

Praying the Psalms

The Psalms are filled with the essential ingredients of God-honoring kingdom prayers, because they speak of his names, majesty, power, faithfulness, creation, sovereignty, goodness, righteousness, and on and on. They are a treasure trove of jewels that can easily be stranded together into the best of kingdom prayers.

Read the following Psalm slowly, concentrating on the attributes of God, and how He had compassion on the poor, wretched, hopeless, lost sinner.

Psalm 116 English Standard Version (ESV)

I Love the Lord

116 I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy.

² Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

³ The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish.

⁴ Then I called on the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I pray, deliver my soul!"

⁵ Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful.

⁶ The Lord preserves the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me.

⁷ Return, O my soul, to your rest; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.

⁸ For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling;

⁹ I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.

¹⁰ I believed, even when^[a] I spoke: "I am greatly afflicted";

¹¹ I said in my alarm, "All mankind are liars."

¹² What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me?

¹³ I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord,

¹⁴ I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.

¹⁵ Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

¹⁶ O Lord, I am your servant; I am your servant, the son of your maidservant. You have loosed my bonds.

¹⁷ I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of the Lord.

¹⁸ I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people,

¹⁹ in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord!

This lost sinner prays that God would have mercy on him. The Spirit rouses the sinner, the man realizes he was good as dead, at the end of his rope, with no hope except for God. God knows everything about his hopeless condition, had compassion on him and saved his soul! Does this story sound familiar? Hopefully it does! This process takes place in the conversion of every sinner. The Spirit quickens the dead, gives sight to the blind, and makes us aware of who we really are, and how desperately we need a savior.

Now the man is saved, and because the Lord heard him and had compassion on him, he vows to pray to God as long as he lives! He knows God hears, he knows God answers. Please God, remind us of what you have done in us and how thankful we should be! Cause us to share the good news of Christ to whoever will listen. Give us a heart to come to you every

day, many times a day, to ask for faith, wisdom, forgiveness, that Your will be done in all the earth and that Your name be praised by me and all people everywhere!

This Psalm needs very little modification to make it so you are speaking directly to God, instead of about God to someone else.

I Love *You* Lord

116 I love *You* Lord, because *You have* heard my voice and my pleas for mercy.

² Because *You* inclined *Your* ear to me, therefore I will call on *You* as long as I live.

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⁴ Then I called on the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I pray, deliver my soul!"

⁵ Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful.

⁶ The Lord preserves the simple; when I was brought low, *You* saved me.

⁷ Return, O my soul, to **comfort and** rest; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.

⁸ For *You* have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling;

⁹ I will walk before *You* in the land of the living.

¹⁰ I believed, even when^[a] I spoke: "I am greatly afflicted";

¹¹ I said in my alarm, "All mankind are liars."

¹² What shall I render to the *You* for all *Your* benefits to me?

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¹⁸ I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people,

¹⁹ in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord, indeed!