

Called to Experience More of God — February 3 & 4, 2018
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Psalm 27

- Why is David not afraid (1)? How does he weather attacks (2-3)? What one thing does he want from the Lord (4)? Why (5)? How does he respond to experiencing God in this way (6)? How does it feel to “dwell in the house of the Lord” and “gaze on his beauty”? What practices help you engage God like this? Make a plan to incorporate more of them into your life on a regular basis.
- David then makes several more pleas to the Lord; summarize them (7-12). What do you think his emotions were like when he penned these words? Pray your own seasons of hardship would be marked by greater hunger to experience God.
- What is David confident about (13)? In conclusion, what does he remind both himself and his readers to do (14)? Meditate on these last two verses for a few minutes and visualize what they mean to you personally. Finally, memorize them and recite them aloud whenever you feel distant from the Lord.

Day Two: Psalm 84

- How does the Psalmist describe God’s dwelling place (1)? How does he emphasize his desire to be in that space (2)? What picture does he paint of those who reside in the Lord’s house (3-7)? Consider what experiencing God is like for you. Where do you see your experience echoed here? What might you add?
- In a brief tangent, what does the psalmist want God to do (8-9)? Then, returning to the theme of the Lord’s house, how does he compare closeness to God to any other position (10)? Why does he feel this way (11)? How does he conclude this psalm (12)?
- Further apply this poem to your own life. What is most important to you? What is your deepest longing? If you’re not hungry for more of God, why do you think that’s the case? Being with God and having more of him is *always* better than *anything* else; pray this would be your heart’s genuine desire.

Day Three: Daniel 6

- Set the scene of this story (1-2). Describe the impression Daniel made (3). What were the administrators and satraps trying to do (4-5)? What did they persuade the king to do (6-9)?
- Describe Daniel’s response to the decree (10). Consider that he continued to pray “just as he had done before.” For how long do you think Daniel had these routines of meeting with the Lord? Why do you think he maintained them even under the threat of death? How does this make you feel? Inspired to go and do likewise? Confused? Discouraged? Talk to God about this.
- How was Daniel’s violation discovered and brought to the king’s attention (11-13)? How did Darius respond (14)? What happened next (15-18)? Describe the scene the following morning (19-23). What happened to Daniel’s accusers (24)? What did Darius proclaim (25-27)? Daniel exuded steadiness throughout this story, while the king did not. Why do you think this was the case?

Day Four: Matthew 5:27-30

- Which of the Ten Commandments does Jesus address (27)? What is his take on the prohibition of adultery (28)? Why do you think Jesus demonstrated so much concern for our hearts? When he looks at your heart, what does he see? Respond to the Lord.

- What does Jesus tell us to do with that which causes us to stumble (29-30)? Why is it better to lose these things (29-30)? Why do you think Jesus goes from talking about the intangible inner life of the heart to gruesome dismemberment imagery?
- This sort of radical surgery is often needed in order to experience more of God. Ask the Lord, in his mercy, to reveal what needs “gouged out” or “cut off” in your life. Perhaps it’s poor time management, an unhealthy relationship, a troublesome habit, etc. Whatever you sense God putting his finger on, repent: turn away from the sin and toward a fuller experience of the Lord.

Day Five: Matthew 13:44-46

- In these very short parables, according to Jesus, what is the kingdom of heaven like (44-46)? Which image resonates with you most deeply – hidden treasure or a valuable pearl? Why?
- When the man found the treasure, what did he do (45)? “In his joy” he “went and sold all he had.” Can you imagine forsaking everything you have, and doing so *joyfully*? What would make such an act possible? What did the merchant do when he discovered a highly valuable pearl (46)?
- Through these parables Jesus is telling us that experiencing the complete fullness of God’s rule and reign – his perfect justice, peace and joy – in our lives is more valuable than absolutely anything else. Today, pursue it. And do so with joy! What is the first step you can take to being walking this out? Conclude by asking God to help you wholeheartedly believe that everything you truly desire is found in having more of him.