

Icebreaker

At the start of this month (Sunday February 2nd) it was 'Groundhog day'. In the film of the same name a character relives the same day over and over again. If you could relive one day from your life all over again (and again) what day would it be?

READ PSALM 145:1-21

1. David, the author of this psalm, says "*every day I will praise you*" (v2). For David, praising God was a 'Groundhog Day' experience – something he repeated every day and committed to do so "*for ever and ever*"(v2)
 - i. What kind of things could act as a barrier to people feeling that they could praise God "every day"?
 - ii. Do you find it easy to praise God every day?
2. This psalm says that God is worthy of praise (v3) inspiring people to speak out about His "mighty acts" (v4), His "wonderful/awesome works" (v5&6), His "great deeds" (v6) and His abundant goodness (v7). Spend a few moments highlighting various events in world history, Biblical history or your own history which provide examples of this characteristic of God in action.
3. Over the last 2 Sundays we have read 2 very similar psalms (Psalm 145 and Psalm 103). Both start and end with a call to praise God and verse 8 of both psalms contain virtually the same wording. (Psalm 103:8 says '*The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love*'). Why are these characteristics of God important to remember, especially when reading the Old Testament?
4. Verses 9 and 16 are all inclusive. How does these verses work out in practice in places that are currently experiencing war, floods and famine?
5. Verse 13 speaks of God's kingdom as being an everlasting one. By contrast, throughout history oppressive kingdoms have come and gone.
 - i. What changes in "power" within our world have you seen taking place during your lifetime?
 - ii. How might this influence our prayers when praying for nations who are under oppression today?
6. Verse 13 says that the Lord is "*trustworthy in all he promises*". Do you have a personal story where God promised something to you and it came about, just as He had promised?
7. Verse 14 speaks of the Lord as one who "*upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down*". In recent days a number of high-profile Christian leaders have 'fallen' due to sexual immorality, coercive behaviour, misogynistic attitudes to women and other forms of spiritual abuse.
 - i. How should the church respond when its leaders 'fall from grace'?
 - ii. Do you think the second part of this verse has a direct relation to the first?

GROUP OR PERSONAL ACTIVITY

This psalm is an acrostic one - each line beginning with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet, starting with 'Alef' and ending with 'Tav'. On Sunday Glyn suggested that it may be a good exercise to try and create our own acrostic psalm – starting with 'A' and ending with 'Z'. If this is something you might like to do as a group, then why not begin the process before ending this study and continue it over time together. When completed, if you would be willing to read it out publicly as part of our act of worship then please let Glyn know