forget....I respond in all these ways to your word, law, judgments, testimonies, precepts, statutes, and commandments."*

### Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. Where does the Psalmist learn to say, "You, God, are good"?
2. What are the summary words for God's words in Psalm 119?
3. How should we react to God's words?

4.     

### Praise Pray

Psalm 132b

1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that God has spoken
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member