

# Bible Study of the Psalms

## Session 1

### Welcome/Prayer (5 min.)

### Introduction (15 min.)

1. What words would you use to characterize the Psalms and what they mean to you?
2. At what particular times in your life have you found yourself turning to the Psalms? Why the Psalms?
3. When and how do you seek the Word of God in the Psalms, listening in particular for the meeting points between your own despair, anger, and sorrow and that of the psalmist?
4. What is your favorite Psalm and why?

### Overview of the Psalms (10 min.)

1. John Calvin described the Psalms as “An Anatomy of all the Parts of the Soul,” implying that virtually every human experience is expressed in this book. What does it mean to you that these psalms speak so clearly to what we experience as human beings?
2. Major types of Psalms (**handout**)
3. Organization of the Psalms (**handout**)

### Looking Deeper into the Psalms (20 min.)

Read these Psalms aloud and respond to the questions.

#### Psalm 1

1. In Psalm 1, what can be said about the path of righteousness? The path of unrighteousness? How does the church define these two paths today?
2. How does Psalm 1 prepare us for the reading of the Book of Psalms? What is your understanding of the law of the Lord and its impact on the life of faith? When you consider the idea of God’s law, do you think of it as a burden or a delight? Why?

#### Psalm 2

1. What are your reactions to this psalm?
2. What would you say is the basic message of Psalm 2?
3. What are the main differences between Psalm 1 and Psalm 2?

#### Psalms 3-7

1. When in your life have you found these psalms most meaningful?
2. What image of humanity is depicted by the psalmist?
3. What image of God is depicted by the psalmist?
4. What is the Word of God the psalmist is proclaiming?
5. Based on your own prayer life, what is your predominant image of God?

**15 min.**

**Going Forth with God's Word (10 min.)**

1. The sense of God's absence in many of the Psalms brings the psalmist to the point of despair. Where in your life has your belief in God's faithfulness been most tested by your experience of life's challenges and difficulties?
2. God's faithfulness is portrayed in various ways in the Psalms. In your own life, how would you characterize God's faithfulness?

**Closing/Prayer**