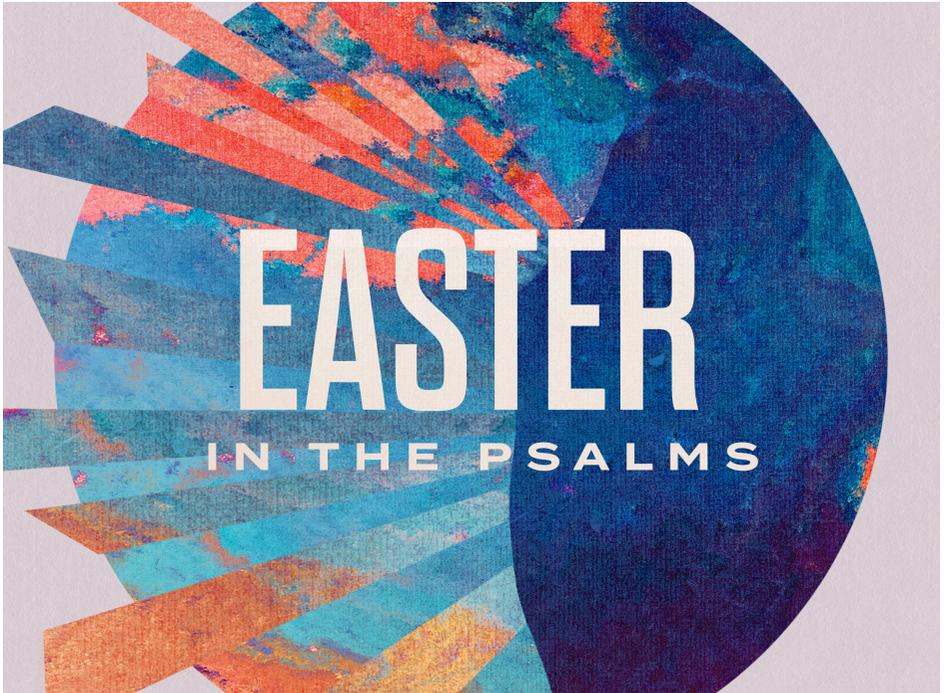


**Reading The Story of The Gospel
Through 6 Weeks In the Psalms**



A Publication of Bethany Church, Long Beach

PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR EASTER

The six-weeks prior to Easter are traditionally a time when Christians around the world prepare their hearts in remembrance of Jesus's death and resurrection. This time often includes a more intentional focus on prayer and reflection, sometimes with some form of fasting, which is a small but tangible reminder of all that Christ sacrificed on our behalf.

This Easter, our sermon series will be called "Easter in the Psalms." To go along with that series, we have prepared this devotional to help us all prepare our hearts and develop a daily discipline of Scripture reading and prayer. We invite you to join with us as we read through the Psalms, with each day of the week focusing on a different type of Psalm. The exceptions will be weeks 5-6 when we will also sprinkle in the Psalms being taught during the Easter series; those will be noted with a (*).

- Sundays: Psalms of Praise
- Mondays; Psalms of Thanksgiving
- Tuesdays: Psalms of Confession
- Wednesdays; Psalms of Lament
- Thursdays: Wisdom in Psalm 119
- Fridays: Psalms of Trust
- Saturdays: Psalms of Kingship

Each day of the week provides an opportunity to Read a Psalm, Reflect on it's themes, Respond in prayer, and Retell some of what you have read. Each day has a reading schedule for the six weeks as well as a place to make some simple notes. If you have a regular rhythm of journaling, you might want to use this alongside a journal with more space to write out your prayers.

We would love to hear about your experience through the Psalms in the coming weeks. May God bless you as He reveals more about Himself through these readings and in your time of prayer and reflection.

Pastor Ben Overby & The Bethany Church Staff



SUNDAYS

READ

Each Sunday we will reading a Psalm of Praise. These biblical hymns highlight God's character, majesty, power, and faithfulness. They celebrate His wonderful works and proclaim, with joy, the goodness of God! The Psalms of Praise encourages corporate worship by petitioning the reader to participate in praise: "Shout for joy!" or "Praise Him!" or "Let us sing for joy!" As you come upon these imperative statements, join in!

REFLECT

Take a moment to write out God's attributes as seen in the Psalm as well as some of His great works. How have you seen that attribute through your own experience?

RESPOND

Spend time in prayer. Acknowledge God's attributes and praise Him for who He is. Ask God to help you reflect on His attributes throughout the day. As we pray for the Easter season, ask God to make Himself known to many who need to know of His love, grace, mercy, sovereignty, power, and justice.

RETELL

Tell someone about the goodness of God today. It can be as simple as "God has shown His faithfulness in my life this week by..."

RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS AS YOU REFLECT ON THE READINGS

Sunday, February 22 | Psalm 8

Sunday, March 1 | Psalm 65

Sunday, March 8 | Psalm 104

Sunday, March 15 | Psalm 145

Sunday, March 22 | Psalm 24*

Sunday, March 29 | Psalm 146

Read on Sundays

Feb 22—Psalm 8

Mar 15—Psalm 145

Mar 1—Psalm 65

Mar 22—Psalm 24*

Mar 8—Psalm 104

Mar 29—Psalm 146



MONDAYS

READ

Each Monday we will reading a Psalm of Thanksgiving. These biblical songs and prayers are very similar to Psalms of Praise, but these often focus more on what God has done. These Psalms will express our thanksgiving for His deliverance, salvation, provision, protection, as well as His love for His people.

REFLECT

Take a moment to write out what the Psalmist is thankful for. Then reflect on what has God done in your life for which you can express your thanksgiving. Write it down.

RESPOND

Spend time in prayer thanking God for all He has done. Take your time and be specific. Praise Him for His working. Shout aloud or sing your praise. Be excited. God has been at work in your life! Also, as we make time to pray forward to Easter, thank God for sending Jesus. Express your thanks for His life, death, and resurrection which enables us to have life in Him.

RETELL

As you are in conversation with someone at work, tell them what you wrote down about what God has done in your life and why you are thankful.

RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS AS YOU REFLECT ON THE READINGS

Monday, February 23 | Psalm 34

Monday, March 2 | Psalm 92

Monday, March 9 | Psalm 95

Monday, March 16 | Psalm 100

Monday, March 23 | Psalm 111

Monday, March 30 | Psalm 118*

Read on Mondays

Feb 23—Psalm 34

Mar 16—Psalm 100

Mar 2—Psalm 92

Mar 23—Psalm 111

Mar 9—Psalm 95

Mar 30—Psalm 118*



TUESDAYS

READ

Each Tuesday we will be reading a Psalm of Confession. These poems and hymns are the psalmists way of expressing sorrow for sin, asking for God's mercy and forgiveness, and seeking restoration in relationship with God. Many of these Psalms are called Penitential Psalms. As you read through them, you will actually find the psalmist expressing that there is joy to be found in confessing and being forgiven.

REFLECT

Take a moment to write out what you notice about the psalmists posture toward God as he writes this song. What are some characteristics of this time of confession?

RESPOND

Spend time in prayer. Ask God to search your heart and point out areas for which you need to confess. Taking a cue from the psalm, use some of the language from the Psalm to construct your own prayer of confession. Perhaps, if you are able, you might add a short time of fasting to your confession as we remind ourselves of all that Jesus sacrificed so that we could have forgiveness from our sins.

RETELL

Do you have someone who can hold you accountable in your walk with God? If so, consider sharing with that person today about what God is putting on your heart to confess and ask that person to pray with you on this today.

RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS AS YOU REFLECT ON THE READINGS

Tuesday, February 24 | Psalm 6

Tuesday, March 3 | Psalm 32

Tuesday, March 10 | Psalm 38

Tuesday, March 17 | Psalm 51

Tuesday, March 24 | Psalm 130

Tuesday, March 31 | Psalm 143

Read on Tuesdays

Feb 24—Psalm 6

Mar 17—Psalm 51

Mar 3—Psalm 32

Mar 24—Psalm 130

Mar 10—Psalm 38

Mar 31—Psalm 143

WEDNESDAYS

READ

Each Wednesday we will be reading through the Psalms of Lament. Lament literally means “a passionate expression of grief or sorrow.” Throughout history, God’s people have lamented over sin in ourselves & others, the brokenness of the world, a longing for God’s justice & righteousness. You will notice in these Psalms that the authors express rather raw distress to God. Sometimes we can feel that we shouldn’t express our complaints to God. But in reality, prayer is the best place to bring our pain and sorrow. It does not surprise God at all and He can definitely handle our emotions. In fact, it is through prayer that God can move us from a very real place of pain and distress to a place of trust in Him. You will see that movement in many of these Psalms.

REFLECT

Take a moment to reflect on the emotions of the psalmist. Write out what he is expressing to God. Then reflect on whether you can sense movement in his emotions. What brings him around to trust?

RESPOND

Spend time in quiet considering what’s on your heart. What is grieving you today? Make a note of it and then cry out to God. Tell Him how you are feeling. All of it. Pour it out before Him.

RETELL

Instead of telling someone else of your complaints today, each time your heart returns to the pain or grief, take time to retell it to God.

RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS AS YOU REFLECT ON THE READINGS

Wednesday, February 25 | Psalm 3

Wednesday, March 4 | Psalm 13

Wednesday, March 11 | Psalm 35

Wednesday, March 18 | Psalm 42

Wednesday, March 25 | Psalm 88

Wednesday, April 1 | Psalm 102

Read on Wednesdays

Feb 25—Psalm 3

Mar 18—Psalm 42

Mar 4—Psalm 13

Mar 25—Psalm 88

Mar 11—Psalm 35

Apr 1—Psalm 102

THURSDAYS

READ

Each Thursday we will be reading through the longest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 119. This Psalm is one filled with wisdom for the believer as it celebrates of God's Word as being the as the ultimate source of life, wisdom, guidance and joy. Throughout this Psalm, the author will proclaim the way to a blessed life as one which is committed to living according to God's laws. This Psalm is structured as an acrostic poem, which each of its 22 stanzas starting with one of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Take your time reading through this Psalm as it's whole theme is about the importance of meditating on God's Word.

REFLECT

Read through the stanza in today's reading of Psalm 119. Reflect on the theme for this section: what does the author have to say about the importance of God's Word or other practical ways of godly living?

RESPOND

Spend time thanking God for His Word and how it impacts your life. Ask God to help you develop a deeper love for His Word and that in meditating on it, you would become more like Jesus. Pray that God would bring to mind someone with whom you can share God's Word and may even literally give them a Bible.

RETELL

Share a verse that is meaningful to you with someone you come in contact with today.

RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS AS YOU REFLECT ON THE READINGS

Thursday, February 26 | Psalm 119: 1-32

Thursday, March 5 | Psalm 119:33-64

Thursday, March 12 | Psalm 119:65-96

Thursday, March 19 | Psalm 119:97-128

Thursday, March 26 | Psalm 119:129-160

Thursday, April 2 | Psalm 119:161-176

Read on Thursdays

Feb 26—Psalm 119:1-32

Mar 19—Psalm 119:97-128

Mar 5—Psalm 119:33-64

Mar 26—Psalm 119:129-160

Mar 12—Psalm 119:65-96

Apr 2—Psalm 119:161-176



FRIDAYS

READ

Each Friday we will be reading a Psalm focusing on our ability to Trust in God's faithfulness. While we may lament and grieve the brokenness in ourselves and the world, we can also trust in a God who is faithful, merciful, righteous, and just. Many of the Psalms of Trust include declarations of faith in the character of God, statements like "God is our refuge and strength," which can give us confidence and hope in times of trouble.

REFLECT

Read through the psalm and write down what the psalmist declares about who God is and about His character. Note where the psalmist expresses fear and dismay about his circumstances and yet how he clings to trust in God.

RESPOND

Spend time in quiet allowing God to point out what may be distressing you. Recall a time in your life when you have seen God display His goodness, faithfulness, and power. Because God has been faithful in the past, respond aloud to your fears today by remembering God's faithfulness through one of the declarations from today's Psalm.

RETELL

In conversation with someone today, share about how God has been faithful in your life and that you can trust He will continue to be faithful in whatever circumstance may come.

RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS AS YOU REFLECT ON THE READINGS

Friday, February 27 | Psalm 27

Friday, March 6 | Psalm 37

Friday, March 13 | Psalm 46

Friday, March 20 | Psalm 62

Friday, March 27 | Psalm 91

Friday, April 3 | Psalm 22*

Read on Fridays

Feb 27—Psalm 27

Mar 20—Psalm 62

Mar 6—Psalm 37

Mar 27—Psalm 91

Mar 13—Psalm 46

Apr 3—Psalm 22*

SATURDAYS

READ

Each Saturday we will be reading from the Royal Psalms, which focus of the kingship of God. These psalms remind us that no matter who is in office or ruling here on Earth, God is ultimately sovereign over them all and King of the Universe. These psalms highlight God's rule over all creation, His sovereign power, and His everlasting throne.

REFLECT

Read through the Psalm and make notes of the attributes of God's kingship & authority. Knowing that He is sovereign as King, how does that help you in trusting Him today? Where might you need to recognize God's authority more in your life and circumstances?

RESPOND

Spend time thanking God that He is King of all and that He is sovereign. Confess to Him where in your life that you have removed Him from the throne. Speak aloud about the Kingship of God, using your words to remind yourself that He is on the throne. As you pray toward Easter, ask God, in His sovereignty, to make Himself known around the world this Easter and ask that many would respond to the Easter story and surrender their lives to His love, grace, and mercy.

RETELL

Recount the Easter story to someone and share the difference the Risen King has made in your life.

RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS AS YOU REFLECT ON THE READINGS

Saturday, February 28 | Psalm 2

Saturday, March 7 | Psalm 47

Saturday, March 14 | Psalm 93

Saturday, March 21 | Psalm 96

Saturday, March 28 | Psalm 99

Saturday, April 4 | Psalm 30*

Read on Saturdays

Feb 28—Psalm 2

Mar 21—Psalm 96

Mar 7—Psalm 47

Mar 28—Psalm 99

Mar 14—Psalm 93

Apr 4—Psalm 30*

**INVITE SOMEONE TO HEAR THE GOOD NEWS
AT BETHANY CHURCH THIS EASTER!**

As followers of Jesus, we have so much to celebrate, especially at Easter! However, we can't just keep it to ourselves. It was meant to be shared! Be sure to invite someone who needs to hear about God's love, mercy, and grace to our Easter services at Bethany Church.

For your convenience, we will have Easter at Bethany invite cards available in the lobby in March for you to share with friends, family, neighbors, and colleagues.

Take one and share one!

EASTER

AT BETHANY

GOOD FRIDAY
6:30 PM

EASTER SUNRISE
6:15 AM

EASTER SERVICE
10:30 AM

MARCH 22 | START OF NEW SERIES: EASTER IN THE PSALMS

This Easter we are going to experience the story of Easter through the Psalms as we prepare our hearts for Jesus's arrival, experience His death on the cross, and celebrate that Jesus turns our mourning into dancing.

MARCH 29 | PALM SUNDAY SERVICE & FAMILY PICNIC

In our Palm Sunday service, we will celebrate Jesus's triumphal entry as reflected in the Psalms. Then everyone is invited to bring a lunch & chair to Stearns Park for a family picnic at 12:30 PM.

APRIL 3 | GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE AT 6:30 PM

Join us for a reflective evening of worship & Scripture readings as we remember the sacrifice Jesus made for us on Good Friday.

APRIL 5 | EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE AT 6:15 AM

Celebrate the Risen King at the rising of the sun! Join us for worship and a devotional message during this 6:15 AM service outdoors in the courtyard. This is a unique service so feel free to return for our 10:30 AM Easter Service.

APRIL 5 | EASTER WORSHIP SERVICE AT 10:30 AM

He has Risen! He has Risen, indeed! Bring the entire family for our Easter Worship Service. Come at 10 AM for refreshments and a family photo area. Kids programming will also be available as we all celebrate Easter!



EASTER OFFERING

GIVING TO THE EASTER FUND FOR MISSIONS

Part of preparing our hearts for Easter is sacrificial giving, as a tangible practice of remembering all that Jesus sacrificed for us on the cross.

This year we are hoping to raise \$11,000 through our Easter Offering, which will go to support special mission projects in San Diego, Honduras, Mexico, and Kenya. Giving beyond the \$11,000 will help a missionary family in East Asia establish permanent residency in order to remain on the mission field long term.

We invite you to give above and beyond your regular giving to the Easter Offering, which will be open from February 22—Sunday, April 5. You can give in the following ways:

- Use the envelope in the service and mark it “Easter”
- Text2Give by texting “Give \$(amt) to Easter” to (855) 596-4954.
- Give online at bethanylb.churchcenter.com/giving
or the QR code below and use the pull down menu “Easter.”



Thank you for your generosity as we help missionaries share the good news of the Gospel around the world.

EASTER OFFERING WILL SUPPORT MISSION PROJECTS

This summer, Bethany will be sending four teams around the world to partner with our missionaries in sharing the Gospel. Those missionaries include The Kashiwaguras in San Diego; The Genesis Diez Team in Mexico; The Steers in Honduras; and the Kenya Hope Team in our adopted village in Kenya. Our Easter Offering will support these missionaries and projects.



SUPPORTING THIS SUMMER'S JAPAN FAIR IN SAN DIEGO

Funds will provide resources for the annual Japan Fair. The Kashiwaguras are ministering to the Japanese community in San Diego & the fair is a way to highlight Japanese culture as a vehicle for sharing the Gospel. We are hoping to raise \$300 for supplies & food.



BRINGING ORAL BIBLE TRAINING FROM PORTUGAL TO HONDURAS

Funds will allow Craig Weaver, missionary in Portugal, to travel to Honduras to train the Steers in Oral Bible Training, which is an engaging way to share the Gospel through storytelling. We are hoping to raise \$500 for Craig's airfare from Columbia to Honduras.



CREATING A CHICKEN COOP FOR RANCHO GENESIS IN MEXICO

Funds will build a 10x10 coop & fill it with chickens for summer camp at Ranch Genesis. The chickens will provide sensory activities for the orphans at camp plus eggs for the camp kitchen. We need \$900 for supplies & \$100 for chickens; our team will help build the coop.



PROVIDE NEW UNIFORMS FOR STUDENTS IN OUR ADOPTED VILLAGE IN KENYA

Funds will provide supplies & payment for widows to hand sew uniforms. This benefits the widows, as a way of financial freedom, and the students, as they learn & grow at school. Our goal is to provide new uniforms & shoes for 300 children at \$30 each, for a total of \$9,000.

BETHANY
CHURCH
LONG BEACH

2250 Clark Avenue, Long Beach CA 90815
562-597-2411 | bethanylb.org