



How to Use This Guide

Each week you will receive one psalm to read and work through before Sunday. The goal is not to finish quickly, it is to be honest. The Psalms are Israel's gift to the church: a school of honest speech before God. They give us words for experiences we haven't named yet, and permission to bring those experiences into God's presence without cleaning them up first.

S — Scripture: Write out the verse or passage that stopped you.

O — Observation: What does the text say? Not what it means yet, what does it actually say?

A — Application: Where does this text intersect your actual life this week?

P — Prayer: Each week offers a different kind of prayer prompt. Let it stretch you.

Your Name _____

Preaching Schedule

June 7 – August 2, 2026

WK	SUNDAY	THEME	READ	PREACH
1	June 7	The Way	<i>Psalm 119</i> (full)	Psalm 1
2	June 14	The Majesty	<i>Psalm 139</i>	Psalm 8
3	June 21	The Refuge	<i>Psalm 91</i>	Psalm 46
4	June 28	The Lament	<i>Psalm 88</i>	Psalm 137
5	July 5	The Wrestling	<i>Psalm 37</i>	Psalm 73
6	July 12	The Waiting	<i>Psalm 22</i>	Psalm 130
7	July 19	The Confession	<i>Psalm 32</i>	Psalm 51
8	July 26	The Prayer	<i>Psalm 27</i>	Psalm 86
9	August 2	The Praise	<i>Psalm 103</i>	Psalm 103

The Arc

This series moves like a story, from orientation through complication, descent, crisis, and back out through ascent to resolution. You will not always know which part of the story you are in. That is intentional. The Psalms are not a map. They are companions for a journey whose terrain keeps changing.

The Way

Psalm 119 (full) · Read before Sunday, June 7

ORIENTATION

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible, 176 verses across 22 stanzas, each beginning with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Read it across the week, a few stanzas at a time. Let it slow you down. The Psalter does not begin with praise or lament, it begins with orientation. Before anything else, there is a way of walking. This psalm asks: what shapes you?

SCRIPTURE

Choose one verse or stanza that stopped you. Write it out in full.

OBSERVATION

What does this verse or stanza claim about God's Word? What does it claim about the person who holds it?

APPLICATION

What habit or posture in your daily life is being shaped by something other than God's Word? What would it look like to reorient one specific area this week?

PRAYER

Prayer prompt: *Write a short prayer of surrender, offering one specific area of your life to be shaped by God rather than by the competing voices around you.*

CHRIST IN THIS PSALM

Jesus called himself the Word made flesh (John 1:14) and said he came not to abolish the Torah but to fulfill it (Matt 5:17). To meditate on Psalm 119 is to meditate on the one in whom the whole law is embodied. He is the way the psalm points toward.

The Majesty

Psalm 139 · Read before Sunday, June 14

ORIENTATION

Psalm 139 is a psalm of intimate divine knowledge. God knows the psalmist's sitting and rising, every word before it is spoken, every day before it is lived. This is not surveillance, it is the knowledge of a maker who has not forgotten what he made. Read it slowly. Pay attention to where you feel the weight of being known, and where you feel the urge to resist it.

SCRIPTURE

Write out the verse or verses that felt most personal, most directed at you.

OBSERVATION

How does the psalmist describe God's knowledge? What emotions seem to move through the psalm?

APPLICATION

Is there a part of your life you have been keeping at arm's length from God, something you have not brought into his knowing? Name it honestly here.

PRAYER

Prayer prompt: *Pray Psalm 139:23–24 back to God in your own words. Let it be a genuine invitation, not a performance.*

CHRIST IN THIS PSALM

The God who searches and knows us in Psalm 139 became the God who was searched and tested in human flesh. Jesus, who knew what was in every person (John 2:25), submitted himself to be fully known, and fully forsaken, on our behalf. In him, being fully known and fully loved are no longer in tension.

The Refuge

Psalm 91 · Read before Sunday, June 21

ORIENTATION

Psalm 91 has been used as a psalm of protection across centuries, by soldiers, by the ill, by those entering danger. It makes bold claims. It was also quoted by Satan in the wilderness to tempt Jesus. The psalm is not a guarantee that nothing bad will happen. It is a description of what it means to dwell, to abide, to make your home, in God. The protection flows from the dwelling, not the other way around.

SCRIPTURE

Write out the verse that carries the most weight for you this week.

OBSERVATION

What images does the psalm use for God as refuge? What threats does it name? What does it promise?

APPLICATION

Where are you most tempted to seek refuge in something other than God, a person, a plan, a substance, a distraction? What would it look like to actively dwell in God's presence in that area?

PRAYER

Prayer prompt: *Sit quietly for two minutes before you write anything. Then write a single sentence of trust, not a request, just a statement of where you are choosing to stand.*

CHRIST IN THIS PSALM

Satan quoted this psalm to Jesus in the wilderness (Luke 4:10–11), inviting him to test the Father's protection. Jesus refused, not because the psalm was wrong, but because he trusted the Father without demanding proof. He is the one who fully dwelled in the refuge of God and became our refuge.

The Lament

Psalm 88 · Read before Sunday, June 28

ORIENTATION

Psalm 88 is the darkest psalm in the Psalter. It ends not with hope but with a single word: darkness. There is no resolution, no pivot to praise, no dawn after the night. Heman the Ezrahite has been suffering since his youth, this is not a temporary crisis. He has prayed before and received no answer. Read this psalm slowly and resist the urge to resolve it. Its darkness is not a failure of faith. It is what honest prayer looks like when God seems absent.

SCRIPTURE

Write out the verse that is hardest to read, the one you most want to explain away or move past.

OBSERVATION

How does that scripture reveal about God or your relation with God?

APPLICATION

Is there an area of your life where you have been editing your prayer, softening it, resolving it before you bring it to God? What would it mean to bring it as dark and unresolved as it actually is?

PRAYER

Prayer prompt: *Write a prayer that does not resolve. Name what is dark, what is silent, what has not changed. You do not need to end with hope. Bring the darkness itself.*

CHRIST IN THIS PSALM

Jesus did not quote Psalm 88 from the cross, but Holy Saturday, the silence between crucifixion and resurrection, is the lived reality this psalm describes. The tomb was sealed. Nothing moved. The early church sat in exactly the darkness Heman names. It is even thought that when he was imprisoned in the basement at the home of Caiaphas this would have been the Psalm he recited.

The Wrestling

Psalm 37 · Read before Sunday, July 5

ORIENTATION

Psalm 37 is a wisdom psalm written in David's old age, addressed to someone watching the wicked prosper and tempted toward envy or despair. The instruction is deceptively simple: do not fret. But the psalm earns that instruction across 40 verses, it is not a quick comfort, it is a long argument about time, justice, and the character of God. Read it as someone who has lived long enough to be frustrated by the way things seem to work.

SCRIPTURE

Write out the verse or command that is hardest for you to accept right now.

OBSERVATION

What does the psalm instruct the reader to do? How many times does it repeat a version of 'do not fret'? What does it promise about the wicked and the righteous?

APPLICATION

Who or what situation is producing envy or resentment in you right now? Be specific. What would it mean to commit that to God rather than rehearse it?

PRAYER

Prayer prompt: *Write a prayer of release, naming the specific frustration or envy and handing it over. Don't spiritualize it. Name it plainly before God.*

CHRIST IN THIS PSALM

Jesus is the fulfillment of the meek inheriting the earth (Matt 5:5, quoting Psalm 37:11). He is the righteous one who was cut down and appeared to lose, whose vindication came not through retaliation but through resurrection. The long view the psalm calls us to is grounded in his story.

The Waiting

Psalm 22 · Read before Sunday, July 12

ORIENTATION

Psalm 22 opens in desolation, the cry of abandonment that Jesus himself would pray from the cross. But unlike Psalm 88, it moves. Not quickly, not neatly, but it moves, from forsaken to heard, from shame to praise, from one man's suffering to the nations coming to worship. Read the whole psalm. Notice where the turn happens and what causes it. The waiting here is not passive, it is strained, active, barely holding.

SCRIPTURE

Write out the verse where you feel the first shift beginning, where the psalm starts to turn.

OBSERVATION

How does the psalmist describe abandonment in the opening verses? What does he remember about God's past faithfulness? What is his posture by the end?

APPLICATION

What are you waiting on God for right now? How long have you been waiting? What does it feel like to keep praying into silence?

PRAYER

Prayer prompt: *Pray the gap, write a prayer that names both where you are right now and where you are choosing to trust, even if you cannot feel the ground beneath it.*

CHRIST IN THIS PSALM

This is the psalm Jesus prayed from the cross (Matt 27:46). He did not quote it as a proof text, he prayed it as a man in genuine desolation. The psalm that ends with the nations bowing was prayed by the one through whom that would happen. To read Psalm 22 is to stand at the intersection of abandonment and redemption.

The Confession

Psalm 32 · Read before Sunday, July 19

ORIENTATION

Psalm 32 is David after the confession of Psalm 51, after the weight has lifted. Read it as the other side of the crisis: what does it feel like when what was hidden is finally named? The psalm opens with beatitudes, blessed is the one whose sin is covered, whose iniquity is not counted. This blessing is not earned. It arrives after a confession that felt like it would kill him.

SCRIPTURE

Write out the verse that describes most accurately where you are, either before or after the confession.

OBSERVATION

What physical and emotional language does David use to describe the weight of unconfessed sin? What changes when he finally speaks?

APPLICATION

What are you carrying that has not been confessed, to God, or to another person? What is the cost of continuing to carry it?

PRAYER

Prayer prompt: *Write a confession, something specific, not general. Address it to God. Then receive the absolution: "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go."*

CHRIST IN THIS PSALM

Paul quotes Psalm 32 in Romans 4:6–8 to argue that justification is by faith, not works, that God credits righteousness apart from deeds. The forgiveness the psalm celebrates is not the result of David's repentance earning mercy. It is the mercy of the one who bore our iniquity so it would not be counted against us.

The Prayer

Psalm 27 · Read before Sunday, July 26

ORIENTATION

Psalm 27 is a psalm of reoriented desire. After the long descent, the psalmist has one thing he asks, to dwell in the house of God, to gaze on his beauty, to seek his face. The psalm still holds fear and waiting and even a moment of near-abandonment. But the face of the voice has changed direction. It is leaning toward God rather than away. Read it as someone who has come through the dark and is learning, slowly, what they actually want.

SCRIPTURE

Write out verse 4, the one desire, in full. Sit with it.

OBSERVATION

What fears does David name? What does he ask for? How does the final verse hold together confidence and waiting?

APPLICATION

What do you most deeply want from God right now, not what you think you should want, but what you actually want? Is that desire oriented toward God himself, or toward what God can give you?

PRAYER

Prayer prompt: *Write a prayer of single desire. What is the one thing you are asking for? Narrow it. Bring it.*

CHRIST IN THIS PSALM

Jesus is the one who fully dwells in the house of the Father, and who, in John 14, promises to make a dwelling for us there as well. The desire of Psalm 27 finds its fulfillment not in a temple but in a person. To seek God's face is, for the church, to seek the face of the one who is the image of the invisible God.

The Praise

Psalm 103 · Read before Sunday, August 2

ORIENTATION

Psalm 103 is praise that has passed through everything. David does not praise from innocence, he praises as one who has been forgiven, healed, redeemed from the pit, and crowned with steadfast love. The psalm knows about frailty: we are dust, our days are like grass, the wind blows over us and we are gone. But it ends not with dust but with the reign of God over all. Read it slowly. You have earned it, not because of anything you have done, but because of where you have been.

SCRIPTURE

Write out the verse that, after nine weeks, lands differently than it would have on May 31.

OBSERVATION

What specific acts of God does David catalog? What does the psalm say about steadfast love in relation to human frailty?

APPLICATION

Look back over the nine weeks. Where did you meet God? Where were you most resistant? What has shifted, even slightly, in how you pray or how you come before God?

PRAYER

Prayer prompt: *Write a prayer of praise, not requests, not confession, just praise. Use the language of the psalm if you need it. Let it be the last word.*

CHRIST IN THIS PSALM

The steadfast love that Psalm 103 celebrates, hesed, covenant mercy, is embodied in Jesus Christ. He is the one who forgives iniquity, heals, redeems from the pit. The Father who is compassionate and slow to anger revealed that character most fully in the face of the Son. All of Psalm 103 is a description of what it looks like when God becomes flesh.