

Scripture Text

Psalm 63

Context

The Psalm is compiled by David, the king (or king to be, depending on when he wrote it) of God's people. The title points this out, as well as telling us that it was "when he was in the wilderness of Judah". This could either have been whilst he was fleeing from king Saul or alternatively when he was fleeing from his son Absalom. It is more likely to be Absalom since the psalms refers to the vindication of the "king" (v11) which David would not have been if he was in the wilderness during Saul's reign. His time in the wilderness is clearly a time of trouble which is evident from the "watches of the night" (v6) and "those who seek to destroy my life" (v9).

Observation & Meaning

1. What themes or ideas are repeated in the passage? What images or metaphors are used?
2. What is the tone of the passion and what emotions is the author arousing? What is David inviting us to do as a result of his experience?
3. What actions are mentioned here in a positive way that is inviting emulation?
4. What does the passage teach us about God that should lead us to desire to follow those actions?
5. What does the passage teach us about God, His people and life in this world?

Big Idea

A vision of God's power and glory leads to an understanding of God's steadfast love, and this love is the source of great satisfaction, so much so that it is to be prized above life itself. It should lead

us to seek God, meditate upon Him, praise His name, and rest secure in final vindication of God's king and those who trust in him.

Connecting to the whole Bible's storyline

Whilst living in the midst of trouble on earth, we can seek God and know His soul satisfying steadfast love. Some of the major themes of the Psalm (steadfast love, power, glory, and the king who rejoices in God) are all fulfilled in Christ who is the expression of God's love, both the power and glory of God, as well as the king who trusted in God and will reign forever. Those who swear by Him will be satisfied with His steadfast love and will be finally vindicated when He returns.

Sermon outline

1. Longing for God (v1)
2. Having our souls satisfied by God (v2-6, 9-11)
 - Seeing God's power and glory (v2)
 - Understanding God's love (v3)
 - Being experientially satisfied (v5)
3. What "seeking God for satisfaction" looks like (v1-8)
 - Intentionally seek after God (v1)
 - Look upon God's power and glory (v2)
 - Meditate upon these truths (v6)
 - Cling to God (v8)
 - Sing his praises (v3, 4, 5, 7)

Application

1. God is clearly first in David's longings. Why is this and do you know God in the way that David does?
2. What do you need to see and understand about God that will make you seek him above all else?
3. Where are God's power, glory and steadfast love most clearly seen?
4. David's seeking of God involves a number of practical actions. How can you give yourself to seeking God in this way?

Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

- Who is writing and to whom?
- What is the situation of the author and of the readers?
- Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?
- Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.