

The Psalms of David

*Franklin Christian Church
Fall 2017 Life Group Study*



Psalm 25 (Week of Nov. 19)

Introduction: Psalm 25 is an acrostic poem, which means that each line begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, in order from first letter to last. This kind of poem represents completion, while also providing a handy way of remembering the poem for the original readers. Even on his deathbed, David would find this Psalm easy to remember and reflect upon, relearning the ways of God as he asks for them again.

Have a group member read the psalm aloud. Group members with Bibles can follow along and note anything that stands out.

1. David spends time in this Psalm praising God as his instructor while also requesting more teaching from God. Spend some time discussing your favorite teacher from school. What are some qualities that made them a good teacher? Why do you remember them better than others? Recall these examples as you continue the study of Psalm 25.
2. More literal translations of verse 1 say “I lift up my soul to you” (NRSV, ESV, KJV). This connotes trust (NIV), but also provides an image to open up the Psalm. “Lifting up the soul” is a metaphor embodied in a posture of prayer where the person stands with arms up and open, with hands outstretched, offering their full self in trust to God. Praying like this might make us feel quite vulnerable.

Discuss the relationship between trust and vulnerability. Which is needed first? How are these sustained? Are they needed in a teacher/student relationship, and why?

3. Read verses 4-5 for David's requests to learn God's ways, paths, and truth. Jump ahead to verse 14, where God will "confide" his lessons to those who fear God. The covenant, God's way, is learned as distinct from the teachings of the world. Only God can offer these lessons.

- a. Take a moment to read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. What ideas stand out to you?
- b. Relate these ideas to David and Solomon, who will receive God's wisdom (1 Kings 2:1-4, 3:10-12). In what ways has following Jesus felt counter-intuitive in your life?

4. David must learn and relearn God's ways throughout his story. Read verses 8-11 and note that God is willing to instruct sinners and the humble. These terms are not mutually exclusive, but perhaps David has fluctuated between them throughout his life.

What are lessons you've had to learn and re-learn in your walk with Christ? What more do we need to learn if we have already been saved?

5. What does this psalm reveal about David's heart? What about God's heart? What has this revealed in your hearts?

6. A Karl Barth (20th century theologian) quote may further illustrate David's death: "Every day we ought to begin with the confession: 'I believe in the forgiveness of sins.' In the brief hour of our death we shall still have nothing else to say." Verse 15 puts it more beautifully: "My eyes are ever on the LORD, for only he will release my feet from the snare." Spend some time in silence (perhaps several minutes) meditating on this verse. How could it impact us to meditate on this every day?