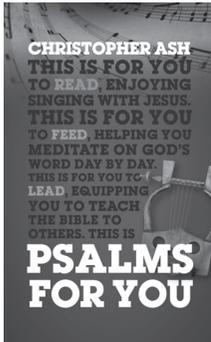




# The King's choir

**Singing the Psalms  
with Jesus**

by Christopher Ash  
with Alison Mitchell



## Psalms For You

If you are reading *Psalms For You* alongside this Good Book Guide, here is how the studies in this booklet link to the chapters of *Psalms For You*:

Study One → Ch 1                      Study Five → Ch 10  
Study Two → Ch 3a                    Study Six → Ch 11  
Study Three → Ch 3b                 Study Seven → Ch 16  
Study Four → Ch 5

Find out more about *Psalms For You* at:  
[www.thegoodbook.com/for-you](http://www.thegoodbook.com/for-you)

The King's choir: Singing the Psalms with Jesus

The Good Book Guide to Psalms

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Unless indicated, all Scripture references are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version.

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# Introduction: Good Book Guides

Every Bible-study group is different—yours may take place in a church building, in a home or in a cafe, on a train, over a leisurely mid-morning coffee or squashed into a 30-minute lunch break. Your group may include new Christians, mature Christians, non-Christians, mums and tots, students, businessmen or teens. That's why we've designed these *Good Book Guides* to be flexible for use in many different situations.

Our aim in each session is to uncover the meaning of a passage, and see how it fits into the “big picture” of the Bible. But that can never be the end. We also need to appropriately apply what we have discovered to our lives. Let's take a look at what is included:

- ↔ **Talkabout:** Most groups need to “break the ice” at the beginning of a session, and here's the question that will do that. It's designed to get people talking around a subject that will be covered in the course of the Bible study.
- ↓ **Investigate:** The Bible text for each session is broken up into manageable chunks, with questions that aim to help you understand what the passage is about. The **Leader's Guide** contains **guidance for questions**, and sometimes ☑ additional “follow-up” questions.
- ⋮ **Explore more (optional):** These questions will help you connect what you have learned to other parts of the Bible, so you can begin to fit it all together like a jig-saw; or occasionally look at a part of the passage that's not dealt with in detail in the main study.
- **Apply:** As you go through a Bible study, you'll keep coming across **apply** sections. These are questions to get the group discussing what the Bible teaching means in practice for you and your church. 🗣️ **Getting personal** is an opportunity for you to think, plan and pray about the changes that you personally may need to make as a result of what you have learned.
- ↑ **Pray:** We want to encourage prayer that is rooted in God's word—in line with his concerns, purposes and promises. So each session ends with an opportunity to review the truths and challenges highlighted by the Bible study, and turn them into prayers of request and thanksgiving.

The **Leader's Guide** and introduction provide historical background information, explanations of the Bible texts for each session, ideas for **optional extra** activities, and guidance on how best to help people uncover the truths of God's word.

# Why study Psalms?

I want to invite you to come with me on an introductory tour of the five books of Psalms (the Psalter), to learn to pray. For this is exactly what the Psalms are in the Bible to do—to teach you and me to pray and to praise in perfect harmony with what God wants. The Psalms give a window into how Jesus learned to pray, in his fully human life; and they are how the people of Jesus are to pray as the Spirit of Jesus leads us.

In the Psalms we learn to pray corporately, with the church of Christ in every age. We learn to pray Christocentrically, with our prayers led by Jesus Christ, by whose Spirit we pray them. And we learn to pray empathetically, as we identify with the wider church and focus less on our individualistic (and often introspective) concerns. Learning to sing and pray the Psalms will be a challenging affair, an unsettling experience, and yet a discipline that transforms us into the image of God's Son, the Lord Jesus, whose own prayer life was shaped by these wonderful poems.

The Psalms are God's chosen way to engage our thinking and our feelings in a way that is passionate, thoughtful, true and authentic. They show us how to express our varied feelings; but, more than that, they reorder our disordered affections so that we feel deeper desires for what we ought to desire, more urgent aversion to that from which we need to flee, and a greater longing for the honour of God in the health of Christ's church. The psalms form within us a richer palette of rightly directed emotions. It is not so much that the Psalms resonate with us as that they shape us so that we most deeply resonate with the God-given yearnings they so movingly express.

In many parts of the Christian church today the Psalms are the neglected treasure; many churches are like a poverty-stricken house with incalculable riches forgotten, neglected, moth-eaten and dusty in the attic. So come with me and let us bring the Psalms out and revel in the wonder they offer: a fullness and richness of relationship with God undreamt of by so many of us half-starved Christians.





## BIBLE TIMELINE

Where does the book of Psalms fit into the whole story of God's word?

### KING DAVID 1040-970BC

Of the 150 songs in the book of Psalms, 73 were written by King David. We include three of these in this Good Book Guide, along with one psalm by Moses, and others that are either unnamed or written by a group known simply as the "sons of Korah".

# 1

## Psalms 1 and 2

# BLESSED IS THE ONE...



### talkabout

1. What comes to your mind when you think about the book of Psalms? How do you feel about studying some psalms together?

- Do you have any favourite psalms? If so, which ones and why?



### investigate

Psalms 1 and 2 are like two grand pillars, one on each side of the entrance gate into the five books of Psalms. They introduce Book 1 and head up the whole Psalter.



#### Read Psalm 1:1-6

2. What does the blessed one *not* do (v 1)?

#### DICTIONARY

**Blessed (v 1):** happy; given good things by God.

**Chaff (v 4):** husks of wheat.

**Righteous (v 5):** right with God.

**LORD (v 6):** the covenant name for God.

- In contrast, what positively defines the blessed person (v 2)?

- And what picture of blessedness are we given in verse 3?

3. Why will those who “stand” in verse 1 “not stand” in verse 5?

- What is the deep reason why both the blessings and warnings in this psalm are true (v 6)?

4. Who is the one person who truly fits the description of Psalm 1 and deserves to inherit this blessing? How do they match this description?

⇒ **apply**

5. What would it take for you to show more and more the marks of this blessed person?



- What will it look like this week to turn from the pressures of a sinful world and instead delight in the law of God?



## getting personal

The life of Jesus, recorded for us in the Gospels, shows us that he was wholeheartedly committed to the belief that blessing is truly found only in a delightful obedience to the law of his Father. Take time to pause and meditate on the wonder of this.



## investigate

### ▶ Read Psalm 2:1-12

6. What are people plotting, and why is it “in vain” (v 1)?

### DICTIONARY

**Anointed (v 2):**  
chosen by God.

**Zion (v 6):**  
Jerusalem.

**Decree (v 7):**  
command.

7. What do we learn about “the LORD” in this psalm?

8. What do we learn about God’s anointed king in verses 6-9?



- How, therefore, should we respond to him?



## getting personal

The effect upon us, by the Spirit of Christ, of singing Psalm 2 is:

- to subdue our proud desires for autonomy (v 1-3).
- to persuade us more deeply that Jesus really is Lord (v 4-6) and nothing can change that (v 7-9).
- to move us to bow the knee to him now, in this age, before it is too late (v 10-12).

How will you respond personally to each of these three points?

Turn your answers into prayer.

9. Psalm 1 starts with a promise of blessing; Psalm 2 ends with one. How would you sum up in one sentence, from these psalms, how to be blessed?



## explore more

optional

Jesus Christ lived the righteousness of Psalm 1 and inherited the promises of Psalm 2. *In the following verses, how does Jesus match Psalm 2?*

- Acts 4:25-26 and Revelation 11:18
- Matthew 3:17 and 17:5
- Hebrews 1:2
- Revelation 12:5 and 19:15



## **apply**

10. How might you use these two psalms to shape your conversations this week...

- with someone who has rejected Jesus?

- with a Christian who is struggling with sin?

- with a Christian who is facing persecution for their faith?

## **pray**

Jesus Christ, the righteous One, the King in David's line, is precisely the righteous King that these psalms so beautifully and powerfully portray.

Blessing is poured upon him by the Father. Blessing is to be found in him and in him alone.

Spend some time thanking and praising Jesus, the righteous King.

