

Praying the Psalms

Psalms has been called the prayer book of the Bible in both Jewish and Christian traditions. It is a collection of sung prayers that has been used in worship from the time of ancient Israel up to the present. Because the psalms range so widely in emotional expression, from the heights of adoration and praise to the depths of vengeful curses against the enemy, they have special relevance to our prayer life. They teach us to hide nothing from God, but to bring all that is real into the only relationship that can bless the best and heal the worst in us.

No matter what we are feeling — distress, trust, anger or delight, we find the words of the psalms accompany us into God's presence. In the psalms we find words to express every conceivable human condition and feeling. These prayers give us words to glorify, confess, hope, ask, and even curse. In so doing, they give us permission to share our whole being with God.

Step #1: Pick any Psalm to explore.

Step #2: Try reading the same Psalm from more than one translation or paraphrase.

Step #3: After exploring the Psalm, you might chose to write your reflections in your journal or even try writing your own psalm