

A LIVING FAITH CLASSROOM LESSON

The Book of Psalms

Contemplation ~ Quiet prayer ~ Meditation



Virtue: Prayers of the Heart

Scripture: Psalm 113:1-3

Praise the LORD!

Praise, O servants of the LORD,

Praise the name of the LORD!

Blessed be the name of the LORD

From this time forth and forevermore!

From the rising of the sun to its going down

The LORD's name *is* to be praised.

MATERIALS:

- Something to play calming sounds (like wind chimes, gently flowing water, etc.) or soft music in the background.
- Bibles

ASK: What are some things that you do to relax? (*Pause for responses, such as "close my eyes, draw, etc.."*) These are all nice ways to help clear your mind and as a way to **meditate**. Can anyone explain what "**Meditation**" means? (*Pause*) Meditation means to be calm, quiet, silent, and still in mind. It is a time when you calm down your mind and your body, and a time to let everything you're worried about disappear.

SAY: Let's try some meditation together. Now remember, the goal for meditation is to put ourselves into a **calm, quiet** state, so let's meditate without making any noise. First, everyone take a deep breath in . . . and out. Next, everyone close your eyes and picture a place that makes you happy. (*For a short amount of time, allow the room to be quiet, except for soft music/sounds playing in background, if you wish.*)

SAY: Everyone may open their eyes. How do you feel? Relaxed?

SAY: Today's lesson will focus on a book in the Old Testament of the Bible that is meant for us to take ourselves into a **calm, quiet, and still** of mind state. The book is called the Book of Psalms.

SAY: Does anyone know any poems? (*Pause for responses.*) How about songs - does anyone know any songs? (*Pause*) I'm positive that everyone here knows some prayers, since that is what we are teaching every Sunday in Sunday school, right?!

SAY: Well, the Psalms in the Bible are **poems, prayers** and **songs** that were written by the People of God before Jesus was born to express thoughts and emotions like **praise, hope, joy, sadness, fear, and anger**. We read Psalms today because the thoughts and feelings that the People of God felt long ago are the same thoughts and feelings that we, the People of God, still feel today.

SAY: There are many beautiful Psalms. Perhaps one of the most well known is Psalm 23, "The Divine Shepherd" or "A Psalm of David." In this Psalm, King David is referring to himself as a sheep in the care of Jesus Christ. Psalm 23 is often read when a person is going through a difficult time to be reminded that God is always with them. Psalm 23 reads,

¹The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;

² he makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters;
 ³he restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
 for his name's sake.
⁴Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
 I fear no evil;
for thou art with me;
 thy rod and thy staff,
 they comfort me.
⁵Thou preparest a table before me
 in the presence of my enemies;
thou anointest my head with oil,
 my cup overflows.
⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
 all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

SAY: *(Give each student or pair of students a Bible.)* Whenever we are struggling or having a difficult time, the best place to turn is to the **Book of Psalms** in our Bibles! It truly has a solution for everything.

I brought with me today a “**First Aid Kit of Psalms**.” Here’s how the “**First Aid Kit of Psalms**” works: I will read a difficult situation and ask you to open you Bibles to the Psalm that will give a solution. Ready? Please open your Bibles to the Book of Psalms.

(Read each situation below; have students find that Psalm in their Bibles; ask a student to read aloud. Discuss.)

1. Ever have an embarrassing moment?

Psalm 25:20, Oh guard my life, and deliver me; let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in thee.

2. Is cheating a challenge?

Psalm 25:21, May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for thee.

3. Afraid to go to bed at night?

Psalm 4:8, In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for thou alone, O LORD, makest me dwell in safety.

4. Concerned about health?

Psalm 41:3, The LORD will help them when they are sick and will restore them to health.

Psalm 30:2, LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.

5. Afraid?

Psalm 56:3, When I am afraid, I put my trust in thee.

Psalm 56:11, In God I trust without a fear. What can man do to me?

6. Love

Psalm 34:18, The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit

Psalm 37:4, Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of the heart.

Psalm 147:3, He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.