

My God

My Gentle God – Psalm 23

Welcome (10 mins)

With what formula for dealing with stress were you raised? "Forget it"? "Pray about it"? "Sleep on it"?

Worship (10 mins)

Have you ever walked into a church service feeling distracted, overwhelmed, or unfocused? Do you sometimes feel you're not in the right headspace to worship? We tend to think of worship as a 'doing' thing, but it is also a 'being' thing - we experience God's peace and we rest in his presence. Psalm 23 speaks of God leading us beside still waters and restoring our souls. Take a moment to slow down, breathe, and be still. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you into rest and peace.

Sing - Psalm 23

Play the lyric video on YouTube [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

Word (30 mins)

Read Psalm 23

- Familiarise yourself with the context of Psalm 23. From what part of David's life does this Psalm come (see 1 Samuel 16:10-12)?
- David as a Shepherd knew all about how to care for his flock. What sort of shepherding has David experienced in his life from the Lord (vv. 1-4)?
- What image is used of David (vv.5-6)? What are the possible meanings of "anointment"? (see 1 Samuel 16:13; Luke 7:46)?

- Read verse 1 again. Go round as a group, emphasising a different word each time
"The Lord is my shepherd." "The Lord is my shepherd..." How does each one resonate?
- Our Lord is a gentle God. What dark valley do you walk now? Has God rescued or protected you with "his rod and staff"? What "green pastures and still waters" has he brought your way?

Wonder (5-10 mins)

Take a minute, to imagine lying down in those green pastures, hearing the still waters running by. Be silent as a group for a minute or two. Ask God in your heart, to take you there - imagine Jesus watching you lie down on that green grass, smiling gently at you, saying 'Rest in me. I have you, lean on me'

Witness (5-10 mins)

For those who feel led: pray Lord, I bring before you....., who is walking through the valley of the shadow of death (note: also replace death with loss).. Is there a specific way in which I can bring your goodness and love to.....this week? Please inspire and guide me, Lord. Amen

My God - My Guiding God

Psalm 25

Welcome (5-10 min)

When lost in a strange city or new store, do you (a) Ask for help? (b) Consult the map? (c) Find your own way?

Worship (10 mins)

The true nature of worship is to seek God's face, which means valuing his presence.

Read - Psalm 25. Choose a verse or phrase that stands out to you. Consider the imagery used, what you see in your mind when you read it.

Write - put the verse onto paper in a creative way, sketch or decorate it, read it back to yourself.

Sing - King Of Glory

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

Word (30 mins)

Read Psalm 25

- In which verses does David ask God for protection from his enemies? What sort of enemies did he face?
- In which verses does David ask for guidance? What characterises God's "path" (v.5)? Who will God guide?
- In which verses does David ask for forgiveness? Does God have a bad memory (v.7)? To what aspect of God does David make his appeal?

- What are you most in need of today: protection, guidance or forgiveness? Do you feel you will receive it? Why or why not?
- With what is God's guidance more concerned? Ethics or geography? Character or direction? Morals or prosperity?
- What quality needed for finding God's guidance will you work to develop this week? How could this psalm answer the question "How can I know God's will?"
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Wonder (5-10mins)

- What is the main thing you need direction or guidance for? Share and pray for one another.
- David was very unhappy v 16 – 20. Yet he knew God felt his pain, saw his troubles and forgave his sins. Have a silent prayer for 2 minutes speak to God and tell him how you are. Write out these verses and use them as a prayer this week.

Witness (5-10mins)

Conclude by praying for the Guiding Hand of God upon our church. Pray that God would show us his ways and guide us in His truth.

Suggestion: All or one person prays out-loud Psalm 25, changing the pronoun 'me' to 'our church'.

The last verse ends with *Redeem Israel, O God, from all their troubles!* End your study by also praying this prayer for Israel.

My God – My Gracious God - Psalm 26

Welcome (5-10 min)

Do you tend to sit in the same place at the dinner table? In class? Church? In this group? Why?

Worship (10 mins)

CONSIDER - In today's Psalm David declares his commitment to obedience - past, present, and future. He recognises the value of living righteously and faithfully before God. In contemporary church culture, we tend to think of worship as the singing part of a service or gathering, but in reality it is as much about how we act as what we sing or say. David understood this, for him worship was what he did with his whole life.

JOURNAL - Spend 5 mins writing down actions that could deepen the level of obedience in your life. Are there any weak points or difficult situations? Is there something you could begin to do that would draw you closer to God?

SING - 'Available' by Elevation Worship is a wonderful expression of commitment to follow and obey Jesus.

Play the lyric video on YouTube [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#)

Word (30 mins)

Read Psalm 26

- What does "blameless" mean (vv.1,11)? Faultless? Sincere? How does David's life contrast with those pictured here (vv.4-5, 9-10)?
- How does "love" motivate David (vv.3,8)? How is that love expressed?

- From what you know of David, what mark would you give him out of 10 in the Lord's "test" (v.2)?
- Given a "sincerity scale" of 1 to 10, how would you score on the Lord's test? Why?
- What connection is there between "leading a blameless life" and "trusting in the Lord" (v.1,11)? How does the New Testament build on this idea in Colossians 1:22-23? How does this give us hope?
- David's "crib sheet" was God's love and truth: What "crib sheet" do you rely on? How can you follow David's example?

Wonder (5-10 mins)

Are you a person who suffers from 'false guilt'? often feeling needlessly guilty or not good enough? Share in pairs – pray for each other to really know God's complete forgiveness – he views us as his friends, totally innocent in him, truly forgiven.

Go around in the group and turn into a prayer, out loud, one by one, how God's grace has been present in your life in the past week and thank him.

Witness (5-10 mins)

Jesus spoke harshly against the Pharisee's self-righteousness. This Psalms and the Colossians passage calls the church to moral integrity, trust, love and truth. Considering these passages and our Christian witness, what are some important Biblical principles we should adopt as we face the moral issues of our time (consider social media).

My God – My Good God - Psalm 27

Welcome (5-10 min)

How good are you at remembering faces? Why?

Worship (10 mins)

What's your first instinct when you feel attacked by someone or something? In the Psalm we're about to read, David begins by describing the battles and opposition he faces, then moves into a response of praising God, saying that there is nothing he would rather do than be near to God, worship Him, behold His beauty. That's quite a response, and it's a wonderful model of the movement that takes place in worship - we don't deny our struggles and the dangers of life, but we choose to worship and trust God for our deliverance. As you sing this song, ask God to give you the same attitude as David, the heart of a determined worshipper.

Sing 'Better Is One Day'

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#)

Word (30 mins)

Read Psalm 27

- What three qualities of God does David recall in verse 1? What do you think he means by each?
- How does each relate to David's confidence (vv.2-3)? In what ways might these verses reflect David's life experiences? (1 Sam 20:1-2 for example).

- What is the relationship between "seeking" and "waiting" for God (v.14)? What does this tell you about the Christian life?
- How has the Lord been like a "light" or a "stronghold" in your life in this past month? What situation has driven you to him to find shelter? What words describe your sense of his presence at the point of need?
- Which declaration of David's would you like to echo this week?

Wonder (5-10 mins)

Is there something that you are waiting for? Share this with one another and pray for each other - praying in faith **'that you will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living'** He will never disappoint you.

Share in pairs - is there something that you fear? Pray for each other God says 'seek my face' - another version says "Come and talk with me". Be quiet for a minute or so on your own, and just tell God how you're feeling right now. Listen to what he says to you.

Witness (5-10 mins)

We're highlighting the ministry of Emma Brewster and SIM (Serving in Mission) this month. Watch again the video screened on Sunday [here](#).

Using verses from this Psalm, spend a few minutes praying for Emma. Emma will be preaching Sunday 17th July and will join us at Time on Pray on Tuesday 19th (pray with us from 7.30 - 8.30pm as we pray for Emma, our church and our world). Consider inviting Emma to your group to learn more about her life and ministry with SIM (email yvonne@cck.org.za) for contact details.

My God – My Groundbreaking God - Psalm 29

Welcome (5-10 min)

How does a thunderstorm make you feel?

Worship (10 mins)

REMEMBER / DRAW - God is clearly revealed to us in His word, as we experience His presence with us, and also as we enjoy His creation. Take a moment to recall your favourite outdoor location. What colors do you see? What sounds do you hear? What does it smell like? Do you see sweeping horizons, majestic mountains? Do you stoop down to admire the tiniest detail on the smallest leaf? Perhaps the awesome power contained in a thundering waterfall? If time and inspiration permits, try to capture the location in a simple sketch or describe it to the group. Psalm 29 uses imagery from creation to describe the beauty and strength of God - a song of worship that draws on creation to glorify the Creator.

SING - How Great Is Our God

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key)

Word (30 mins)

Read Psalm 29

- What is the impact of this thunderous Lord on nature? On the people?

- See the map below. What path does the storm take (vv.5-8). Trace it on the map.
- Why is the name of Yahweh ("the Lord") repeated 18 times?
- When the storm passes (v.10), what then?
- What storm blows through your life now? Are you responding like the people - giving glory to God for ruling over the storm? Or are you like nature - in uproar? Why?
- Would you find peace by recognising the Lord of the storm? Why or why not?

Wonder (5-10 mins)

In Jewish synagogues, this psalm was read on the Feast of Pentecost, Shavuot. The church was 'born' on the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus was crucified and believers were gathered together. Host, pray for your group, now, that they may be filled with the Holy Spirit, that a spirit of praise is released among you, and an understanding of the beauty of the Lord's holiness be revealed to you all! Take a minute just to receive his gift.

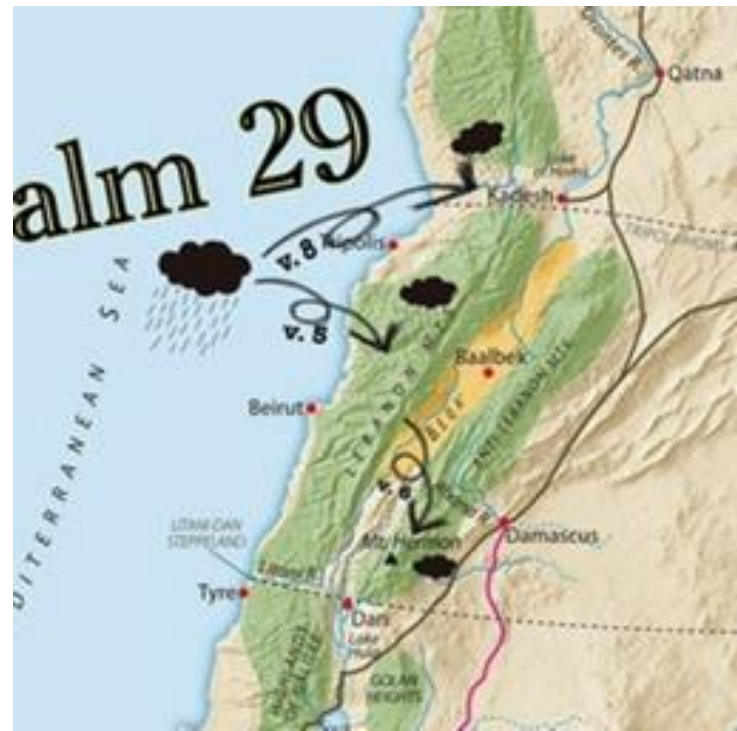
Then go around your group and praise him out loud!

Share in pairs - what strength do you need from the Lord, and where do you need peace in your life? Pray for each other.

Witness (5-10 mins)

The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace (vs 11).

Think of someone who needs to draw on God's strength and peace. Pray this prayer for them throughout the week. Consider sending them this text and letting them know you are praying for them.



My God - My Generous God

Psalm 30

Welcome (5-10 min)

Do you like rollercoasters?

Worship (10 mins)

REMEMBER - What were the hardest moments for you during the COVID-19 pandemic? As a church family, there were a few months when we were unable to meet in person at all. So we had to record services in advance and make them available online - not exactly an ideal way to be a church. One of the worship songs we sung several times was We Shall Not Be Shaken by Matt Redman. It was something of an anthem for a time when everything around seemed uncertain and unfamiliar. As you listen and sing, recall your difficult moments and bring them before God, just as David does in today's Psalm.

SING - We Shall Not Be Shaken

Play the lyric video [here](#)

Download the chord chart [here](#) (original key) or [here](#) (lower key) or [here](#) (even lower!)

Word (30 mins)

Read Psalm 30

- For what reasons does David praise God (vv.1-3)? How does he account for why the Lord allowed these hard times to come upon him?
- What do you learn about the Lord's anger (v.5)? About his favour?
- What error did David make (vv.6-7)? Is it wrong to feel secure?

- How does David argue that God should spare him (v.9)? What does this indicate about his view of the afterlife?
- Is security important to you? How much of your money goes toward buying a house? Medical and life insurance? Savings? Where does security lie?
- Read verse 5 again. How is the theme of "sorrow producing joy" developed in the New Testament (John 16:19-22; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18)? Are you experiencing wailing or dancing at the moment? Have you experienced "rejoicing in the morning" after a "night's wailing"?

Wonder (5-10mins)

David was full of gratitude and thankfulness as he dedicated his palace to God. How are you, right now, this week, grateful and thankful to God for what he has done for you? Share. God sees your thankful hearts and it gives him great pleasure!

Life can be difficult – we're close to God, we feel grateful, then we then lose touch with him, we're sad, we make mistakes and even feel desperate at times. Perhaps you're in a season of weeping or you can't feel him close to you. Listen quietly to each other, without commenting, as you share. Then pray simply and just bring each other to the Lord, trusting him to turn your 'mourning' into dancing, to bring you through this season of weeping, to the joy that comes with the morning.

Witness (5-10mins)

Pray for those that have recently become Christians, or have renewed their faith, through Alpha, services, or through the witness of a friend. They may feel that they have been rescued from the pit, and the hurt and pain may still be fresh. Pray that their wailing will be turned into dancing. And pray that we will always be a warm and welcoming church to everyone who walks through our doors.