



SESSION 4

A Fearless Faith

LOOKING BACK TO THE STUDY OF PSALM 8

Psalm 8 begins and ends with the phrase, "Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" Reflect on how easy or difficult it is to know that everything you see is ordered and created by God.

Pastor Doug Meikle in his sermon on August 18 said that he prays regularly to see the world as God sees it, and he recommended that we do the same. Discuss what he meant by seeing the world as God sees it.

Doug observed that loneliness, boredom, and anxiety are hallmarks of this age of humanity. He encouraged us to leave these behind, embrace the joy of the Christian faith, and sing a new song. Share ideas about how to do this.

READ ALOUD | PSALM 27

Head | 15–20 Minutes

Observe the text and the author's main points

- What is David's description of the Lord (v.1)? What do you think is the connection between that description and its impact on David's emotional and spiritual outlook (vv. 1-3)? Compare and contrast what Psalm 27:1 and Psalm 8:1 say about God.
- How do verses 1-6 differ in tone from verses 7-12? How are they similar?
- How might verses 13-14 build a bridge between verses 1-6 and verses 7-12?

Heart | 15–20 Minutes

Envision how the text—when applied—might transform your inner life in terms of your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors

- Is it plausible that the light and salvation God offers can change your experience of fear on a day-to-day basis? Why or why not?

- Discuss whether you have experienced both the confidence in God's salvation and fear of His rejection, perhaps simultaneously? How might Psalm 27 (and others) offer a way through that contradiction?
- Is waiting for the Lord, in strength and courage, a plausible approach to day-to-day life? Why or why not?

Hands | 10 Minutes

Apply the text by moving from inward reflection to outward action looking for ways to live the text out in our lives to serve others.

Reaching Upwards: Growing in Your Relationship with God

- If you find money or power or prestige (or something else) competing with God as the stronghold of your life, ask the Holy Spirit to show you a concrete step toward making Him your ultimate security. Share with your small group and encourage one another.
- Practice waiting on God by committing a few minutes to sit in His presence in a posture of resting or receiving, rather than requesting. Alone or as a group, sit in silence for 3-5 minutes. After the time of silence, discuss the experience.
- Re-read and meditate on Psalm 27. Use it as the basis for prayer, individually, and as a group. In preparation for the sermon and study next week, read and reflect on the last psalm we will study in this series, Psalm 84.

Reaching Outward: Investing in Your Neighbors

- Discuss how to deal with people who oppose you. What is your experience resisting the impulse to respond to them in your own wisdom or power and intentionally praying for God's intervention and direction?
- If you have had a parent, other family member, or friend fail you, ask the Holy Spirit to show you how God's acceptance of you can empower your ability to heal and forgive. For small groups, share experiences of forgiveness and healing in relationships.
- **Back to School** - Pray for students of all ages, their parents, teachers, administrators, school nurses and others as schools start across Houston. Find school year volunteer opportunities with FPC Ministry Partners such as The Forge for Families at fpchouston.org/serve/ways-to-serve/upcoming-opportunities.

Reaching Beyond

- **August 16-26** - FPC staff and covenant partners will be returning from Gaba, Uganda after speaking and attending a conference with friends from Africa Renewal Ministries (ARM). Please hold the following individuals returning from this mission trip in prayer: **Pastor Curtis Bronzan, Fielding Cocke, David and Amy McCarty, Ann Smith:**
 - For good health and stamina as they finish their trip;
 - For the team to leave "the aroma of Christ" behind;
 - For safety and protection as they travel home;
 - For recovery from jet lag and time away from home;
 - For hearts to be softened through prayer, reflection, and sharing about their mission trip.

- **August 26** - Prestige Learning Institute (PLI) Volunteer Orientation - PLI welcomes and empowers refugees and immigrants from over 51 countries representing 42+ languages. Learn more about PLI and volunteer opportunities at this orientation. To RSVP, email volunteer@prestigelearninginstitute.org.