



# **GROWING THROUGH OUR CHALLENGES**

A STUDY OF THE PSALMS

# WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE PSALMS?

- A collection of the inspired songs and prayers of devout people over several centuries, that have encouraged believers through the ages.
  - Poetry – Vivid imagery; Hebrew parallelism, “saying the same thing (or almost) twice”; artistic; stylized; some were sung.
  - Wide range of circumstances and emotions
  - Authors: David, Asaph, Sons of Korah, Moses, Solomon, and others, many unknown.
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## **5 BOOKS IN THE PSALMS**

**Book 1: Psalms 1-41 (Genesis – sin and redemption)**

**Book 2: Psalm 42-71 (Exodus – salvation and deliverance)**

**Book 3: Psalm 73-89 (Leviticus - holiness)**

**Book 4: Psalm 90-106 (Numbers – the world around us)**

**Book 5: Psalm 107-150 (Deuteronomy – the Word and Worship)**



# MAJOR THEMES OF THE PSALMS

Praise and the greatness of God

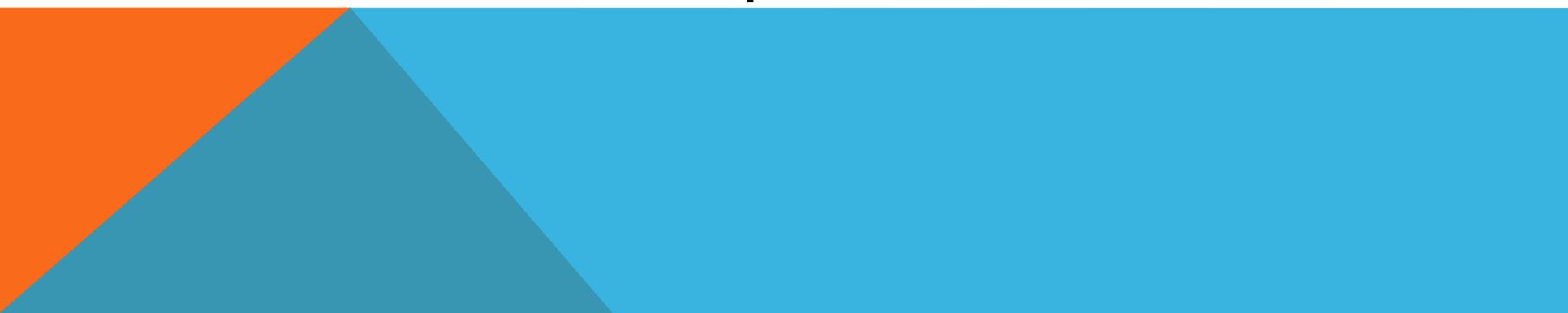
God's power and sovereignty

Forgiveness of our sins

Gratitude and thanksgiving

Trust and the benefit of faith in God

The truth that: We can come to God in any situation or spiritual condition and pour out our souls to Him and receive from Him the help we need.





**TODAY: GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR  
SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

PSALM 1

# WHAT IS GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH?

- To break the influences of the world in your life
  - To create in you a hunger for the things of God
  - To fill you with hope and expectation for the future
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# PSALM 1

Blessed is the one

who does not walk in step with the wicked  
or stand in the way that sinners take  
or sit in the company of mockers,  
<sup>2</sup> but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and who meditates on his law day and  
night.

<sup>3</sup> That person is like a tree planted by streams  
of water,

which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither—  
whatever they do prospers.

# PSALM 1, CONTINUED

<sup>4</sup> Not so the wicked!

They are like chaff  
that the wind blows away.

<sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the  
judgment,

nor sinners in the assembly of the  
righteous.

<sup>6</sup> For the LORD watches over the way of the  
righteous,

but the way of the wicked leads to  
destruction.

# 1. BREAKING WORLDLY INFLUENCE

- Notice the “de-gression” described
  - Walk in the counsel of the wicked – considering their ideas
  - Stand in the way of sinners – following their actions
  - Sit in the seat of the mockers – joining their number
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# OUR OPERATING SYSTEM:



**The Natural Person is  
spiritually dead**

**At salvation God's Spirit  
enters into our spirit,  
making us spiritually  
alive**

**Our soul (mind,  
emotions, and will) is a  
battle ground between  
the Spirit and the world  
and our fallen nature**

# HOW WE LEARN AND GROW

1. Structured systematized learning
2. The inspiring influence of others
3. Reacting to the circumstances we find ourselves in

We never really learn anything until we need to know it...

So spiritual growth is often predicated by something that creates a personal need in our lives

The conscious effort to avoid the world's ways of thinking is an essential discipline for spiritual growth

**“All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, comes not from the Father but out of the world” (1 John 2:16)**

## **IF...THEN**

**If we only learn structured learning, then we will not be prepared to face spontaneous temptations.**

**If we take our children to church but do not live out the faith at home, then we set them up for spiritual failure.**

**If we find spiritual heroes and learn to trust in God in surprising and difficult situations, then we will be growing as God planned.**

**If we meditate on the Word of God and fellowship daily with His Spirit, then we safeguard our souls from spiritual danger and prepare ourselves to meet temptation.**

## 2. CREATING HUNGER FOR GOD

**“His delight is in the law of the LORD and on his law he meditates day and night.”**

- **A hunger for the Lordship of Christ**
  - **A hunger for the truth of His Word**
  - **A hunger for prayer, both the discipline and privilege**
  - **A hunger for the community of faith – the law could only be fulfilled in a community.**
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# THE LIFE GOD CULTIVATES

- “Like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season” – reference to cultivation in a dry land.
  - Hears God’s voice amid worldly noise
  - Follows Christ when the crowd is going in the opposite direction
  - Finds life amid death, hope amid despair
  - Joy amid cynicism, peace amid conflict
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# THE EXAMPLE OF DAVID



God chose David ...from tending the sheep, to be shepherd of his people... (Psa 78:71)

“Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart” (1 Sam 16:7)

David's inner life with God prepared him to serve and follow

### 3. FILLING US WITH FUTURE HOPE

- The Wicked degress
  - Blown around, away, Ungrounded (walk)
  - Will not endure the tests, cannot stand in judgment (stand)
  - Will not sit in the assembly of the righteous (sit)
  - The Righteous progress
  - Grounded in the truth, no longer “shopping”
  - He stands and prospers in difficult times, for his concern is God’s will
  - He sits by grace among the elite.
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# **HOW CAN WE PROGRESS SPIRITUALLY?**

**Be connected to the nourishing Word of God and fellowship with His Spirit. Do not depend only upon formal learning, but learn to react in the Spirit, preparing for the unexpected.**

**Avoid the influences of the world**

**Expect to endure the dry times of life – they will come and go**

**Have a vision for your life that is beyond yourself, and your personal interests alone. Care about God first, and then about others, about their happiness and success. Consider what God can do with your life to help and bless others. Invest in His Work.**

# A LESSON FROM OCEAN WAVES



Though on the earth, they form on the basis of the moon's gravitational pull.

“My prayer is not that you would take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:15-17).

# WHAT PREVENTS SPIRITUAL SUCCESS?

- What prevents people from becoming all that they can become in Christ? Four things can be derived from this text
  - An absence of proper spiritual and emotional nourishment
  - Impatience with the seasons of life
  - Withering during adverse circumstances
  - Living solely for selfish goals
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