

242 for 2015

Songs of the 70's

—Psalms 70-79—

Lesson: 5
Text: Psalm 74
Handout/Prep: October 7
242/Discussion: October 12-16
Proclamation: October 18

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 74; Deuteronomy 4:25-31; Romans 8:31-39

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 74 a song *title*, what would it be?
- 2) What word (or words) express the *feeling* of this song? Have you ever experienced this feeling? Explain.
- 3) When considering the content its lyric, is it likely that Psalm 74 is composed by the same “Asaph” who wrote Psalm 73? Why, or why not?
- 4) According to vss. 1-3 of Psalm 74, precisely who is lifting-up this song, and why?
- 5) In the fury (and flurry!) of events sketched-out in vss. 4-8, who are the marauders, and what is their intent? Do they succeed? Why, or why not?
- 6) According to vs. 9, what do the singers of this song *see*? What do they *hear*? What is the significance of these sights and sounds?
- 7) What appears to be the heart of the question being raised in vss. 10-11? How would the singer know when (or whether) the question receives an answer (i.e. what would the answer look like)?
- 8) How does the tune of Psalm 74 change in vs. 12? What appears to spark the new chord? Has this chord-change dynamic ever been part of your own faith experience? Testify.
- 9) What particular *word* accents the tone of vss. 13-17? What notable actions are on display in these verses? What significance does this emphasis carry within the song as a whole? How does this section *sing* into your own circumstance? Does it echo your own confession of faith? Explain.
- 10) As lifted-up in the closing cries of vss. 18-23, how would you summarize what the singer wants God to *remember*? Why *should* God answer this prayer? *Does* God answer this prayer? If so, how so? Explain.
- 11) Assess the commentary of Derek Kidner: “In the psalm’s context of suffering, it forestalls our hasty conclusions in the same way as the closing chapters of Job, by looking beyond the immediate problem to the total scene which God co-ordinates in wisdom.”
- 12) Assess the commentary of Calvin Beisner (*italics his*): “If the key to the psalm is the appeal to the covenant in verse 20, the essence is verse 22, where the psalmist begs God to plead *His own* cause. Not man’s comfort but God’s honor and glory are the right purpose of all creation, all life, all religion, and all prayer.”
- 13) As a singer of Psalm 74, what is it calling you to *do*? What is it calling you to *know*? To *feel*? Is one of these aspects accented more prominently? Explain.
- 14) How is this song about you? Do the lyrics of Psalm 74 provide words for your circumstance today? Do they give expression to your wants? Your worship? Your world? Why/why not?
- 15) How is this song about Jesus? Did He experience Psalm 74? Did He sing Psalm 74? 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.