

Reading Guide David Week 2

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 18:1-19**

Read these verses slowly, spending time reflecting on each verse and trying to picture what David is describing. If you have the illustration you did of these verses during the lesson pull it out so you can see it and add to it if you want. Then picture yourself in these verses: think about what makes you feel like you are overwhelmed and trapped; call out to God for help; trust that he loves you as much as he loved David and that he will "part the heavens and come down" to help you. Thank him for the fact that you know he will "rescue you because he delights in you."

Choose one of the descriptions of God in these verses, like "strength", "rock", "fortress", etc. and when you feel scared or intimidated or overwhelmed, remind yourself of what God is to you. For example, "I don't need to be afraid that I am too weak to overcome this situation because God is my strength."

Day 2 **Psalm 18:20-28**

As you read through these verses use them to examine your life. First, consider the "cleanness of your hands" (v.20) by thinking about the right or wrongness of things that you have done or said (and not done or said.)

Ask God to show you where in your life you have not "kept his ways" (v. 21) and ask his forgiveness for those specific things.

Then, thinking about verse 27, consider the "cleanness of your heart," the attitudes and motivations that only you and God know about. Humble yourself before Him and let Him shine the light of his truth and love into the darkness of the sin that still lives in your heart. Finish thanking him for his forgiveness and asking him to help you be both right in your actions and righteous in your heart.

Day 3 **Psalm 18:29-50**

For your heart to be like David's—fixed on God and unmoved by fear, pressure or criticism—you have to know that you can depend on God and you have to do what you need to do in his strength. Read verses 29-36, looking for what God contributes to the victory and what David contributes. Re-read each verse slowly, picturing what the idea that David is expressing might look like in your life, for example, if you have to stand up for what is right at school or work, as you read v. 32 picture God standing next to you giving you the strength for what you have to do. Then read verses 37-50. Keep in mind that the Christian is supposed to love and pray for his human enemies (Mt. 5:44) and that our real enemies are

our sinful desires, the world and the devil (Eph. 6:11,12). Think about the joy that David felt when he saw God answer his prayers. Praise God for the ways he has shown his unflinching kindness to you in the past and for the victories he will give you in the future.

Day 4 **Psalm 27**

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 5 **Psalm 62**

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.