

BRBC Bible Study Series – Psalms

Bible Study #1

Psalm 1: Praying for a Closer Walk with God

Main Passage

Psalm 1

Purpose of the Study

To explore what it means to walk closely with God. Psalm 1 contrasts two ways of life—the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked—and calls us to delight in God's Word, resist influences that draw us away from Him, and become fruitful people who are firmly rooted in God.

Opening Prayer

“Lord, draw us closer to You. Help us to delight in Your Word, to recognise the paths that lead us away from You, and to become people whose lives bear fruit for Your glory. Amen.”

1. Read the Passage

Read Psalm 1 slowly, perhaps twice.

As you read, notice the contrast between:

- The blessed person and the wicked.
- Walking, standing and sitting.
- The counsel of the wicked and the law of the Lord.
- The tree planted by streams of water and the chaff blown away by the wind.
- The two different destinations.

Questions

- What words or phrases particularly stand out to you?
- What does Psalm 1 mean by being "blessed"?
- Why do you think the Psalm begins with what the righteous person avoids?
- What does this Psalm suggest about the direction of our lives?

2. Context and Summary

Psalm 1 acts as a doorway into the whole Psalter. Before we learn how to pray, praise, lament or worship, we are confronted with a fundamental question:

Which way are we walking?

The Psalm describes a person whose life is increasingly shaped by God's Word. They do not merely read God's law occasionally; they delight in it and meditate upon it continually.

The imagery moves from **walking** with the wicked, to **standing** in their way, to **sitting** among them. It pictures a gradual movement away from God.

By contrast, the righteous person is like a tree planted beside streams of water—rooted, nourished and fruitful.

OT Connections

- Deuteronomy 6:4-9 – God's Word shaping everyday life.
- Joshua 1:7-8 – Meditating on God's law.
- Psalm 19:7-11 – The goodness of God's Word.
- Psalm 119:9-16 – Keeping one's way pure through God's Word.
- Jeremiah 17:7-8 – The person who trusts in the Lord is like a tree planted by water.

NT Connections

- Matthew 7:13-14 – The two ways and two destinations.
- Matthew 7:24-27 – Building life upon Jesus' words.
- John 15:1-8 – Abiding in Christ and bearing fruit.
- Romans 12:1-2 – Refusing conformity to the world.
- Colossians 2:6-7 – Being rooted and built up in Christ.

Questions

- What influences most strongly shape your thinking and choices?
- What does it mean practically to "delight" in God's Word?
- What helps us become spiritually rooted?
- What fruit should a life rooted in Christ produce?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A Closer Walk Begins with a Choice

Psalm 1 presents discipleship as a deliberate choice about the direction of our lives.

We cannot continually absorb the values of the world without being influenced by them.

Augustine wrote:

"You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You."

God's Word Nourishes Us

The righteous person meditates on God's law "day and night". This is not simply academic Bible study. It means allowing God's Word to occupy our thoughts, shape our decisions and form our character.

John Wesley wrote:

"I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air."

His point was that life is brief and therefore should be lived intentionally before God.

Fruitfulness Comes from Rootedness

The tree does not strain to manufacture fruit. It bears fruit because it is planted beside a constant source of nourishment.

Jesus develops the same picture in John 15. Fruitfulness comes from remaining in Him.

Questions

- Is your walk with God becoming closer or more distant?
- What currently nourishes your spiritual life?
- What needs to be removed from your life?
- What evidence of spiritual fruit can you see?
- Where might God be calling you to put down deeper roots?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

- Are we becoming a church deeply rooted in Scripture and prayer?
- Are we helping one another walk closely with Christ?
- Are our ministries producing spiritual fruit rather than simply activity?
- Are we creating environments where people can grow as healthy disciples?
- What qualities in a church leader should be present for that person to lead the church in God's ways?

Challenge

A healthy church is not simply busy; it is **rooted**.

If BRBC is deeply rooted in Christ, prayer and Scripture, then its ministry should naturally become increasingly fruitful.

Questions

- What would a "Psalm 1 church" look like?
- How can we help new believers develop deep roots?
- What influences might quietly weaken our spiritual life?
- Where does BRBC need to become more fruitful?
- What should be the priorities in those who seek to lead God's people?

5. Practical Action

- Begin each day this week by reading Psalm 1.
- Choose one verse to meditate upon throughout the day.
- Identify one influence that is drawing you away from Christ and reduce it.
- Establish or strengthen a regular Bible-reading pattern.
- Ask another Christian to pray with you about your walk with God.

Areas for Prayer

- A closer personal walk with God.
- Spiritual growth within BRBC.
- New and young believers.
- Families and friendships.
- Fruitfulness in local outreach.
- Christians throughout the world seeking to remain faithful.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Psalm 1:3

"That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season."

Final Prayer

"Lord, plant us deeply in You. Help us delight in Your Word, resist the paths that draw us away from You, and become fruitful disciples of Jesus. May Brighton Road Baptist Church be deeply rooted in Christ and fruitful in serving our community and proclaiming the gospel. May we appoint to leadership those who hold faithfully to your word. Amen."

BRBC Bible Study Series – Psalms

Bible Study #2

Psalm 3: Praying Whilst Afraid

Main Passage

Psalm 3

Purpose of the Study

To explore how David prays when surrounded by fear, opposition and apparent danger. Psalm 3 teaches us that faith does not mean pretending we are not afraid; it means bringing our fear honestly to God and learning to trust Him in the midst of it.

Opening Prayer

“Lord, when we are afraid, teach us to turn towards You rather than away from You. Help us to know that You are our shield, our glory and the One who sustains us. Amen.”

1. Read the Passage

Read Psalm 3 slowly.

Notice:

- David's enemies.
- His honest description of his fear.
- His declaration of God's protection.
- The movement from distress to trust.
- The final request for God's salvation.

Questions

- What is David afraid of?
- Does David hide his fear from God?
- What changes as the Psalm progresses?
- Which verse would you most naturally pray in a time of fear?

2. Context and Summary

The heading connects Psalm 3 with David's flight from his son Absalom. David is surrounded by enemies and experiencing an intensely personal crisis.

Yet the Psalm is not simply a record of fear. It is a prayer journey:

Trouble → Prayer → Trust → Rest → Confidence.

David begins by describing the growing number of his enemies. Others even say that God will not save him.

But David responds:

"But you, Lord, are a shield around me."

Fear has not disappeared, but David's understanding of God has become greater than his fear.

OT Connections

- Psalm 27:1-3 – "The Lord is my light and my salvation."
- Psalm 46:1-3 – God our refuge and strength.
- Psalm 56:3-4 – "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you."
- Isaiah 41:10 – Do not fear, for God is with you.

- 1 Samuel 30 – David strengthens himself in the Lord.

NT Connections

- Matthew 8:23-27 – Jesus calms the storm.
- Matthew 14:22-33 – Jesus meets the disciples in their fear.
- John 14:27 – Christ's peace.
- Philippians 4:6-7 – Prayer replacing anxiety with God's peace.
- 2 Timothy 1:7 – God gives a spirit of power, love and self-discipline.

Questions

- What fears do people commonly carry?
- What makes a 'fear' healthy and helpful or debilitating and harmful?
- How do fears shape the way in which we live?
- Why is it sometimes difficult to bring fear honestly to God?
- How does knowing God's character change the way we face fear?
- What difference does prayer make even when circumstances do not immediately change?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

Faith Does Not Deny Fear

David does not say, "There is nothing to fear."

He says, in effect, "There is much to fear—but God is greater."

Martin Luther wrote:

"Pray, and let God worry."

Prayer transfers the burden from our shoulders into God's hands.

God Is Our Shield

David calls God "a shield around me". His confidence rests not in his own strength but in God's protection.

This does not promise that believers will never suffer. Rather, it assures us that God remains present and sovereign even in suffering.

David Can Sleep

One of the most remarkable statements comes in verse 5:

"I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the Lord sustains me."

Fear had not necessarily disappeared, but David could rest because he trusted the One who watched over him.

Questions

- What keeps you awake at night?
- What would it mean to place that fear deliberately into God's hands?
- Have you experienced God's sustaining presence during a difficult season?
- How can we help fearful people experience the peace of Christ?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

- Is BRBC a place where people can honestly admit their fears? If so, how? If not, why?
- Are there collective fears that we have a church that are restricting or preventing health and growth?
- Do we pray for one another when people are anxious or afraid?
- Are we known for bringing fear to God rather than spreading fear among ourselves?

Challenge

The church should be a community where fear is met with **prayer, presence and hope**.

Questions

- How can we support people experiencing fear, anxiety or crisis?
- What fears might our community be carrying?
- How can BRBC demonstrate the peace of Christ in Horsham?

5. Practical Action

- Name one fear honestly before God.
- Pray Psalm 3 slowly each morning.
- Contact someone who may be facing a difficult situation.
- Replace one anxious thought with a specific prayer.
- Before going to sleep, consciously entrust tomorrow to God.

Areas for Prayer

- Individuals facing fear or uncertainty.
- Families under pressure.
- People experiencing war and persecution.
- Those facing illness, bereavement or financial difficulty.
- Peace and confidence within BRBC.
- BRBC's future ministry and mission and the calling and equipping of leaders who have a healthy fear of God.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Psalm 3:3

"But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high."

Final Prayer

"Lord, You know our fears before we speak them. Teach us to bring them honestly to You. Be our shield, our glory and the One who lifts our heads. Help us sleep in peace because we know You sustain us. Amen."

BRBC Bible Study Series – Psalms

Bible Study #3

Psalm 43: Praying for Hope

Main Passages

Psalm 43; 2 Corinthians 1:3-11

Purpose of the Study

To explore how we pray when we feel discouraged, rejected, confused or spiritually distant from God. Psalm 43 shows us how to bring darkness into God's presence and deliberately choose hope, while 2 Corinthians 1 shows how God comforts us so that we can comfort others.

Opening Prayer

"God of hope, meet us in our discouragement. Shine Your light into our darkness, lead us by Your truth, and restore our hope in You. Amen."

1. Read the Passage

Read Psalm 43 and then 2 Corinthians 1:3-11.

Notice the repeated language of:

- God's light.
- God's truth.
- God's holy presence.
- Hope in God.
- Comfort in suffering.

Questions

- What circumstances appear to be troubling the Psalmist?
- Why does he ask God to "send me your light and your faithful care"?
- What is it about 'light' that is analogous to 'hope'?
- What does the repeated question "Why, my soul, are you downcast?" reveal?
- What does Paul teach about God's comfort?

2. Context and Summary

Psalm 43 continues the themes of Psalm 42. The writer feels rejected, oppressed and distant from God. Yet instead of allowing his feelings to have the final word, he speaks to his own soul:

"Put your hope in God."

The Psalm contains a movement from **distress** → **prayer** → **God's presence** → **hope**.

The Psalmist does not manufacture hope. He returns to God as the source of hope.

Paul makes a similar point in 2 Corinthians 1. God is described as:

"the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort."

Paul's suffering becomes an opportunity to experience God's comfort and then share that comfort with others.

OT Connections

- Psalm 27:1 – God as light and salvation.
- Psalm 42:5 – Hope in God amid discouragement.
- Psalm 119:105 – God's Word as light.
- Isaiah 40:28-31 – Renewed strength for those who hope in God.
- Lamentations 3:21-24 – Hope because of God's faithfulness.

NT Connections

- John 8:12 – Jesus, the light of the world.
- Romans 5:1-5 – Hope that does not put us to shame.
- Romans 15:13 – God fills believers with hope.
- 2 Corinthians 1:3-11 – God comforts us in suffering.
- 1 Peter 1:3-9 – A living hope through Christ's resurrection.

Questions

- Where do you currently need God's light and truth?
- What difference does Christian hope make during suffering?
- How can suffering become an opportunity to comfort others?
- Why is Christian hope different from wishful thinking?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

Hope Is a Decision to Look to God

The Psalmist does not deny his feelings. He acknowledges them, but refuses to let them have the final word.

C.S. Lewis wrote:

"There are far, far better things ahead than any we leave behind."

Christian hope is grounded in God's character and promises rather than circumstances.

Jesus Is Our Light

The Psalmist asks God to send His light and truth.

Jesus later declares:

"I am the light of the world."

The ultimate answer to spiritual darkness is not simply better circumstances but Christ Himself.

God Comforts Us to Make Us Comforters

Paul's suffering does not make him useless. God uses what he has experienced to equip him to minister to others.

John Chrysostom wrote:

"Affliction is a school of virtue."

Questions

- What circumstances most threaten your hope?
- Where do you need Christ's light and how will you seek to receive it?
- Who might God be asking you to encourage?
- How could your experience of suffering help someone else?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

- Are we a community that gives hope?
- Do people encounter Christ's light when they encounter us?
- Are we attentive to those who are discouraged or struggling?
- Do we create space for honest lament as well as joyful praise?
- How should we respond to complaining, moaning and grumbling?

Challenge

A hopeful church can become a source of hope to an increasingly discouraged community.

Questions

- Who in our local community needs encouragement?
- How could BRBC become more intentional about offering Christian hope?
- How can we support one another through seasons of discouragement?

5. Practical Action

- Pray Psalm 43 each morning this week.
- Write down three promises of God that give you hope.
- Contact someone who needs encouragement.
- Ask God to show you someone who needs comfort.
- Share your testimony of God's faithfulness with another person.

Areas for Prayer

- Those experiencing discouragement or loneliness.
- Families under pressure.
- People without hope.
- BRBC's pastoral ministry.
- The work of local organisations such as Horsham Matters, Horsham Debt Advice Service, Turning Tides and the local Samaritans branch.
- Those suffering through war, poverty and persecution.
- Opportunities to share the hope of Christ.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Psalm 43:5

"Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God."

Final Prayer

"God of hope, meet us in our darkness. Send Your light and truth, lead us into Your presence, and restore our hope. Make us people who carry Your comfort to those who are hurting. May Brighton Road Baptist Church become a community of hope in Jesus Christ. Amen."

BRBC Bible Study Series – Psalms

Bible Study #4

Psalm 23: Praying for the Lord's Leading in Our Lives

Main Passage: Psalm 23

Key New Testament Passage: John 10:1–18

Purpose of the Study

To discover what it means to trust God as our Shepherd and to pray for His leading in every area of life - especially when we cannot see the way ahead.

Opening Prayer

Lord, You are our Shepherd. Help us to hear Your voice, trust Your presence and follow where You lead. Give us open hearts as we study Your Word. Amen.

1. Read the Passage

Read Psalm 23 together, preferably twice.

As you read, look for what the Shepherd provides, does, gives and promises.

Questions

- What words or phrases stand out to you?
- What does this Psalm tell us about God?
- Where do you see provision, guidance, protection and presence?
- Why do you think the Psalm moves from talking about God as “he” to speaking directly to God as “you” in verses 4–5?

2. Context and Summary

David knew what it meant to be a shepherd. He understood that sheep need someone to provide for them, protect them and lead them.

Psalm 23 uses this picture to describe our relationship with God.

The Lord does not simply give directions from a distance. He goes with His people.

The Psalm moves through different experiences:

Provision → Rest → Restoration → Guidance → Valley → Protection → Abundance → Home

Notice that the Shepherd's leading includes both green pastures and dark valleys.

God's leading does not mean that we will never experience difficulty. It means that we never face it alone.

The Old Testament repeatedly describes God as Shepherd:

- Genesis 48:15 – God who has shepherded Jacob throughout his life.
- Psalm 78:52–53 – God leads His people like a flock.
- Psalm 25:4–5 – “Show me your ways, LORD.”
- Isaiah 40:11 – God gathers, carries and gently leads His people.
- Ezekiel 34:11–16 – God promises to seek, gather, feed and shepherd His people.

Jesus brings this imagery to its fulfilment.

Read John 10:11–18.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep, lays down His life for them and leads them.

Questions

- What does Psalm 23 teach us about the kind of Shepherd God is?
- What does John 10 add to our understanding?
- What does it mean in practice to hear Jesus' voice and follow Him?
- Why is God's presence sometimes more important than knowing what will happen next?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. The Shepherd provides

“I lack nothing.”

God knows what His people need. This does not mean Christians receive everything they want. It means we can trust God's fatherly provision.

Question: Where do you most need to trust God's provision at present?

B. The Shepherd restores

“He refreshes my soul.”

Sometimes God's leading means moving forward. Sometimes it means **stopping and being restored**.

Our culture often tells us to keep going. The Shepherd knows when His sheep need rest.

Question: Is there an area of your life where you need God's restoration rather than simply another instruction?

C. The Shepherd leads

“He guides me along the right paths.”

God's guidance is never separated from God's Word.

We should therefore test what we believe God is saying against Scripture, prayer and wise Christian counsel.

God's leading will never require us to disobey God's Word.

Question: What decision or situation currently needs God's direction?

D. The Shepherd is present in the valley

“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.”

Notice: through, not permanently in.

And notice what changes. David begins by speaking about God: “He guides me...”

But in the valley he says: “You are with me.”

The deepest comfort is not simply that God will eventually change our circumstances. It is that God is present within them.

Question: How does God's presence change the way we face difficult circumstances?

E. The Shepherd brings us home

The Psalm ends with:

"I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."

The destination of God's leading is ultimately God Himself.

Percy Ainsworth said "This busy world will surge about you with the tread of restless feet and the throb of restless hearts... But you may in Christ find rest for your soul."

We are not simply looking for God's guidance so that our lives work out better. We are learning to follow God because He is our Shepherd.

Questions

- Which aspect of the Shepherd's care do you most need today?
- What might God be asking you to trust Him with?
- Are there times when we want God's guidance but resist God's authority?
- What helps us distinguish God's leading from our own desires?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

A church can become busy doing good things while failing to ask: "**Lord, where are You leading us?**"

We need to pray before planning, listen before deciding and seek God's direction rather than simply asking Him to bless our plans.

This applies to our worship, discipleship, evangelism, pastoral ministry, leadership and future direction.

Jesus says: "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

The challenge for BRBC is therefore not simply to **do more**, but to **listen better and follow faithfully**.

Challenge

Ask together:

Are we asking God to lead us, or are we asking God to bless the direction we have already chosen?

Questions

- Where does BRBC particularly need God's guidance at present?
- How can we become better at listening to God together?
- What might it look like for us to be a church that genuinely follows the Good Shepherd?
- How can we encourage one another to recognise and follow Jesus' voice?

5. Practical Action

During the coming week:

- Pray Psalm 23 each day, slowly and personally.

- Bring one important decision to God and deliberately surrender your preferred outcome.
- Ask: "Lord, what do You want me to do?"
- Test any perceived guidance against Scripture.
- Seek wise Christian counsel where appropriate.
- Spend some time in silence before God rather than doing all the talking.
- Encourage someone who is currently walking through a "dark valley".
- Read John 10:1–18 and thank Jesus for being your Good Shepherd.

Areas for Prayer

- For guidance, wisdom, obedience, restoration and trust.
- For BRBC's leaders and members to hear God's voice, follow His Word, discern His direction and walk together in unity.
- For those facing decisions, uncertainty, grief, illness or major change.
- For people who feel lost or without direction; for those affected by war, persecution, poverty and displacement; and for Christians seeking to follow Christ faithfully in difficult circumstances.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Read slowly: "He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake." (Psalm 23:3)

Then sit quietly for a moment and ask:

"Lord, where are You leading me?"

Final Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are our Good Shepherd. Thank You that You know us, love us and gave Your life for us. Forgive us for the times when we have gone our own way and then asked You to bless our decisions. Teach us to hear Your voice and follow You.

Restore us when we are weary. Guide us when we are uncertain. Correct us when we wander. Give us courage when we walk through dark valleys, remembering that You are with us.

Lead our families, our church and our community. Give BRBC wisdom to know where You are leading and courage to follow.

Help us not simply to ask, "What do we want to do?" but: "Lord, what are You saying, and will we follow?"

May our lives bring honour to You until the day we dwell with You for ever. Amen.

BRBC Bible Study Series – Psalms

Bible Study #5

Psalm 130: Praying for Forgiveness

Main Passage: Psalm 130

Key New Testament Passage: Romans 8:1–11

Purpose of the Study

Psalm 130 is a prayer from the depths. It moves from guilt and waiting to forgiveness, hope and confidence in God.

This study explores what it means to come honestly before God, receive His forgiveness and live in the freedom that is found in Christ.

Opening Prayer

Lord God, we come honestly before You. Search our hearts, reveal what needs to change and help us to receive Your mercy. Thank You that through Jesus there is forgiveness and no condemnation for those who belong to Him. Amen.

1. Read the Passage

Read Psalm 130 slowly, perhaps twice.

Notice the movement:

The depths → Crying to God → Waiting → Hope → Forgiveness → Redemption

Questions

- What do you think the Psalmist means by “the depths”?
- What does he ask God to do?
- What does verse 3 teach us about human sinfulness?
- What gives the Psalmist hope?
- What does verse 4 tell us about the purpose of God's forgiveness?

2. Context and Summary

Psalm 130 is one of the Songs of Ascents (Psalms 120–134). It is a prayer from someone who knows his need of God.

The Psalmist does not hide his sin or pretend that everything is fine. He cries: “If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?”

The answer is clear: none of us could stand.

Yet the Psalm does not end in despair: “But with you there is forgiveness.” Forgiveness is possible because God is merciful.

The Psalmist therefore waits for the Lord “more than watchmen wait for the morning”.

His hope is not based upon his own goodness. It rests upon God's unfailing love and full redemption.

The New Testament reveals the fullest answer to this hope in Jesus Christ.

OT Connections

- Exodus 34:6–7 – God is compassionate, gracious and forgiving.

- Psalm 32:1–5 – blessing comes through confessed and forgiven sin.
- Psalm 51:1–12 – David's prayer for cleansing and restoration.
- Isaiah 1:18 – God offers cleansing from sin.
- Isaiah 53:5–6 – the suffering servant bears our sin.
- Micah 7:18–19 – God delights in mercy and casts sins into the depths.

NT Connections

Read Romans 8:1–11.

- Romans 3:23–24 – all have sinned, but are justified through Christ.
- 1 John 1:8–9 – confession brings God's forgiveness and cleansing.
- Ephesians 1:7 – redemption and forgiveness are found in Christ.
- Hebrews 9:14 – Christ cleanses our consciences.
- Hebrews 10:19–22 – because of Jesus, we can approach God with confidence.

Psalm 130 asks, “Who could stand?”

Romans 8 answers with the gospel: Those who are in Christ need no longer stand condemned.

Questions

- How does Psalm 130 balance the seriousness of sin with the greatness of God's mercy?
- Why is confession important if God already knows our sins?
- What difference does Romans 8:1 make to someone who feels condemned?
- How is Christian forgiveness different from saying our sin does not matter?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. We need forgiveness

Psalm 130 does not minimise sin. “If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?”

Christianity begins by recognising our need for grace.

Question: What happens when we excuse, hide or minimise sin instead of bringing it to God?

B. God is ready to forgive

“With you there is forgiveness.”

Forgiveness is not something we persuade a reluctant God to give. God's mercy flows from His character.

The cross shows the cost of forgiveness: Jesus bore our sin so that we could be reconciled to God.

Augustine wrote: “The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works.”

Confession is not spiritual defeat. It is the doorway to restoration.

C. Forgiveness produces reverence

Psalm 130:4 “But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you.”

Forgiveness does not make sin unimportant.

It produces gratitude, humility and holy fear.

Grace does not give us permission to remain unchanged. Grace gives us freedom to become changed.

D. Forgiveness produces hope

The Psalmist waits for God “more than watchmen wait for the morning”.

Waiting is not passive resignation. It is confident expectation. We can wait because God is faithful.

Romans 8 takes this hope further: there is “now no condemnation” for those who are in Christ Jesus.

John Wesley emphasised the transforming nature of grace: God's grace not only pardons sinners but begins to make them holy.

Questions

- Do you find it easier to believe that God forgives others than that He forgives you?
- What is the difference between guilt that leads us to repentance and condemnation that drives us away from God?
- How should knowing we are forgiven affect the way we treat other people?
- Is there something you need to confess and leave with God rather than continually carrying it?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

A healthy church should be a place where sin is taken seriously but grace is even more clearly proclaimed.

We need both truth and mercy.

People should be able to hear: “Sin matters.”

But also: “Jesus forgives.”

And: “There is a way back.”

The Church must not become a place where people hide their failures because they fear condemnation. Neither should it become a place where sin is ignored.

The gospel calls us to repentance, forgiveness, restoration and transformed living.

Challenge

Ask: Are we known more for what we condemn, or for the grace and restoration we offer in Christ?

And personally: Is there anything I need to bring honestly before God today?

Questions

- How can BRBC become a place where people experience both biblical holiness and gracious forgiveness?

- How should we respond when a Christian genuinely repents after failure?
- Are there people we need to forgive?
- How can we proclaim forgiveness to people who feel too ashamed to approach God?

5. Practical Action

This week:

- Pray Psalm 130 slowly.
- Confess specific sins honestly to God.
- Thank Jesus specifically for His forgiveness.
- Read Romans 8:1–11 and underline what God has done for those who are in Christ.
- If appropriate, seek reconciliation with someone you have wronged.
- Refuse to keep rehearsing forgiven sin as though Christ's cross were insufficient.
- Ask God to help you extend to others the grace you have received.

Areas for Prayer

- For repentance, assurance of forgiveness, freedom from condemnation and growth in holiness.
- For a culture of grace, truth, accountability, restoration and Christ-centred preaching in BRBC
- For broken relationships, reconciliation and people struggling with guilt or shame.
- For people who feel far from God; for prisoners, addicts, the lonely and those carrying shame; for persecuted Christians who need strength and hope.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Romans 8:1

Sit quietly and thank God for this truth: “**There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**”

Final Prayer

Father, we come from the depths to You.

We confess that we need Your mercy. Thank You that with You there is forgiveness. Thank You that Jesus carried our sin, that we can be cleansed and that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Help us to repent honestly, receive forgiveness fully and live differently because of Your grace.

Teach us to forgive others as we have been forgiven. Restore broken relationships and bring people who feel far from You back into Your presence.

Make BRBC a church where holiness is taken seriously, grace is freely offered and those who fall are helped towards restoration.

Give us hope as we wait for You and confidence in Your unfailing love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

BRBC Bible Study Series – Psalms

Bible Study #6

Psalm 150: A Prayer of Praise

Main Passage: Psalm 150

Key New Testament Passages: Ephesians 5:15–20;
Revelation 5:9–14

Purpose of the Study

Psalm 150 brings the Psalter to its great conclusion:
Praise the Lord!

It teaches us that praise is centred on God, expressed
in many ways and offered by the whole people of
God.

This study asks: Why should we praise God, where
should we praise Him, how should we praise Him and
who should praise Him?

Opening Prayer

Lord God, You are worthy of all praise. Open our eyes
to who You are and all You have done. Teach us to
praise You not only when life is easy, but in every
circumstance. Fill us with joy, gratitude and wonder as
we worship You together. Amen.

1. Read the Passage

Read Psalm 150 slowly. Notice the repeated
command: **“Praise the LORD.”**

Look for four things:

- **Where** should God be praised?
- **Why** should He be praised?
- **How** should He be praised?
- **Who** should praise Him?

Questions

- Why do you think the Psalm ends the whole
Psalter with praise?
- Answer the four questions above.

2. Context and Summary

Psalm 150 is the final Psalm and the final word of the
Psalter. It begins and ends with: “Praise the LORD.”

The Psalm gives a widening picture of praise.

Praise is offered: Where God is - in His sanctuary and
mighty heavens. Because of who God is - His mighty
acts and surpassing greatness. With many expressions
- voice, music and instruments. By everyone - “Let
everything that has breath praise the LORD.”

The Psalm does not say that praise is appropriate only
when circumstances are good. It places praise within
the whole story of Scripture. God's people praise
because God is worthy.

OT Connections

- 1 Chronicles 16:23–31 – God's people
proclaim His glory among the nations.
- Psalm 34:1–3 – praise is a way of life.
- Psalm 96:1–4 – sing to the Lord and declare
His glory among the nations.

- Psalm 103:1–5 – praise remembers benefits.
- Habakkuk 3:17–19 – praise and trust remain
possible even in difficult circumstances.

NT Connections

Read Ephesians 5:15–20. Paul connects being filled
with the Spirit with speaking through psalms, hymns
and spiritual songs and giving thanks to God.

Then read Revelation 5:9–14. Heaven is filled with
praise centred upon Jesus, the Lamb who was slain.

- Luke 19:37–40 – Jesus receives praise as King.
- Acts 16:25 – Paul and Silas praise God in
prison.
- Hebrews 13:15 – believers continually offer a
sacrifice of praise.
- 1 Peter 2:9 – God's people proclaim His
praises.

Psalm 150 points beyond Israel's worship, to the great
gathering of God's redeemed people around Christ.

Questions

- What do the Old Testament passages teach us
about praise?
- Why is praise possible even in difficult
circumstances?
- What does Ephesians 5 suggest about the
connection between the Holy Spirit and
praise?
- What does Revelation 5 show us about the
ultimate purpose of worship?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. Praise begins with God

Psalm 150 is not primarily about how we feel.

It is about who God is and what He has done.

Verse 2 gives two great reasons: “his acts” and “his
surpassing greatness.”

We praise because God is worthy.

C.S. Lewis observed that praise is closely connected
with delight: we naturally praise what we value and
enjoy.

Praise therefore helps us look away from ourselves
and towards God.

Question: What attribute of God gives you particular
reason to praise Him today?

B. Praise remembers God's mighty acts

Biblical praise is rooted in God's actions.

We remember creation, salvation, covenant,
provision, answered prayer and above all Jesus Christ
and His death and resurrection.

Praise becomes stronger when we deliberately
remember what God has done.

Question: What has God done in your life that you
should not forget?

C. Praise can take many forms

Psalm 150 mentions the trumpet, harp, lyre, tambourine, strings, pipes and cymbals.

The point is not that every Christian must use every instrument. The point is that God is worthy of wholehearted expression.

Some praise through singing. Others through instruments, prayer, testimony, giving, serving, obedience, creativity or simply grateful hearts.

John Chrysostom strongly emphasised the place of singing in Christian worship and described the gathered church as a place where believers teach and encourage one another through song.

Question: How can we make sure our praise is wholehearted rather than merely habitual?

D. Praise is possible in difficult places

Psalm 150 is easy to read after a good day. But biblical faith goes deeper. Habakkuk praised while facing devastation. Paul and Silas sang while imprisoned. Praise does not mean pretending everything is fine. It means declaring that God remains worthy even when everything is not fine.

E. Everyone is invited

The final verse says: "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD." The Psalter ends with an invitation that reaches beyond one congregation, one nation or one generation. Every breath is a gift. Every breath can become an opportunity for praise.

Questions

- What can prevent us from praising God?
- How can praise help us when we are discouraged?
- What is the difference between genuine praise and simply singing words?
- How could praise become our lifestyle?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

Psalm 150 challenges us to be a praising people. Our worship should not depend entirely upon musical style, personality, circumstances or preference. We praise because God is worthy.

Our Sunday worship should overflow into Monday - in our homes, at work, in the community and when alone.

A Spirit-filled church should be a thankful church.

A thankful church becomes a witnessing church: praise declares that Jesus is worthy to be known.

Challenge

Ask: If someone watched my life for a week, would they recognise that I have reasons to praise God?

And for BRBC: How can our praise point people beyond ourselves to Jesus?

Questions

- How could BRBC become increasingly known as a praising and thankful church?
- How can worship better involve the whole congregation?
- How can our praise become part of our witness to the wider community?
- How can we encourage one another to praise God even during difficult seasons?

5. Practical Action

This week:

- Begin each day by naming three reasons to praise God.
- Turn one familiar worship song into a personal prayer.
- When facing a difficulty, deliberately praise God for who He is, even before circumstances change.

Areas for Prayer

- For grateful hearts, joy in God, renewed worship and the ability to praise Him always.
- For Spirit-filled worship, unity, wholehearted participation, a deeper focus on Jesus rather than personal preference.
- For homes where prayer and thanksgiving become natural parts of everyday life.
- For opportunities to demonstrate the hope and joy of Christ; for Christians under persecution; and for those who have not yet heard the good news of Jesus.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Read slowly: "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD." (Psalm 150:6) Take a moment to breathe slowly. Recognise each breath is a gift from God.

Final Prayer

Lord God, we praise You because You are worthy. Thank You for who You are and for all that You have done. Thank You for creation, for Your faithfulness, for Your mercy and above all for Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

Forgive us for the times when our circumstances have become bigger in our minds than Your greatness.

Teach us to praise You in good times and difficult times, when prayers are answered quickly and when we are still waiting.

Fill us with Your Holy Spirit. Make our homes, our church and our daily lives places of praise.

May BRBC become increasingly known as a people who love Jesus, rejoice in His salvation, give thanks in all circumstances and make His goodness known.

And one day, with Your people from every nation, tribe and language, may we join the everlasting praise of heaven. Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Amen.