



DiscoverChurch LIFE GROUPS

**LIFE GROUP CURRICULUM
NOVEMBER 2017 - JANUARY 2018**

Suggested Structure of the Meeting:

Gathering and Fellowship

Gather and enjoy a meal or snack as you get ready for the Bible Study.

Opening

Ice Breaker question

Bible Study

- **Praise and Worship**
- **Scripture Reading:** There is always a specific Bible text for each study.
- **Notes:** Each study includes background material to help you better understand the text.
- **Open-ended subjective questions:** Questions for which there is no wrong answer. Instead, these questions will hopefully help each participant to think about their life in light of God's love and our calling.

Prayer

Specific prayers related to the study

Additional material

New this year, additional material: songs for worship and videos that can help expand your study.

Believe, Belong, Bless

In this quarter's material, we have questions that focus on one of three areas of a balanced Christian life – They're pointed out by one of the three words: Believe, Belong and Bless.

November 2017

Psalms the Hymn Book of the Bible

Psalm of Praise

Psalm 104

Ice Breaker: What is your favorite Praise Song, Hymn or Song on the radio?

Read: Psalm 104 – Responsively (Pick a leader and then read the Psalm with the leader reading the 1st Part of the verse aloud and the rest of the group responding with the second part of the verse.)

The Psalms were the ancient hymns and prayers that Israel used when worshiping in the temple. It is a Jewish book, a Christian book, a prayer book and a hymn book. It was Martin Luther's favorite book. He explains why, "The Psalter might well be called a little Bible. In it, it comprehends most beautifully and briefly everything that is in the entire Bible." He also called it "a really find handbook." The book of Psalms has a long and rich tradition in the spirituality of Christians. This is true from the very beginning of the Church. The New Testament is filled with quotes out of the Book of Psalms. In fact, the most oft quoted Old Testament verse is Psalm 118. It was quoted in three of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark & Luke), The Book of Acts, and 1 Peter. As we study various Psalms over the next several months we will discover the full range of human emotion, as well as the deep and honest faith of those who originally penned these prayers and hymns.

Notes:

- There are five sections in the book of Psalms:
 - Book 1 – Psalms 1-41

- Book 2 – Psalms 42-72
- Book 3 – Psalms 73-89
- Book 4 – Psalms 90-106
- Book 5 – Psalms 107-150
- The five-book structure in Psalms matches the five books in the Torah, the first five books of the Bible.
- There are two major types Psalms: Praise/Thanksgiving and Laments
- Psalm 104 is a Psalm of Praise. It is closely connected with Psalm 103.
 - They are next to each other at the end of book 4.
 - They both begin and end with the phrase “Praise the Lord my soul.
 - Psalm 103 focuses on the beauty of the covenant God has with his people.
 - Psalm 104 focus on the beauty of creation and has echoes of Genesis 1.

Questions:

- 1) Do you like being outdoors, why or why not?
 - a) If yes, what do you like to do?
- 2) Have you ever been awe struck by something in creation (it doesn't have to be outdoors it can be kids, pets, science project)?
 - a) What was your response?
- 3) For you, what does creation tell you about the Creator? [Believe](#)
- 4) For you, what questions does creation raise about the Creator? [Believe](#)

Prayer:

Pray for the victims of natural disasters: earthquakes, hurricanes etc. Pray for our mission team going to Houston this summer. Pray for quilt ministry that often sends quilts into natural disaster areas. Pray for Shelter Box an organization

that provides temporary housing after a disaster. This is often the organization that we give money to when we want to help victims of a certain disaster.

Additional Resources

- This YouTube is based on the 104 Psalm:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8lpq5c_EcDU
- Prager U video how creation science points to God
<https://www.prageru.com/courses/religionphilosophy/does-science-argue-or-against-god>

December 2017

Psalms the Hymn Book of the Bible

Psalm of Lament

Psalm 22

Ice Breaker: Do you like scary movies, why or why not?

Read: Psalm 22 – Responsively by verse (Pick a leader and then read the Psalm with the leader reading the 1st verse aloud and the rest of the group responding with the 2nd verse, continue to the end of the Psalm.)

Listen to this video on the book of Psalms:

https://www.google.com/search?q=Bible+Project+psalms&rlz=1C5CHFA_enUS710US711&oq=Bible+pro&aqs=chrome.2.69i57j69i59l2.4715j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

Notes:

- There are five sections in the book of Psalms:
 - Book 1 – Psalms 1-41
 - Book 2 – Psalms 42-72
 - Book 3 – Psalms 73-89
 - Book 4 – Psalms 90-106
 - Book 5 – Psalms 107-150
- The five-book structure in Psalms matches the five books in the Torah, the first five books in the Old Testament.
- There are two major types of Psalms: Praise/Thanksgiving and Lament.
- Psalm 22 is a Lament that paints a very scary picture.
- The early church read the 22nd Psalm as a prophetic that described the death of Jesus.
- According to both Matthew and Mark, Jesus cries out from the cross the opening line of the Psalm 22.

Questions:

- 1) How do you cope with pain?
- 2) Has there been a time in your life that you have had a hard time praying?
- 3) The opening verse of the 22nd Psalm is “ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?” Have you ever felt that way?
 - a) If you felt that way, did you pray? How?
- 4) Are there people who you think need our prayer because they feel abandoned by God? How can we pray for them? How can we support them in other ways? **Belong**

Prayer:

Pray for the persecuted church, homeless families, those who grieve and others who are feeling hopeless.

Additional Resources

1. You might want to use worthy is the lamb as worship before the study. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMsihDoX3uM>

January 2018

Psalms the Hymn Book of the Bible Psalm of Thanksgiving Psalm 138

Ice Breaker: How do you celebrate Thanksgiving?

Read: Psalm 138

Another way of looking at the Psalms is to categorize them into three areas. There are Psalms of orientation (Life is Good/God is good.) Psalm 104 is a good example of this type of Psalm. There are Psalms of disorientation (life stinks, where is God?) Psalm 22 is an excellent example of this type of Psalm. Finally, Psalms of re-orientation (life is good again because God brought me through.) Psalm 138 is a good example of this kind of Psalm. As you read the Psalms, you realize that just about every human emotion is brought before God in prayer and in praise, all with the understanding that God will hear the Psalmist and respond.

Notes:

- Psalm 138 is a Psalm of Thanksgiving.
- Psalm 138 is the mirror opposite of the Lament Psalm in structure.
 - The Lament Psalm is “God you need to help – I will trust”
 - The Thanksgiving Psalm is “God you have helped – I give you praise”
- Psalm 138 is a good definition of thanksgiving.

Questions:

- 1) What do you have to be thankful for? Make a list with your group.
- 2) How do you express thanks to God?
 - a) Brainstorm what are some other ways to express thanks.

- 3) Is there someone that you know that you can **bless** as a way to say thank you to God? **Bless**
- 4) How does God preserve your life in times of trouble?
- 5) If you were asked to speak at the UN about God what would you tell them? How can you share that important truth to others in your life?

Prayer:

Pray for our world leaders, that they may acknowledge Jesus as king.

Additional Resources

2. A modern-day Psalmist is Bono of U2. This YouTube is 2 of his songs. The second one is based on Psalm 40 another Psalm of Thanksgiving. The song is over at 7:11
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEV-Y3b_hvw
3. This YouTube is a discussion between Eugene Peterson – Theologian, Author of The Message a paraphrase of the Bible. This video is twenty minute long.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-l40S5e90KY>