

PARKSIDE at PRAYER

Praying through Psalm 13



PARKSIDE
CHURCH

Parkside at Prayer: Praying through Psalm 13

This evening, in lieu of our gathered prayer service on March 15, 2020, we pray together although separated. We encourage you to use this guide as a way to pray on your own, with your family, or even over the phone with a friend.

As you begin, pray the Lord's Prayer and then read Psalm 13 out loud.

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil,
For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever. Amen.*

Psalm 13

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

- 1 *How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?*
- 2 *How long must I take counsel in my soul
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?*
- 3 *Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,*
- 4 *lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.*
- 5 *But I have trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.*
- 6 *I will sing to the Lord,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.*

It is always right for God's people to look to God's Word as He gives us the perspective and stability of His sovereign rule and care. On any day, and especially on a day with unusual concerns and troubles, God's Word is our guide and instructs us that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).

Purposefully, we want to follow the pattern of Psalm 13 and begin by acknowledging our condition and our need before the Lord. Our needs are an opportunity to come before God in honesty and dependence.

Acknowledge Before God our Present Condition

We pray to the Lord in humility recognizing that we, like the Psalmist, are people of need and concern. We are sorrowed (v.2), shaken (v.4) and question God's presence (v.1). Our condition reveals our need for God's sure foundation, and His redirecting grace.

- Acknowledge our personal need for God (Psalm 130, Psalm 40:13-17).
- Acknowledge humanity's need for God (Eph. 2:12, John 15:6, Romans 8:20-23).

You may be helped by closing this section by praying these words adapted from a Puritan prayer¹ that recognizes our weakness and need before the Lord.

Spirit of God,

Help me in my weakness; When I am pressed down with sorrow, confusion, and I don't know what to do, help me Lord, I pray.

If you look at my life and heart and see anything wrong, please convict me of sin. If there's anything impure I delight in, any idol I hold dear, any delight that is not yours, any habit that grieves you, any sin I want to hide from you, then Lord please forgive me and teach me to walk in the way of your commands.

Lord, please deliver me from my burdens, make me a joyful and holy person dependent upon you. Please help me to walk a life that is committed to following you, fighting against my own sin and weakness.

Teach me to worship and adore you; please make me a person of praise and gratitude to you.

I come to you now as a child of God before you, my loving Heavenly Father. Holy Spirit, give me the power to live as your child in all I do. Help me to live today as a child of God, not a slave to sin. Preserve me from trusting in any empty idol or desire; keep and humble me with a joy and purity from you.

Lead me, Lord, to live focused on your kingdom and your glory, not asking whether the road before me will be rough or smooth. I ask, Lord, that you will help me to fix my gaze on your face, to be content with food to eat, with clothes to wear, that in everything your salvation will be my joy. Amen.

Cry Out to God in Light of our Present Condition

Our fight against despair and self-dependence begins as we cry out to God in prayer. As we approach God's throne of Grace and help in our time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16), we come with confidence giving voice to our concern and drawing near to Him.

- Crying out to God for the salvation of many people (1 Tim. 2:1-7, 2 Tim. 2:24-26, Rom. 10:1, 2 Peter 3:9).
- Crying out to God asking that he will preserve and sanctify his people (Psalm 16:1, 1 Thess. 5:23-24).
- Crying out to God for intervention and perseverance in the midst of our present crisis (Phil 4:6-7, Job 42:2, 2 Cor. 4:16-18, Psalm 107:23-32).

Close this section with these words adapted from The Book of Common Prayer:

"O God, Creator and preserver of all mankind, we cry out asking that you would make yourself known throughout the world. We pray that people around the world and neighbors next door, strangers and friends, people in all walks of life would come to know your salvation and find new life in the Lord Jesus.

We pray that your church would be guided by your Spirit. That we would be filled with your compassion for the lost, have unity in the Holy Spirit, and be led by your truth and love. We entrust to you those who suffer and are sick. We ask if it pleases you that you would comfort and heal. For those who care for the sick and serve places of need, please sustain them, give them courage, help them to be a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray, as citizens of this world, we would be ambassadors of your kingdom. As creation groans and we see the effects of sin in our world, we pray looking forward to the day when all will be made right. Until that day comes, we bring our cry to you asking that you would

both keep us and use us for your glory. We ask all of this for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Trust and Worship God in the Midst of our Present Condition

In our third and final section, we follow the pattern of Psalm 13, trusting and worshipping God in our present circumstance. Our circumstances may not change, but His presence gives us new perspective. Today, and every day, He is worthy of worship.

As vv. 5-6 lead us: *"But, I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me."* His love is steadfast and His salvation is the source of our joy.

- Ask God for a unique sense of His steadfast love (Psalm 136, Psalm 25:10, Isaiah 54:10).
- Worship the Lord for His salvation, His steadfast love, His daily grace. (Hab. 3:17-19, Lamentations. 3:21-25, 2 Cor. 12:9, Heb. 13:6).
- Ask God to grow your trust in His promises, and His power to deliver (Prov. 3:5-6, James 1:12, 2 Thess. 3:3-5, Matt. 11:28-30).

We are thankful to God that His church and His people can come to Him from any place, at any time, with any need. As need arises we pray that God will strengthen and use His people to bring Himself all the glory. These words of benediction from the book of Ephesians provide a helpful conclusion:

"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen" (Eph. 3:20-21).

¹ Bennett, Arthur. *The Valley of Vision: a Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions*. Banner of Truth Trust, 1975