

Psalms

A Four-Session Study on the Book of Psalms

SESSION 3: CONFIDENCE AND LAMENT PSALMS

This session, we will learn about Psalms that represent two distinct places we encounter in the ups and downs of life. The confidence genre includes Psalms filled with an unshakable, unwavering trust in God. The lament genre includes Psalms of brutal honesty about the difficulties and disappointments of life in a fallen world.

WIN

To know more about God through studying the Psalms and to engage with the Psalms in ways that help us become more like Jesus

CONNECT

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions:

1. Where was the most recent place you wish there was a complaint box available?
2. What would you have written on the complaint card?

LEARN

Before watching the video together and discussing the questions provided, we suggest taking a few moments to pray. Here's a simple prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, Prepare our hearts to receive whatever you want us to discover about who you are and how to pray our way through both the easy and the hard places of life. Amen.

After praying, watch the video for Session 3.

APPLY

Discuss the following questions as a group:

1. These two genres represent two different places within our lives: Psalms of Confidence ("My God is able") and Psalms of Lament ("God, do something! Help!"). Does one resonate with you more in this season than the other? If so, which one and why?
2. Psalms of Confidence flow from times of intentional reflection upon God when the psalmist's heart was at peace, his mind quiet, and his soul at rest. What are the spiritual habits that would be helpful in cultivating this type of posture in your own life? Do you have any habits in place? If so, what are they? If not, what habit could you try?



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3. One of the key observations about Psalms of Confidence is that the circumstances surrounding the Psalm are irrelevant to the psalmist's conviction that God is absolutely trustworthy. How can circumstances challenge your certainty in God's trustworthiness? How can these Psalms encourage your own confidence in God?
4. Psalms of Lament are raw, emotional, and gut-level-honest complaints expressed to God. Is the idea of being this honest with God difficult for you to grasp? Why or why not?
5. There are three types of complaints found in the Lament Psalms: complaints about one's own thoughts and actions, complaints about what others have done, and complaints about God. The Israelites expressed all of these as part of their prayer and worship experience. What does this teach us about God's heart toward his people?
6. What are your biggest takeaways from the video? What do they teach you about who God is, and how can what you've learned help you become more like Jesus?

PRAY

Remember, the Israelites actually prayed these Psalms to God, and we can too. As you wrap up this session, the group will read aloud both Psalm 23 (a Psalm of Confidence) and Psalm 13 (a Psalm of Lament) as the closing prayers. God knows every individual complaint, every expression of the heart, and every emotion being experienced. We can trust him to honor and respond to everyone's unspoken needs being represented in each Psalm.

BEFORE NEXT TIME

Examples of Confidence Psalms: 8, 63, 91, 121

Examples of Lament Psalms: 6, 56, 79, 90

Over the next week, read through a few of both genres and ask God to strengthen your trust as you reflect upon his relentless love and unwavering faithfulness in all the circumstances of your life.

Write your own Confidence Psalm. What metaphors would you use to describe God? How have you experienced his steadfast love and unwavering faithfulness? What has he taught you about his nature and character that you are absolutely certain about?

Write your own Lament Psalm. What are the sorrows or frustrations you would list? What emotions would you express: anger, fear, grief? What do you want God to do? How would you write your declaration to trust? How would you end with praise?

