

Reading Guide David Week 1

Too often we feel like what we read in the Bible washes over us without ever really sinking in. This series of readings, and their accompanying meditation exercises, is designed to help you connect with God's word in a deeper way. Most of us don't have much practice meditating so you might find yourself frustrated, wishing you could just write down a few answers to some questions and get on with your day. But once you begin to feel a deeper intimacy with God, you will be amazed at how present he is in His word and in your life. You will find that your time with Him makes you feel centered and peaceful. Keep in mind that the purpose of meditation is "to enable us to hear God more clearly." (Richard Foster) To this end, you will get the most out of these readings if you do them regularly in a quiet place when you are not distracted by time pressure (and when you aren't sleepy!)

May God use His word to form His heart in you.

Day 1 **Psalm 16**

Read the psalm once through. Then carefully re-read each verse or section, turning it into a prayer, affirming what David is saying or asking for the same thing for your life.

Day 2 **Psalm 25**

Read the psalm carefully, choose a verse or verses that resonate with what is going on in your heart and then write those verses on an index card. As you write them out think about the words, tell God what you are feeling, ask Him to help you understand and live out this passage in a deeper way. Don't do all of the talking, be quiet and let him talk to you. Then throughout the day and until your next devotional time, pull out the card, read the verses and prayerfully think about them.

Day 3 **Psalm 32**

This psalm focuses on confession, acknowledging our sins before God and asking for him to forgive them based on Christ's death on the cross (1st Jn. 1:9). Prayerfully read verses 1-7 and then kneel facedown on the floor, and spend time confessing your sins, both things you have done that you shouldn't have and things you should have done but didn't. Then in this humble position, be silent and let God show you things in your life that aren't pleasing to him. After a few minutes of silence, read verses 8-10, and ask God to show you his path and give you the power to walk in it. Finish by reading v. 11 and thanking God for His forgiveness.

Day 4 **Psalm 63:1-8**

Read the psalm slowly, trying to *feel* and *see* what David is expressing in each verse. Here are some ideas for how to do this: after you read verse one, spend time thinking about what it feels like to be thirsty, to be hot and tired and long for water and think about longing for intimacy with God with that kind of intensity. Consider what it means that Jesus is "living water" and "the Bread of Life."

After you read verse two read Isaiah 6:1-4, Ezekiel 1:4-28, and/or Revelation 4:2-11 and spend some time imagining the scene depicted there. Then as you read v. 3-5 picture your praises joining the praise that is constantly going on around God's throne.

Let verses 6-8 remind you of times when you haven't been able to sleep because you were worried about something. Let yourself feel the anxiety of something that concerns you right now, then think about the power and majesty of God that you glimpsed in His throne room, picture yourself walking up to him, explaining the situation and asking for His help. Let yourself "sing in the shadow of His wings" because "he is your help."

Day 5 **Psalm 141**

Read the psalm looking to understand the nature of David's heart and life. Think about what he liked and what he disliked, according to these verses. Choose a verse from the psalm to memorize and repeat it to yourself throughout the day.