



RAW PRAYERS: Praying Through Our Fears

Pastor Derek

May 7, 2023

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Invite someone to share a thought or encouragement from their “chair” time this week

Scripture: READ [Psalm 3](#)

Derek outlined four steps to praying through our fears:

1. Identify the source of your fear. **Read Psalm 3:1-2** What was David’s specific fear? Share some examples of fears you face or have faced. What are some questions to ask yourself as you work to pinpoint the source of your fear?
2. Turn your attention from your circumstances to God’s character. **Read Psalm 3:3-4.** What characteristics and actions of God does David list? As a group, list some characteristics of God and some promises that you can focus on during times of fear.
3. Acknowledge God’s protection and get a good night’s sleep. **Read Psalm 3:5-6.** What are some times in David’s life that God came through for him and rescued him? Your group shared earlier about some ways God saved or delivered you. How can remembering these times help you trust God enough to sleep well even in your fear?
4. Express your full range of emotions to God. **Read Psalm 3:7-8.** What does David ask God to do for him? Considering Jesus’ teaching to love our enemies and pray for them, how might our prayers when we’re afraid be different than David’s? How might they be the same? How can you express your feelings to God when you’re not even sure what you need or want in a fearful situation?

Prayer: Have the group pray silently through a fear using this sample: *“God, I’m afraid of _____. And God, I’m feeling _____. But God, I know you are _____.”* Take a few deep breaths and pray that sentence over. As you inhale, say *“But God, I know”* and as you exhale repeat that characteristic of God. End by thanking Him for the way He will save you from this fear.

Next Steps: Begin making a list of promises of God to read over when you are afraid.

Additional Scriptures: Philippians 4:6-7; 1 John 5:14; Romans 12:12; Psalm 18:6; John 14:27ff; Matthew 6:35ff



RAW PRAYERS: Praying Through Pain

Pastor Derek

May 14, 2023

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Invite someone to share a thought or encouragement from their “chair” time this week

Scripture: READ [Psalm 22:1-31](#)

How do you typically deal with pain in your life? (stuff it, ignore it, run from it, wallow in it...)

How do your prayers change during hard circumstances or when it feels like God is silent?

How can processing pain with God help us grow spiritually?

Share about a time that God healed you or helped you through a difficult season.

Discuss the 4 keys for praying through pain:

1. **Let pain lead you to corporate worship.** How do you see David doing this through Psalm 22 (especially verses 22-26)? What might it look like today? How can worshipping through your pain *with* others impact their faith and your process? What might stop you from doing this? Consider reading [Psalm 40:1-10](#) as another example.
2. **Don't just make requests from God, but reveal yourself before God.** How do you see David doing this through Psalm 22? Why do you think this is important? How does this shift your focus?
3. **Use pain to approach God with your disappointments.** How does David approach God in Psalm 22? What does this tell us about how he was feeling? Would you feel comfortable approaching God honestly with these types of emotions? How do David's honest expressions differ from venting? Notice that David continued to pursue God, even when He didn't seem to be responding. When have unmet expectations or a 'delayed' response from God tempted you to give up talking to Him about a situation? What can help us persistently pursue God even in the waiting? Consider reading [Luke 18:1-8](#) for more conversation about persistence in prayer.
4. **Always leave room for God's ultimate rule.** Despite David's frustration and pain, how can we tell that he still trusted God? Why do think it is important to intentionally think about God's sovereignty when you are facing difficult situations? What makes that challenging? What reminders can you put in place to help you lean into that truth?

Prayer: Lead the group in practicing prayer modeled after Psalm 22. Read the opening of each of these statements and then allow time for your people to finish them (either silently or aloud, depending on their comfort level). 1. God, I am disappointed that... 2. This pain has made me want to... 3. But, God I acknowledge that you are...

Next Steps: Consider sharing a current struggle with another believer (or your Life Group) this week. Be as open as possible about where your heart is and what you need from God. Ask them to pray with you.

Additional Scriptures: Psalm 34:18; Revelation 21:4; Psalm 23:1-6; 2 Corinthians 1:3-8; 1 Peter 4:12-19; John 16:20-24; Hebrews 12:1-11; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10; 1 Peter 5:9-10; Romans 8:28



RAW PRAYERS: Praying Through Guilt

Pastor Derek
May 21, 2023

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Invite someone to share a thought or encouragement from their “chair” time this week

Scripture:

-How has guilt affected you? (Extra: Have you felt stuck in the past? Does unresolved guilt make you afraid to say “no”? Has guilt affected your closeness with God? When it comes to overcoming guilt, what are your victory stories?)

-How can guilt be a gift? When is it not?

-Pastor Derek mentioned 5 creative but wrong ways to deal with guilt: compare, medicate, blame, create a different God, and compensate. Which ways have you used to deal with guilt?

READ [Psalm 51: 3-4, Mark 7:21-23](#)

-How do you know what sin is? How do you know if sin has affected your relationship with God?

-Based on David’s example, how should awareness of our sin affect us? How should you feel?

READ [Psalm 51: 8-12, 1 John 1:9](#)

-Based on these verses, when we ask for forgiveness what are a few things we are asking God to do?

-How do you know that you are forgiven?

READ [Psalm 51: 13-15, 2 Corinthians 5:17-19](#)

-In Psalm 51 King David is asking forgiveness because of his sin of adultery and murder. How is he qualified to “teach transgressors” God’s ways?

-What do sinners have to offer when it comes to helping others return to God?

-Have you ever had a time of worship after experiencing God’s forgiveness? What was it like? How did you feel? What did you sing or pray, and what was your posture?

Prayer: Based on this week’s sermon and discussion, what do you need prayer for? (Examples: Unresolved guilt, restored joy, looking for ways to be used etc.) Are there friends, family, or co-workers that you would like prayer for? (Names or situations can be unspoken.)

Next Steps: Meet with another Christian that you trust. Confess to them the sins that you are currently having difficulty overcoming. Ask them to pray for you and keep you accountable. (James 5:16)

Additional Scriptures: Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 6:7; 1 John 1:9; Romans 3:23-24; Romans 5:1-2, 8; Hebrews 9:14; 2 Corinthians 5:21; James 5:16; Acts 3:19



RAW PRAYERS: Praying Through Our Doubt

Pastor Derek

May 28, 2023

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Invite someone to share a thought or encouragement from their “chair” time this week

Scripture:

-In what areas have you had spiritual doubts? What kinds of questions are you asking?

- Intellectual – (miracles/ science, supernatural, Jesus claims of exclusivity, etc.)
- Circumstantial – (bad things happen to you / prayers go unanswered/ personal suffering)
- Experiential – (I’ve been around some Christians behaving badly- why would I want to be that?)
- Relational – (mom, dad, grandma have been a part of one religion and for you to explore) Christianity feels like you’re denouncing everything they have stood for)
- Personal – (sometimes you doubt yourself and your own ability to hear and respond to God)
- Lifestyle – (if I fully commit to the claims of Christianity, I’m going to have change some things)

-Respond to this statement: If doubt is managed well, it keeps us humble, open to discovery, ready to receive.

LEADER: Choose to work through either Psalm 73 or Job 38, 40, 42

READ [Psalm 73](#) in more than one Bible translation (try ESV, [NIV](#), [NASB](#), [HCSB](#), or [NLT](#))

-Describe Asaph’s doubt and discouragement (:1-15). Perhaps he had asked God a lot of questions during his season of doubt. What would those questions have sounded like? (Why? How long? What? Etc.)

-Asaph’s turning point comes in :16-17. Have you experienced a turning point like this?

-What stands out to you about Asaph’s thoughts in :18-28? Has he lost all doubts? In what ways is he trusting God?

READ [Job 38:1-7](#), [40:1-5](#), [42:1-6](#)

-Job wanted to understand WHY all these terrible things had happened to him. How did God respond to Job?

-If Job didn’t get the answers he was looking for, what did he learn from God?

-What does it look like to surrender your need to have everything figured out?

Prayer: If anyone is willing to articulate a specific spiritual doubt, pray through that doubt together. Use [Mark 9:24](#), [Psalm 27](#), [Proverbs 3:5-7](#), or [2 Peter 3:8-9](#) as appropriate.

Next Steps: If some in the group are struggling with doubt, consider partnering members together to pray throughs doubts with and for one another.

Additional Scriptures: Matthew 11:1-6; John 20:24-29; James 1:5-8; Matthew 14:31; Hebrews 4:15-16