

Transformed By Praise

Week 9 Study Questions (pp. 114-128)

Group Questions

Discussion starter: What is your favorite novel (or movie)? Describe the basic storyline, including the major conflict and how it was resolved. What is it about the story that you enjoy the most?

1. Has someone you love ever promised you do something for you, and later seemed to renege on their promise? Try to recall some of the thoughts and emotions you had in the midst of this experience. How do such experiences change our view of loved ones?
2. Based on the author's comparison of the Book of Psalms to a novel (with a beginning, middle, and end), what is the overall message of the Psalms? Does this understanding seem contrived, or is it convincing to you? Why?
3. Psalm 88 and 89 express the psalmist's lament that the messianic kingship appeared to be aborted by the Lord. How do these psalms speak to Christians today? In what ways is a Christian's situation similar to that of a faithful OT Israelite? In what ways is it different?
4. How should a bird's eye view of the Psalms, as is presented in this chapter, increase our faith in the midst of personal, family, and communal suffering? When you have asked questions of God regarding why you suffer, where have you found comfort?
5. The theme of Book 4 of the Psalms is living with faith. In what truth are we specifically to express faith? What are some assurances and comforts to our faith that come from this truth?

6. The theme of Book 5 of the Psalms is living with obedience. What two things must characterize our obedience? Explain what legalism is and why proper Christian obedience is not legalism.

7. On page 127 the author summarizes this chapter when he says, “The abundant life is a life of faith in the Lord who reigns even when all evidence points us in another direction. And this faith is a living faith that lives in keeping with God’s instructions. This obedience has its origin in love and its goal in worship.” What key aspect of the Christian life is missing from this description of the abundant life? See 1 Cor 13; Rom 5:1-11.

Digging Deeper

Discuss with a partner the evidence in the psalms for the dramatic movement of the overall message of the Book of Psalms. Use the suggested psalm references as a starting point.

Psalm Grouping	Theme	Psalms
Book 1 (1-41)	Messianic Kingship Inaugurated and Confirmed	1, 2, 41
Book 2 (42-72)	Messianic Kingship Transferred	1, 2, 8, 72
Book 3 (73-89)	Messianic Kingship Aborted?	1, 2, 88, 89
Book 4 (90-106)	Live With Faith	90, 93-99
Book 5 (107-150)	Live With Obedience	119, 145

Application

Choose a stanza from Psalm 119 to pray and meditate on. Identify one practical way in which you can praise God in the midst of your current spiritual state/mood. Be prepared to share some thoughts about this next week.