

242 for 2015

Songs of the 70's

—Psalms 70-79—

Lesson: 2
Text: Psalm 71
Handout/Prep: September 9
242/Discussion: September 14-18
Proclamation: September 20

Refresh

Since your last meeting, seek to refresh not simply your memory (of outlines and illustrations, etc.), but also your past week, your present weaknesses, your will, your wonderings.

- 1) Review key themes. What did you hear last Sunday? Was it gospel? Could you tell this story to someone else? Will you tell it?
- 2) Address — or add — any questions you still wish to hear covered or clarified from the reading, the discussion, or from the sermon.
- 3) Explain any new insights (about God, church body, neighbor, self, service, etc.) you encountered or experienced. How does this Word inform your understanding of the Lord who is telling the story? How does it inform your place in His story?
- 4) Consider anew how the Word of God read and proclaimed last week offers refreshment to you:

Read

Psalm 71; Psalm 16; Psalm 22; Exodus 15:1-18; Acts 2:22-36; 13:32-42

Reflect

In this section, expect to find a mixture of questions and considerations relating to the text/reading. Reflect both within (thought, prayer, study, etc.) and without (writing, discussion, action, etc.).

- 1) Based on its tone and lyric, if you were to give Psalm 71 a song *title*, what would it be?
- 2) If Psalm 71 was a “popular” song in its day, what group might likely be its largest listening demographic (ex. Angst-ridden teens? Young-agrarian professionals? Faith-filled elderly? Other)? Explain.
- 3) Throughout the song, the psalmist lays out a lyric offered to someone well-known, and well-trusted. What names and descriptions does he use? Cite words and verses.
- 4) What appears to be the *occasion* for this song (who is doing what, and when, and why)? What is the apparent *outlet* for this circumstance?
- 5) Verses 5-18 make particular reference to the author’s trust in the Lord that spans his life from “before my birth” (vs. 5) to “old age” (vss. 8 and 18). During this time, did he ever feel forsaken by the Lord? *Was* he ever forsaken? Is this kind of lyric, and experience, ever a part of your own song? Why or why not?
- 6) Assess the following expository idea of Psalm 71 as developed by one commentator (italics his): “*Mature believers continue to trust in the LORD as they have all their lives, continue to pray to the LORD when additional crises arise, and continue to praise the LORD when they know he will redeem them from trouble. A mature faith brings security to the spiritual life and stability to the congregation.*”
- 7) In his trial, what outcome does the psalmist *expect*? Cite words and verses. What outcome does he *experience*? Was his prayer answered? Explain.
- 8) Using a single word, how would you describe the psalmist’s mood as expressed in vss. 19-21? What notes from Psalm 71 can you hear echoing in other songs, like: The song of Moses (Exodus 15:1-18); and other songs by David (ex. Psalm 16; Psalm 22)? Are the notes note-worthy, or significant, within the story that God is telling? Explain.
- 9) In vs. 7 of Psalm 71, the singer says that he has been as “a portent to many.” What does that lyric mean? What significance might it carry in a song like this?
- 10) In Psalm 71, several references are made to activities and expressions as ongoing or abundant (i.e. “continually;” “all the day;” “more and more;” cf. vss. 3, 6, 8, 14, 15, 24). How does this observation affect the overall tenor of the song? How does this influence your own participation in the song? Explain.
- 11) In vss. 15-18 and 22-24, the psalmist gives voice to events that evidently lie up ahead. What are his expectations? How does he express them? Is this your kind of tune in life? Always? Never? Other? Elaborate.
- 12) How is this song about you? Do the lyrics of Psalm 71 provide words for your circumstance today? Do they give expression to your wants? Your worship? Your world? Why/why not?
- 13) How is this song about Jesus? Did He experience Psalm 71? Did He sing Psalm 71? Explain.

Relate

How does this Word relate to your relationships with God, fellow saints in the church, your neighbor, yourself (i.e. He, We, Thee, Me)? Consider the value of considering each relationship *in this order*. Moreover, seek to understand how the “fruit of the Spirit” (i.e. “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;” cf. Galatians 5:22-23) informs your answers/applications in each relationship.

1) *He*

How does this Word reveal God?

- His character? [attributes, works, wonders, control, etc.]
- His covenant? [plan, story, promises, blessings and curses...]
- His commands? [will, ways, call to repent, believe, obey...]
- His Christ? [pointing to, need for, fulfillment by, glory of...]

2) *We*

How does this Word speak to God’s people as a whole?

- As a global body [Displaying unity? Love?]
- As a gathered body [Assembling for worship? Regularly? Eagerly?]
- As a growing body [Making disciples? Equipping saints?]
- As a gifted body [Exercising gifts? One-anothering?]
- As a GURC body [Local applications? Edifying? Specific? Shared?]

3) *Thee*

How does this Word inform the way I love my neighbor?

- With my words? [kindness, truth-telling, gospel/evangelism...]
- With my works? [doing justly, loving mercy, meeting needs...]
- With my welcome? [hospitality, listening ear, availability...]

4) *Me*

How might the Spirit use this Word to move me — from the inside-out?

- My consecration [set-apartness, unto holiness...]
- My commitment [love of God in heart/soul/mind; walking humbly...]
- My conviction [of particular sin, of need for restoration...]
- My conscience [internal calls to specific actions, needs, people]
- My cornucopia [personal applications of fruit-full-ness; cf. Gal. 5]
- My calling [use of gift(s) granted/equipped with, for service]
- My conflict [with people, with inner struggles, with my flesh...]
- My congregation [see applications above, “We”]
- My comfort [see applications below, “Rest”]
- My conversation [with spouse? children? unbelievers? believers?]
- My communication [in particular: assess ability/desire to tell the gospel from *this text*. Why not try now in your own words?]

Resolve

As revealed from this text, and as guided by the Holy Spirit, note at least one insight or specific action that would prove fruitful (see again Galatians 5:22-23) in your walk as you make your way to Zion. For example, does this week's study or proclamation of good news call you to:

Remember?	_____
Repent?	_____
Resist?	_____
Reconsider?	_____
Relay?	_____
Relish?	_____
Rejoice?	_____
Other?	_____

Rest

In view of all the above, rejoice that the inner posture of a child of God is/ought to be one of rest — a deep-seated joy that exudes gratitude and ongoing trust in the One who proves Himself forever faithful — to His people, to His plan, to Himself! This reality serves to refocus and encourage weary, walking saints. Today, can you name one way, or one area of your life where you would like to rest in Christ more? How does this present Word speak to your need for rest? With His gospel refreshing you, seek the Lord's comfort as you pilgrim upward in His service.