



Brown Community Group

Discussion Guide

Psalm 22 – August 9, 2020

I. Starter Thoughts and Context of Lesson:

Can you think of some things that we don't often recognize, or take for granted, or can't even sense around us that we all need and that would have an effect on us if they were removed?

II. Discussion of Scripture:

The Book of Psalms is deeply personal with a psalm for everyone and for every occasion in life. There are psalms of praise, worship, despair and depression. Likely no human understood the power of the psalms more than their most prolific author, King David. David wrote roughly half of the Psalms we have recorded in Scripture, and they encompass all points and times in his life. Most of his dateable psalms were written during his darkest times. They highlight for us the harsh reality of sin in the world and its painful consequences. He also calls us out to live differently. The Psalms painfully point out our shortcomings, but also show the overwhelming holiness and power of our God and His faithfulness to strengthen and embolden us to live worthy of our calling.

III. Scripture – Psalm 22, a Psalm of David:

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish? ² My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest. ³ Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises. ⁴ In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. ⁵ To you they cried out and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame. ⁶ But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people. ⁷ All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads. ⁸ "He trusts in the Lord," they say, "let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him." ⁹ Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you, even at my mother's breast. ¹⁰ From birth I was cast on you; from my mother's womb you have been my God. ¹¹ Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help. ¹² Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me. ¹³ Roaring lions that tear their prey open their mouths wide against me. ¹⁴ I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. ¹⁵ My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. ¹⁶ Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. ¹⁷ All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. ¹⁸ They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment. ¹⁹ But you, Lord, do not be far from me. You are my strength; come quickly to help me. ²⁰ Deliver me from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs. ²¹ Rescue me from the mouth of the lions; save me from the horns of the wild oxen. ²² I will declare your name to my people; in the assembly I will praise you. ²³ You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel! ²⁴ For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help. ²⁵ From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly; before those who fear you I will fulfill my vows. ²⁶ The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the Lord will praise him— may your hearts live forever! ²⁷ All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him,

²⁸ for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations. ²⁹ All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him—those who cannot keep themselves alive. ³⁰ Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. ³¹ They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: He has done it!

IV. Teaching Points and Questions for Discussion:

1. Connection to Jesus' death on the cross
 - a. According to the Bible Knowledge Commentary... "The interesting feature of this psalm is that it does not include one word of confession of sin, and no imprecation against enemies. It is primarily the account of a righteous man who was being put to death by wicked men."
 - b. It is nothing short of remarkable the vivid description of Jesus' death on the cross. But David writes this Psalm 1,000 years before Jesus' time. David writes of his own circumstance in poetic form what Jesus literally fulfills in His time. This is not prophecy in the sense of "tell it before it happens," but the Holy Spirit leading the Gospel writers to see a very real connection between Jesus' death and David's sufferings.
2. Psalm 22:1-10 – Cycles of reality
 - a. The Reality of David and That of God's Reality
 1. Verses 1-2 – Imagine the emotional darkness in David's life that lead to those first few verses and his feelings of abandonment by God. David's reality at that time was one of despair and being forsaken by God due to his enemies' torment and no clear answer from God.
 1. Have you had a deep and dark point in your life where you felt as David did? Feeling almost void of God's protection and direction?
 2. If so, then what turned this point of despair around for you specifically?
 2. Verses 3-5 – The Reality is that God is holy and He is trustworthy and He has helped people through dark times in the past.
 1. What do these verses say about what it takes for David even in his Verses 1-2 state to then say "Yet You are holy?" What direction does this provide for us today?
 2. Someone reconcile God "forsaking" David (and Jesus on the cross) with His promise to never leave us nor forsake us in Hebrews 13:5?
 3. What does God's forsaking someone really look like?
 - b. The Reality of Us
 1. Verses 6-10 – David's reality should not be driven by his feelings as a result of his enemies' mocking led to him feeling self-worthlessness. David was chosen by God and his worth comes solely through God's eyes.
 1. In times of mocking and derision how can we turn our thoughts of identity and self-worth from the world's eyes to God's eyes?
 2. What are the dangers of deriving our opinions of ourselves from the world around us?
3. Psalm 22:11-21 – My heart is like wax
 - a. David cries out to the LORD for salvation. The bulls and the lions were after him, and he was downcast. Note the pain with which David wants us to understand his mental and emotional anguish. It was like he was...
 1. Poured out like water, his heart was like melted wax, his bones were out of joint, his tongue stuck to his jaws, his strength was dried up, and he was prepared to die in the dust.

1. What does this description of David's pain tell us about the true strength of man?
2. Why would God allow David to feel like this?
- b. But he is able to direct his cry to the One who is able to save.
 1. "You have answered me." God answers prayers!
 2. David knew that he was chosen by God. He knew his worth to God. He knew his life was precious and worth saving by God. In verse 20 he calls his life "precious." This theologically means unique, only, beloved. It is also said of Isaac as Abraham's "only son." The later Greek translation was used of Jesus as the "only-begotten" Son of God.
 1. Are we any different than David with respect to worth or being precious in His sight?
 2. What implications does this have on us today?
4. Psalm 22:22-31 – I will tell of Your name
 - a. Through his experience of God working in his life and saving him from his afflictions, David turns to the congregation and invites them to praise.
 1. In what ways can our testimony of God working in our life encourage others to God?
 - b. David says, "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You." (v. 27).
 1. What does this imply to a Christian today and our responsibility?

V. Responding in Prayer:

- Pray that God would increase your faith in times of distress and affliction, to see and remind you that God has not forsaken you as He promises in His word, and that you would humbly allow those He put in your life to come alongside of you and help bear your burdens and remind you of those truths.
- Pray for your Community Group that you would be united in Christ and continually speak the truth of God's holiness and power into each other's lives and lift up those who are struggling.
- Pray for our elders, pastors and staff to promote praise and be faithful to lead in worship at this time when the church is scattered across social distancing and the internet. Pray also that the church leaders would continue to seek God's wisdom in leading us into what the church will look like as we navigate through this time of great uncertainty.