



BY STREAMS OF LIVING WATER

A Six-Part Worship Series on the Psalms

1. Soul Thirst

Pastor David Flowers

Sermon Series Focus

For the most profound and enduring prayers of all time, both Christians and Jews look to the Psalms.

These timeless writings become our words when we have none. With vivid word pictures that capture our imagination, and in the beautiful artistry of the language, we will discover that the Psalms are empowering for faith as we learn to sing and pray them together in sincere devotion to God.

“When people of faith gather around the Hebrew scriptures, the focus is often the book of Psalms. This collection of songs has powerfully influenced worship, theology, ethics, and piety for centuries. The book continues to influence contemporary readers with its eloquent poetic language, which communicates directly to the life circumstances of contemporary readers even though the language originated in the ancient Near East. The book undercuts private and simplistic forms of piety and yet it has been appropriately labeled the “Prayer Book of the Bible.”

Brueggemann & Bellinger, *Psalms* (pg.1)
New Cambridge Bible Commentary

Sermon Series Purpose

- Deepen our individual and corporate prayer lives through the reading and study of the Psalms, as well as expand our appreciation for biblical literature
- Understand and experience a wider variety of personal and corporate prayer (e.g. desire, praise, confession, lament, justice, thanksgiving, etc.)
- Rediscover the power of faith that is not meant to be solely expressed intellectually, but emotionally as well; seeing that music, art, ritual, and passion are holy

What is the Book of Psalms?

- The Psalms take the form of Hebrew poetry; it is a collection of songs and prayers for the individual and the community of faith for all seasons of life
- The Psalms reveal the deeply emotional aspects of faith—honest dealings with God that go beyond theological concepts to a real relationship
- The Psalms prove that soulful artistic expression is not only a viable form of spirituality... it's necessary
- The book is structured in five sections (Torah); (ch. 1-41, 42-72, 73-89, 90-106, 107-150)

Psalm 1:1-3 NIV

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,

² but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
and who meditates on his law day and night.

³ 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 1:4-6 NIV

⁴ Not so the wicked!

They are like chaff
that the wind blows away.

⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶ For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote:

“When God’s word comes to us, it wants to find fertile soil in which to grow. It does not want to be left on the hard path. It is a great miracle that the eternal word of the almighty God seeks in me a place to dwell, wants to be received by me, like seed in soil. God’s word is sown not in my intellect but in my heart. Not as something to be analyzed but as something kept alive in our hearts...

If I only keep God's word in my intellect, then my thoughts will often be occupied with other matters, and what God has to say to me will miss its target. So we are never finished with God's word when we have merely read the Bible; it must penetrate deep within us, dwell in us, like the Most Holy Place within the sanctuary, so that we do not go astray in our thoughts, words, and deeds."

Bonhoeffer, *Reflections on the Bible* (pgs 70-71)

“As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?”

Psalm 42:1-2

Psalm 63:1-3 NIV

¹ You, God, are my God,
earnestly I seek you;

I thirst for you,
my whole being longs for you,
in a dry and parched land
where there is no water.

² I have seen you in the sanctuary
and beheld your power and your glory.

³ Because your love is better than life,
my lips will glorify you.

Psalm 63:4-6 NIV

- ⁴ I will praise you as long as I live,
and in your name I will lift up my hands.
- ⁵ I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods;
with singing lips my mouth will praise you.
- ⁶ On my bed I remember you;
I think of you through the watches of the night.

“You’re blessed when you’ve worked up a good appetite for God. He’s food and drink in the best meal you’ll ever eat.”

Jesus, Matt 5:6 MSG

Jesus, Gospel of John 4:10, 14 NLT

“If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water... those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”

For What Does Your Soul Thirst?

- Being God's creation, we believe that every soul is ultimately thirsting for God (Jesus) himself, however, we often settle for cheap substitutes.
- What or whom do you believe can quench your thirst?
- The psalmists express longings for God beyond anything else of earth. Do you share that longing?
- Is your desire for God being reflected in the **Up, In & Out** of your walk with Christ, the church & the world?
- What form of artistic expression in your life allows for a softening of your heart and a deepening of your faith?



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Sermon audio & slides in PDF can be downloaded at:
www.christiansburgmennonite.org