

How humbling it was to realize that God shows off for us every day and even more so when we ask Him! My concerns disappeared, and peace wrapped around me. God’s got this and every other request you throw at Him. If we all made trust our prayer word, imagine how our lives would center on God and not the “what ifs.” “Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and live securely” (Psalm 37:3, NIV).

*Patty VerDouw*

**Day 14:**     **Wade In** – Psalm 62:6, **Jump In** – Psalm 62, **Dive In** – Psalm 60-65

Within Psalms 60-65, King David provides several references to God as being a rock, a fortress, a strong tower, and so on. In my mind, these images formed together create a lighthouse. The function of a lighthouse and the role of a lighthouse keeper fascinate me. Living in a lighthouse must be a lonely life. As lighthouses are generally at the farthest reaches of land, they aren't typically near a large community. The lighthouse keeper may not have the support of a social system or emergency services like those living in town. However, he has chosen to live on a rock, in a fortress meant to withstand the wind and waves. And his sole responsibility is to make sure the bright light atop the tower continues to function. That one light shining above the waves could be a beacon of hope for those seeking refuge on land. It could also mean salvation for those traveling too near a rocky shore. When we plant ourselves on the Rock and make God the strong fortress within us, we can be that light. When the storms come, we can be the beacon that guides others to the shelter of His love and salvation.

*Bethany Whitworth*

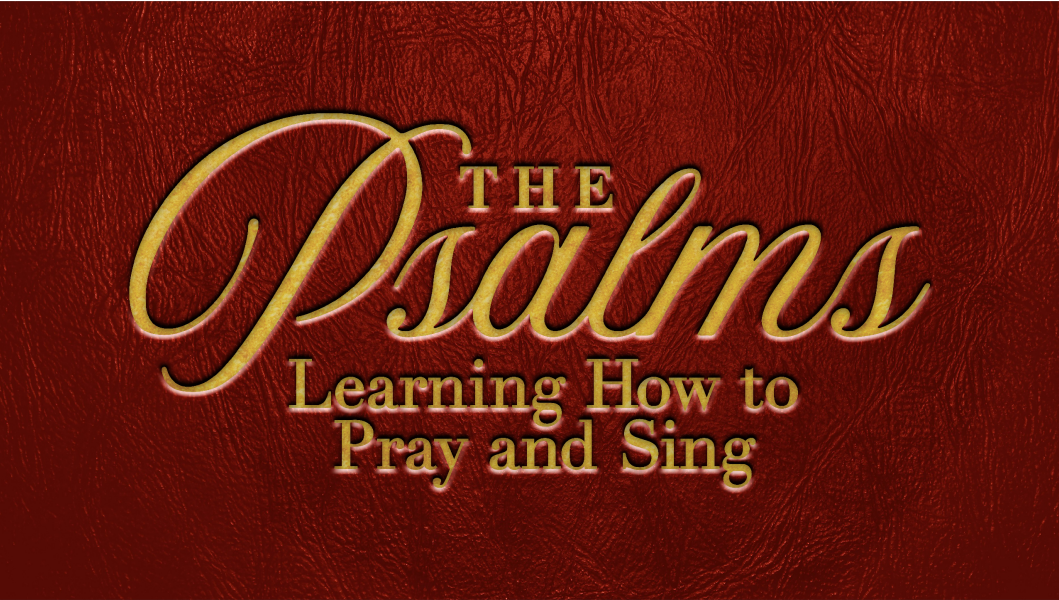
**Day 15:**     **Wade In** – Psalm 69:9, **Jump In** – Psalm 69, **Dive In** – Psalm 66-72

I used to get angry and frustrated when people would judge all Christians based on the bad behavior of a few. I also got tired of being held to a higher standard than everyone else, standards that my detractors didn’t even meet—sometimes proudly. That said, I do like the expectation of living up to a high standard. It’s the only way I can grow and learn wisdom. Anything less is stagnation. But that shouldn’t be the only reason. Why did God expect the Israelites in David’s day—and Christians today—to live holy lives? What is his purpose?

In short, God wants to show his grace, love, and yes, even justice, through us. As David lamented in Psalm 69:9, he knew that his actions had great impact on those around him. He didn’t want his poor actions to reflect on anyone else, especially those who were still seeking God and his mercy. How often have we heard stories of people rejecting Christ and the Church because some professed Christians did terrible things to them? How do we encourage them to come back, that not all Christians, and not all churches are terrible?

Our every action and word matter. Whether we like it or not, people are watching us, and yes, judging us. As such, we need to make sure those actions encourage seekers to keep on seeking and show ourselves to be trustworthy in that we can help them find what they seek. Because the consequences of failure are eternal.

*Andra Marquardt*



### **Week 3 Devotional - Hope for the Future**

*Heavenly Father thank you for granting us access to you through your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you for your Word which enables us to know you better. When others fail us, we can trust that you are ever faithful. When we cry out to you in our hurt and disillusionment, you will answer us. When we fail ourselves, you wash away our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin. Your love for us is great and reaches to the sky. While that may seem unfathomable to us, we are ever mindful that we are unable to love others if we do not accept the truth of your love for us. When the world oppresses us, we become fearful. But when we put our trust in you our souls find rest, for you are our fortress, we will not be shaken. You are worthy of all our praise. May our lips shout for joy as we lift our praise to you for you deliver us from evil. You give us hope. Empower us to share it with others. Be gracious to us and bless us Lord. Make your face to shine upon us so that your ways and salvation may be known on the earth. Amen.*

*Rachel Dinger*

**Wade In** - If you are unfamiliar with the Bible, new to following Jesus or just want to renew your faith, wade into the shallow end with the Bible by reading one or two verses.

**Jump In** - If you’re growing in your faith and getting to know God better through your daily Bible reading plan but you know you still have a lot to learn and experience in God’s Word, then jump in with a short passage of the Bible.

**Dive In** - If you’ve ready to get in the deep end of the pool, join us in reading longer sections of Scripture.

**Day 11:**     **Wade In** – Psalm 46:1-3, **Jump In** – Psalm 46, **Dive In** – Psalm 42-47

- 1) How have you seen God’s protection or strength in your life this week?
- 2) What problem or fear do you face today?
- 3) Reread Psalm 46:1-3, noting God’s actions and our response.
- 4) God desires to connect and communicate with us through prayer, and what better way to do that than to use his own words from the Bible! Spend time today praying Psalm 46:1-3. As you pray Scripture, you’ll find new ways to talk to God. If you have never prayed scripture back to the Lord, use the following ideas to begin today.

- \* Choose a meaningful Bible verse or scripture passage.
- \* Ask God to speak to you through his Word and read through the verse(s) slowly, meditating on each word and/or phrase.
- \* Consider the following three methods to pray God’s Word and their examples based on Psalm 46:1-3:
  - 1. Read and pray the verses in first person** – “I praise you, God, for being my refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.”
  - 2. Use the words to shape your thoughts into prayer** – “Thank you, Lord, for always being with me. You are my protection and strength in difficult and uncertain times. Because of your promises and your power, I know that no matter what, I do not have to be afraid.”
  - 3. Make the verse(s) personal by inserting specific names or situations into the prayer** – “Lord, I run to you as my refuge today and ask that you strengthen my family. Be with Rebecca, Emma, Matthew, Erin, and Lia. May they see and feel your presence in their lives. Be the Comforter and Helper that our families so desperately need as we walk through the loss of David. When life feels like it is caving in on us when sorrow surrounds us, we will not be afraid, but put our complete trust in you. Amen!”

Write out a prayer based on Psalm 46:1-3.

*Amanda Rue*

**Day 12:**     **Wade In** – Psalm 51:1-2, **Jump In** – Psalm 51, **Dive In** – Psalm 48-53

“I messed up. How will God ever forgive me?” Who among us has not had those thoughts? There are times in all of our lives that we make mistakes, and wonder how we will make it through, how we will find our way back to God.

The first thing I thought of when I read this Psalm was something that has been sung at every Catholic mass I’ve ever attended, “Create in me a good heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” It got me thinking about how many of our current “psalms,” the songs we hear and sing, have this as an underlying message. Here are just a few examples:

- \* “When I was your foe, still your love fought for me. When I felt no worth, you paid it all for me.” – “Reckless Love” by Cory Asbury
- \* “Where sin runs deep, Your grace is more. Where grace is found is where You are. And where You are, Lord, I am free. Holiness is Christ in me. Lord, I need You, oh, I need You. Every hour I need You.” – “Lord I Need You” by Matt Maher
- \* “He sees the best in you when you feel at your worst, so in the questioning, don’t ever doubt His love for you.” – “Haven’t Seen it Yet” by Danny Gokey
- \* “I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I’m not enough. Every single lie that tells me I will never measure up. Am I more than just the sum of every high and every low? Remind me once again just who I am, because I need to know - You say I am loved when I can’t feel a thing. You say I am strong when I think I am weak.” – “You Say” by Lauren Daigle
- \* “I searched through the Earth for something that could satisfy, a peace for the hurt I had buried deep inside. Knees on the floor, I finally found everything I needed. You lifted my soul and opened up my eyes.” – “Till I Found You” by Phil Wickham

The list goes on, and on, and on. We all have times when we have done wrong, and need to find forgiveness, whether a psalmist from the Bible, a musician, a doctor, or a high school student. This is part of being a human. Find your way to lift those needs to God, forgiveness has already been given, if you just ask.

*Aaron VanNingen*

**Day 13:**     **Wade In** – Psalm 55:5-8, **Jump In** – Psalm 25:1-3,37:3-6, 55:5-8, Isaiah 12:2, **Dive In** – Psalm 54-59

I didn’t start saving for retirement until my mid 40’s but used it all to buy our home in 2002. I started saving again five years ago. Now I’m eligible for Medicare, have house payments for 25 years, and have no real plan in place. This poor planning stressed me out as I worried about taking care of my needs as I aged. Soon it was other “what ifs” added to the burden. It was consuming me!

At a Legacy class last month, they asked the participants to choose one word that needed prayer. My word was “trust.” So, I asked my sister to fast and pray with me. The next week, I went to my Bible app and asked God to give me a sign that he had heard me. I clicked the drop-down arrow on the book of the Bible, closed my eyes and selected the book. Then I did the same for the chapter landing on Psalm 25:1-3. The words leaped off the page, “In you, Lord my God, I put my trust. I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor my enemies triumph over me. No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame.” I decided to see what would happen if I did that again. Psalm 91:2 appeared, then Isaiah 12:2, and Psalm 37:3-6. All my “random” selections dealt with trust!