

Title:

Rehearsing Life

You are already preparing for how you respond to the unexpected through what you rehearse

Big Idea:

The Psalms are historically prayers that both the Jewish people as well as the ancient church would pray regularly (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:26 - the Psalms were a central part of the rhythm of early church life). As they prayed prayers that may or may not have had to do with their current circumstances, they were training themselves for how they would respond to those circumstances in their lives. The Psalms help us to rehearse life - they prepare us for how we will respond to the unexpected in our lives

Dates:

June 29/30 - July 27/28

Objectives and Outcomes:

- For people to put their trust in Jesus as King and to express it through baptism (June 29/30)
- To help people connect with the historic use and rhythm of the psalms as regular prayers that helped to create a context for how people would process experiences in their lives
- Encourage a rhythm of praying the Psalms (we will provide a "Praying the Psalms" bookmark for people to use during this series)
- For people to recognize the way they respond in situations is based on what they are already rehearsing in their lives - to intentionally rehearse how we will respond to God in situations that we might not be in the midst of at that moment.

Weekly Overview:

June 29/30

WHO'S IN CHARGE?

Psalm 47

For God to be king, means that we are not. In order for God to be on the throne, we have to get off of it. God already is king, and he already rules, and we either chose to live in rebellion to that reality or to submission to it. To recognize God as king is to give him first place in our lives. In doing that, we're recognizing the reality of who God is, which leads us to praise and worship. When we worship, it's about putting God in his rightful place in our lives. We declare God as king as a rehearsal for the times when we have a hard time letting him be king, when we want to be the center of our own lives, so that we are able to better stand during those times.

We will also do a spontaneous baptism push this weekend - recognizing baptism as a public declaration that Jesus is King in our lives...that he is on the throne.

July 6/7

FINDING DIRECTION FOR LIFE

Psalm 1

To choose God's ways and to allow his law and his wisdom to lead you is to live a rooted life. One of the ways we rehearse this is through the meditation - the intentional soaking in of Scripture. When situations arise that you don't know how to respond to, if you have been drinking in the richness of the Scriptures, you will already have rehearsed how you will respond.

July 13/14

WHEN LIFE IS HARD

Psalm 22

The Psalms of Lament make up over 1/3rd of the Psalms - more than any other category of Psalms. By regularly praying these Psalms, the Hebrews and the ancient church had set a tone for how they would respond in tragedy in their lives - even when life wasn't hard, they would rehearse how they would respond when it was. When life is hard, we cry out to God in honesty, we don't have to hide our feelings or emotions - but we also recognize praise of him in that place. Rehearsing laments helps you to be able to cling to God even in the midst of tragedy.

July 20/21

LIVING IN CONFIDENCE

Psalm 27

Being aware of the presence of God allows you to live with confidence. Intentionally turning your attention towards the Lord - what David calls, "dwelling in the house of the Lord" or "gazing on the beauty of the Lord" - is a way to rehearse God's presence in our lives in order to help us live with confidence. You can live with a self-assurance when you are assured of the presence of God in your life.

July 27/28

JOYFUL EXPECTATION

Psalm 126

A reflection on the good that God has done in the past, helps us to live with praise in the midst of present circumstances. This is a part of what Paul calls, "giving thanks in all circumstances". We rehearse by recounting the way God has been faithful and the good he has done, and that helps us to live in a joyful expectation. The Israelites would sing this Psalm of Ascent as they traveled to Jerusalem as a reminder of living in joyful expectation of what the Lord would do because of what he had already done.

Ideas, Research, Random Notes:

"The Psalter is the great school of prayer."

~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together

When you pray the Psalms, you are not praying alone - you are joining in with the "great cloud of witnesses", praying prayers that for thousands of years, followers of Jesus and of YHWH have prayed...prayers that people around the globe are still praying today. Your prayers, even if you are praying them alone, become not just an individual experience, but a joining with a community who is praying them

A part of what prayer does, is to conform you to the will of God - praying the Psalms helps you to do that

"...prayer is not a matter of pouring out the human heart once and for all in need or joy, but of an unbroken, constant learning accepting, and impressing upon the mind of God's will in Jesus Christ..."

~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together

Worship song selection for each week should reflect the kind of Psalm that we're looking at together (making sure not to use "lament" type songs during the Psalms of Praise or vice-versa)...they should compliment as much as possible the kind of Psalm we are looking at

Dr. Walter Brueggemann on the Lament Psalms - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxqmtft4WYM>