

PRAYING THE PSALMS

A LENT RESOURCE FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH



Week One
Psalm 1 - Two ways to live

Today's Reading

Psalm 1

1 Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.

2 But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night.

3 They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.

4 But not the wicked! They are like worthless chaff, scattered by the wind.

5 They will be condemned at the time of judgment. Sinners will have no place among the godly.

6 For the Lord watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction.

Watch via

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zYYUNZ-vU30>

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

PLANTING SEEDS

Give the children two plant pots, put a seed in each one. Place one in the darkness and one in the light. Which one will grow? See over time. You could leave these somewhere at your group if you wished. We need light to grow, just like in this Psalm. Ask what we need to grow both physically and spiritually.

WALKING PATHS

Mark out some paths, you could use chalk, rope, stepping stones. Get the children to follow the different paths. How can they travel along them? Which path did they choose? Why? In life we can choose different paths that lead to different outcomes. How do we make good choices on the paths we take? Where might they lead us?

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

TREE OR CHAFF

Show the young people an image of a tree and chaff. How do they move in the wind? How are they different. What do you think this says about the choices people make?

Which one do you think you are like? Why?

How can we be more like the tree? What does it mean to delight in the Lord? What can we do to delight?

TREE PRAYER

Set up a prayer station, a twig tree is a really good base. Add leaves to the tree, with the actions we can do to delight in the Lord. Such as meditation, bible reading, prayer etc.



Week Two
Psalm 37 - Being Like God

A psalm of David.

1 Don't worry about the wicked or envy those who do wrong.

2 For like grass, they soon fade away. Like spring flowers, they soon wither.

3 Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper.

4 Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires.

5 Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you.

6 He will make your innocence radiate like the dawn, and the justice of your cause will shine like the noonday sun.

7 Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act. Don't worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes.

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

Re read V6. Has anyone ever seen the sunrise or felt the warmth of the mid day Sun? The psalm is telling us that when we focus on God, we will shine like the sun each day. It can be hard to focus on what we need to do for God.

HEART'S FOR GOD

Print out some heart shapes, that the children can decorate. The Psalmist talks about doing good, and taking delight in the Lord. How can we do this? You might just want to talk about this, or they could add ideas to the hearts.



ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
SPEAK A BLESSING

You can use these blessings to speak over each other in a group. You might like to put these on pieces of paper to share out.

- That was a righteous choice that you made, _____.
- _____, you chose wisely.
- I see that you have a sensitive conscience, _____. It pleases God when you listen to Him.
- I'm so proud when you make wise choices. _____
- You have a soft heart, _____. I can tell that you want to please God.
- God is pleased with the choice that you just made.
- _____, I can tell you are tuned in to God's voice.
- I'm glad you're trusting God, _____.
- God is honoured when you obey Him

Week Three
Psalm 99 - Shout praises to God!

Psalm 99

1 The Lord is king! Let the nations tremble! He sits on his throne between the cherubim. Let the whole earth quake!

2 The Lord sits in majesty in Jerusalem,^[a] exalted above all the nations.

3 Let them praise your great and awesome name. Your name is holy!

4 Mighty King, lover of justice, you have established fairness. You have acted with justice and righteousness throughout Israel.^[b]

5 Exalt the Lord our God! Bow low before his feet, for he is holy!

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Have a go at making your own musical instruments ready to be like David and Praise the Lord!

Cardboard tubes could be made into great shakers. Then put on a praise play list to enjoy singing praises to God!



POWER PRAISE FOR KIDS

Some ideas for praise songs
Every Move I Make - Hillsong kids
Jump Around - Planetshakers

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

PRAISE & WORSHIP

We praise a mighty God, who is righteous and fair.

How many qualities of God can you see in the section from Psalm 99.

We have lots of reasons to praise God. Have a look back through the Psalm, and add some of your own.

EXPLORE WORSHIP MUSIC

Often we use music, songs to praise just like in the Psalms. There are lots of different genres around. Why not explore some new ones and have a go at your own.

Aaron Cole is a Christian RnB artist
Check out 'Only u'

Lecrae is a Christian Rap artist
Check out 'God is Enough'

Tim Godfrey is an Afrobeats artist
Check out 'Big God'

Week Four
Psalm 91 - The Lord is my refuge

1 Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
2 This I declare about the Lord: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him.
3 For he will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease.
4 He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection.
5 Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night, nor the arrow that flies in the day.
6 Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness, nor the disaster that strikes at midday.
7 Though a thousand fall at your side, though ten thousand are dying around you, these evils will not touch you.
8 Just open your eyes, and see how the wicked are punished.

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

SHELTER BUILDING

What is a refuge? When might we need shelter? - From a storm, the weather at night, to be safe. Where are our places of refuge? Who might not have a place of safety both physically and spiritual. As a group take time to create or build a den or shelter, this might be indoors or outside depending on your location. Use this as a prayer space. A time to share, to listen and pray.

WATCH AND PRAY

Share this version on a TV
Psalm 91 Kids on the Move
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmMvCEJ35c4>
Psalm 91 by kids with pictures
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_T90pd6dWM

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

PRAYER FOR THE WORLD

As we look on the news, around the world we see hurt, war, pain, suffering and more. Take a large world map to share some of the issues in the world, you could use post it notes or pins to mark these. Take time to pray over these situations knowing we have a God who brings protection and refuge, to those who believe.

OUR WORRIES & FEARS

Lots of worries and fears are mentioned in this psalm. Our children and young people may have lots of worries and fears in their lives. Often these can feel like knots inside of us. Using pieces of string, children can offer up these in prayer, and as they do so tie a knot in the string.



Week Five
Psalm 27 – The Lord is my light

A psalm of David.

1 The Lord is my light and my salvation— so why should I be afraid? The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble?

2 When evil people come to devour me, when my enemies and foes attack me, they will stumble and fall.

3 Though a mighty army surrounds me, my heart will not be afraid. Even if I am attacked, I will remain confident.

SING A MEMORY VERSE

It can be helpful for young people or children to learn some key memory verses that they can then turn to. This clip uses the start of the psalm as a song, they can sing to help them remember this key teaching
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qD8Gmand61A>

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

THE LORD IS MY LIGHT

Last session focused on God being a shelter and refuge. So this session will focus on just verse one of this Psalm. Have a light with you, this could be a torch.

Who has ever been afraid of the dark? Why?

What can help us when we are out camping? There is a storm?

Show them the light. What happens to the dark when you switch on the light? It goes! Explain how this is like the Lord.

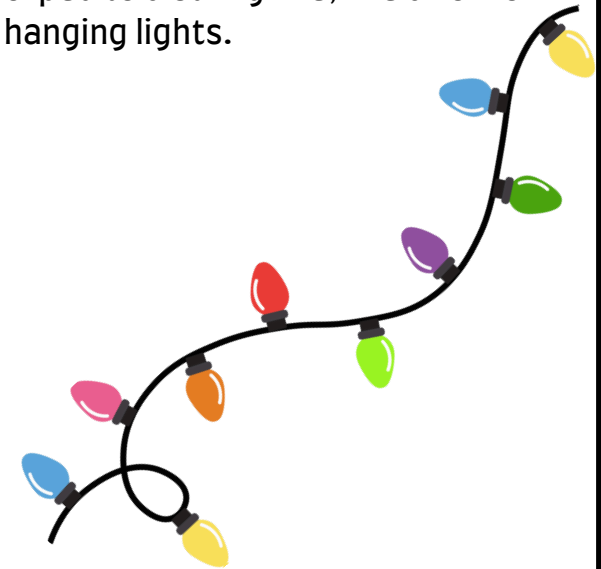
The Light overcomes the darkness, just like Jesus overcomes death and sin. The Light shows us the way. It keeps us safe when we are trying to find our way. We don't feel frightened any more.



ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A LIGHT BULB MOMENT

Have a full copy of the Psalm, the young people could look this up in their own bibles or some copies you have available. Psalm 27 gives us lots of things to be thankful for. Use it as a way to explore this. You could prepare some Lightbulb outlines, that have 'I should praise God for..' on. The young people can finish this off using the psalm. These can be clipped to a string line, like a row of hanging lights.



Week Six
Psalm 63 - God fills me up!

1 O God, you are my God;
I earnestly search for you.
My soul thirsts for you;
my whole body longs for you
in this parched and weary land
where there is no water.

2 I have seen you in your sanctuary
and gazed upon your power and
glory.

3 Your unfailing love is better than
life itself;
how I praise you!

4 I will praise you as long as I live,
lifting up my hands to you in prayer.

5 You satisfy me more than the
richest feast.
I will praise you with songs of joy.

6 I lie awake thinking of you,
meditating on you through the night.

7 Because you are my helper,
I sing for joy in the shadow of your
wings.

8 I cling to you;
your strong right hand holds me
securely.

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

FILL UP THE CUPS

Each team has a bucket of water at one end, and then an empty container at the other end. They also need a small container such as a cup to carry the water. Have a relay race to move the water, the team who fill their container are the winner. Share about how we all need water for life. It might not appear like a big thing, but when we don't have it, then we really miss it. God is like that, we often don't think about him till we don't have him.

GOD FILLS ME UP

Have some magazines with food in them (supermarkets often have these). What do you like to eat. Young people can cut and stick image. Talk about how these things fill you up, but how God fills us up spiritually. We have lots of needs not just physical needs and God makes sure that all our needs are fulfilled.

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A SHARED TREAT

We know that lots of young people enjoy sharing food! You can pick anything they might enjoy - doughnuts are a popular choice. Along with something to drink.

Leave them on the table and read the Psalm. Taking it turns to read a verse as a good way to share it out. How would you feel if you were in a desert? What might you need? What if there was nothing to drink or eat? What does it mean to thirst for something? What if you were then given doughnuts and drink? How would you feel? Would that feeling last? Link to God being more than this, the feeling continues as God continues to provide.

Of course let them enjoy the feast!



Week Seven
Psalm 32 - God forgives me

A psalm of David.

1 Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight!

2 Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

3 When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long.

4 Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Interlude

5 Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the Lord." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

WHERE IS IT HIDDEN?

Explain the kids that you have hidden a coin. They need to find it. Celebrate when you find them. Ask them if you were to hide an elephant would it be easier or harder? Have they ever done something they shouldn't have done or done the wrong thing, and not wanted to tell anyone? How does it make you feel. Once its out in the open how do you feel? David talks about it making you waste away, and how it feels to be forgiven.

SHARING SALVATION

This is a great opportunity to share stories of salvation. If you want you could share your testomany this might be a good opportunity. Jesus comes to give us salvation as he over comes death. We are able to seak and be granted forgiveness. Having the opportunity to have a new life in him. This may require follow up support for young people.

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

FIZZY FORGIVENESS

It can be hard to let things go, to confess to God what we have done or haven't done. Things that happened a long time ago can still eat us up! Get a glass container filled with water, and some carbon tablets or vitimin C tablets. Read through the Paslm as a group. Provide some music and a period of time for young people to ask for forgiveness (this can be private) but to let this physically go.



Week Seven
Psalm 126 – Sing with Joy!

Psalm 126

A song for pilgrims ascending to Jerusalem.

1 When the Lord brought back his exiles to Jerusalem, it was like a dream!

2 We were filled with laughter, and we sang for joy. And the other nations said, “What amazing things the Lord has done for them.”

3 Yes, the Lord has done amazing things for us! What joy!

4 Restore our fortunes, Lord, as streams renew the desert.

5 Those who plant in tears will harvest with shouts of joy.

6 They weep as they go to plant their seed, but they sing as they return with the harvest.

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

GO TELL

When we have Good news we want to tell everyone. As the music plays the children move around the room. When it stops they tell the person next to them sometime that makes them joyful! Take time to thank God for all of these things.

BE JOYFUL

When we have gone through times that are hard and difficult, we are encouraged to be joyful. Sit in a circle, with one person in the middle. The person in the middle says ‘I love you but you just won’t smile’ at someone, they need to say ‘I love you but I just can’t smile back’ if they laugh they are now in the middle. How does it feel to laugh? How does it feel to be joyful?

Take time to pray for moments of joy and celebration, your young people, might want to share moments they have found joy this last week or month.

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

REFLECTING ON THE PSALMS

The Jewish people at this time have been in exile in Babylon, they are now back in Jerusalem. They have gone through a really hard time, this has been highly traumatic for them. We might be in a situation that is causing us pain, or previously such as covid. This can be hard, but in the Psalm we are reminded by God that a time for Joy will come, that after pain we can receive Joy. You may have young people who can share when this has happened.

PRAISE

Watch / sing – King & Country Joy
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IA7n7TwPDmw>
After have a time of prayer and reflection. Out of times of despair comes joy! We can’t always change the situation but we can change our views on it.