

**Day 8**

Psalm 17
Psalm 18
Psalm 19

Believers often wonder about the status of their salvation and the strength of their faith. Let's look to King David for encouragement. David had tangible faith that acted and relied fully on God to keep His promises. In Psalm 17 David could rest with faith, even while in a desert cave or on a rock while fleeing from Saul, who wanted nothing less than to murder David. Psalm 18 once again proves that David's faith is not a mere belief in God but it was a tangible way of life that is different than relying on himself. David knew God would deliver him. He says "I love you, Lord...the Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliver." He raises his hallelujah above his circumstances because he believed not in his own power but in that of his Lord and Savior. God's love, grace, and mercy are just as strong as His delivering power and that is perhaps why David closes Psalm 18 saying, "Therefore I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing the praises of your name." Because our God is a loving, healing, good, and gracious Father Who is present at all times, we are also called to believe God in the same way that David does. At the end of his life in Psalm 19, David continued to worship God. Through his challenges and wavering faithfulness, David witnessed and received God's good faithfulness through it all, and he could worship God at the end. We aren't looking at David today to magnify how strong his faith was or his accomplishments and qualifications - just like us, he had none! Rather, we are magnifying the foundation and source that enables our faith to be strong; we can worship God with confidence to the end because GOD is Who He is - always good, always faithful, always strong to save. Spend some time meditating on God's glory and allow it to humble your soul and relieve your heart that God can be trusted.

**Day 9**

Psalm 20
Psalm 21
Psalm 22

Psalm 20 and 21 are the first royal psalms, a collection of prayers for the king's well-being in the midst of military threat. Notice God's faithfulness to answer prayer, which leads to praise. Do you remember times in your life when God answered prayers for your or another's well-being? Let God's faithfulness inform your prayers today, knowing He will be faithful now, as well. As the psalmist says, "May the LORD answer you when you are in distress; may the name of the God of Jacob protect you" (20:1). Now read Psalm 22, which begins with a frightening question: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" These are the very words Christ pronounced on the cross (Mark 15:34), although this psalm was written centuries before then. As you read this psalm, be reminded of the agony Christ endured for us, depicted and predicted here. Although Christ's physical pain is frightening, perhaps nothing is more frightening than the silence that followed when Christ uttered these words. Today, you and I can rest assured that because of that very pain and separation that Christ experienced for us, we will never experience the same. Through Christ's death on the cross, we have access to a faithful Father to whom we can take anything and everything. In doing so, we see the psalmist's prophecy fulfilled: "All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him." What will you take to your faithful Father today, knowing He will never leave you or forsake you?

Day 10

Psalm 23
Psalm 24
Psalm 25

God's commitment to His own glory is seen in one of the most well-known Psalms of all time when David says, "He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name sake." Again we see in Psalm 24 that David asks the Lord to remember him because of His own steadfast love and for the sake of His own goodness. He then asks that the Lord pardon his guilt for His name sake. Psalm 23 reminds us that while there is no consistency to be found in the external circumstances of our lives, we do have a consistent and unchanging God who leads us in the valleys. He restores us when we've been in those valleys longer than we can bear, and He provides for our every need - not according to our changing desires, but according to his consistent and unchanging character and purpose for us. He does not act because of anything we deserve or do not deserve, but He comforts, provides, leads, sanctifies, and protects us for the sake of His own name. In other words, it is who He is. Today, can you find comfort in knowing the foundation of God's love for us is in His commitment to His own glory?

**Day 11**

Proverbs 4
Proverbs 5
Proverbs 6

These chapters cover the importance of obedience to authority and guarding one's heart from evil, particularly evils regarding lust and immoral relationships. As we live in our modern culture that permits and supports lustful pursuits (i.e. pornography, unmarried sex, etc), believers can slide and gravitate towards an incomplete view of sin. This view essentially says that "I really want to feel good, and if I pursue this sin, I know God will forgive me." While we cannot ignore the immense power and depth of Jesus' sacrifice to erase our sins, we must not abuse this freedom in Christ for our own momentary satisfaction. When we put our willingness to sin above our love for Christ, we lose out on experiencing the true joy of the Holy Spirit's ability to completely satisfy our lives. It is important to note that every Christian struggles with this reality. But in our struggle, we are called to pursue Jesus in love, rather than fold to our sin and ignore the sacrifice of the cross. Examine your heart and explore your reactions to the sins in your life, asking God to convict you and lead you in the way of repentance instead of condemnation.

Day 12

Psalm 26
Psalm 27
Psalm 28

Psalm 26 begins with David making a bold proclamation "Put me on trial, Lord, and cross-examine me." This is a terrifying statement for so many people, but for believers this ought to be a joyous question. How is this so? The life of a believer is characterized by his or her willingness to participate in the process called sanctification. Sanctification is the daily journey wherein we worship God, recognize personal sin, rest in the work of God on the cross to cover that sin, and seek to increasingly love Him. All the while, the Holy Spirit leads the believer's desires and actions away from sin. In detail, this process looks unique among believers, but realistically it reveals how deeply and frequently we are tempted to sin. The joy for a believer in asking God to "cross-examine" us arrives when we realize that the depths of our sin is captured by the sacrifice of Jesus and the grace of God afforded to those trust in Him. Thereby, a trial for believers before God is no more than God looking to His Son and recognizing Jesus' righteousness on us through the complete work of Christ. God will reveal and convict of sin in order to correct, adjust, and guide us through His sanctifying work in us, but the burden of sin is removed in Christ! What an incredible love from God that we can experience this freedom!



Day 13

Psalm 29
Psalm 30
Psalm 31

Psalm 31:5 is a familiar string of words written by the psalmist. Jesus uttered them as His last words on the cross in Luke 23:46. The Hebrew word for spirit here is *Ruwach*, which essentially refers to our very wind, breath and essence. This idea of entrusting our spirit into the hand of God is the perfect illustration of a life fully given over to the will of God. However, many believers truly wrestle with this level of trust. We know this by looking through the last 2,000 years of church history, seeing that billions of people still have no access to the Gospel. We read that even the very earliest of Christians like Ananias and Sapphire failed to fully trust God with their giving. We can see how many Christians in our cultures are constantly feeling inadequate in their walk after proclaiming the name of Jesus for decades. While we can believe in Jesus, we still absolutely can carry the patterns of distrust in Him that are ingrained in our doubts, in our anxieties, and in our fears. It's easy to distrust someone you can't see or know. But it is not hopeless. We can learn to overcome distrust by learning and meditating more on Who God is. By knowing Him more, we will trust Him more. Let's pause to reflect and realize that in Christ, we have unique freedom that perhaps we, like those mentioned above, can often overlook! We are free to experience these doubts, anxieties, and fears, but in doing so, Christ allows us to experience these phenomena without being trapped by them. Through the action of entrusting our spirits, our *ruwachs*, to God in every moment and circumstance, we can live in freedom from fear and doubt.

Day 14

Psalm 32
Psalm 33
Psalm 34

A theme that embodies the psalms is a worship of God and a desire for His glory to spread across the Earth. For many, we struggle to pray for and even consider much beyond our own circumstances. There are times when we may feel somewhat extra-mindful, and so we may remember to pray for our governments and world leaders. But when we experience for ourselves when God is faithful to us, it connects - we want others to know for themselves what we know of Him! How do the words in our hearts, minds, and lips express our desire for God's glory and His praise to be extended to every people group on this Earth? Be encouraged to remember that God's intent is for us to be His image-bearers and for all of humanity to worship Him. Why? Because when we live our lives in worship of God, we are experiencing God redeeming our realities so we may engage with what is eternal and truly meaningful, rather than being distracted by what are temporary idols. Therefore, spend some time today praying that God continues to expand and work in your heart for praying for His will - that all the Earth will praise Him.