



PRAYER SERVICE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10TH, 2021

Join us at 7pm in the Sanctuary or on [Facebook](#) and use this guide to pray along with us.

• INTRO

Welcome to Prayer Service! We continue our journey through the Psalms, the Bible's *Prayer Book*, with Psalm 25. This heartfelt, personal prayer can be summed up in one sentence: *"In the midst of all the troubles of life, I place my hope in you, and you alone, O God."*¹ *You alone, O God.* This is the heart cry of the friends of God; this is the fundamental disposition of a follower of Jesus. The more we surrender to God alone, the more we open up ourselves to God's grace which transforms our lives—and the more God's grace transforms our lives, the more we surrender to Him alone! As Jesus said to those who would follow Him, in letting go of our lives fully, we discover life most completely (Matt. 16:25). In the words of a song we'll sing at the end, *"I found my life when I laid it down...I touch the sky when my knees hit the ground."* When this is the true posture of our hearts, our first instinct in times of trouble is not frantic worry or desperate panic; it's wholehearted dependence on God's saving help and desperate pursuit of His presence. When we seek God in this way, He promises to be found. Allow this Psalm to increase your hunger for God, your dependence on His ways, your trust in His grace, and your pursuit of His presence in times of hardship. Let's pray.

• PAUSE

"As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God." (Lectio365) *Pause and pray.*

As we read **Psalm 25** together, be open with the parts that confuse or challenge you; meditate on the parts that stand out to you:

"¹In you, LORD my God, I put my trust. ²I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. ³No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause. ⁴Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. ⁵Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. ⁶Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. ⁷Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good. ⁸Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. ⁹He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. ¹⁰All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant. ¹¹For the sake of your name, LORD, forgive my iniquity, though it is great. ¹²Who, then, are those who fear the LORD? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose. ¹³They will spend their days in prosperity, and their descendants will inherit the land. ¹⁴The LORD confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them...

¹ James L. Mays, *Interpretation Commentary: Psalms*, © 1994 John Knox Press

15 My eyes are ever on the LORD, for only he will release my feet from the snare. 16 Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. 17 Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish. 18 Look on my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins. 19 See how numerous are my enemies and how fiercely they hate me! 20 Guard my life and rescue me; do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. 21 May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope, LORD, is in you. 22 Deliver Israel, O God, from all their troubles!

- **SONGS**

“You Alone”

VERSE 1

You are the only One I need
I bow all of me at Your feet
I worship You alone

VERSE 2

You have given me more
Than I could ever have wanted
And I want to give You my heart
And my soul

CHORUS

You alone are Father
And You alone are good
You alone are Savior
And You alone are God

BRIDGE

I'm alive I'm alive I'm alive I'm alive
I'm alive I'm alive I'm alive I'm alive

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- **PSALM 25:1-7**

“1 In you, LORD my God, I put my trust. 2 I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. 3 No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause. 4 Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. 5 Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. 6 Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. 7 Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good.”

Verse 1 can also be translated, *“To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.”* One commentary calls this first line, *“...a profound description of prayer...”* and observes, *“In Israel, lifting up one’s hands in a stretched-out position was a gesture of entreaty used in prayer. To lift up the soul to God is a metaphor for what the gesture means. The metaphor portrays prayer as an act in which individuals hold up their conscious identity, their life, in hands stretched out to God as a way of saying that their life depends completely on God and only on the help of God.”*² As the Psalmist lifts up his soul to God, he continues by crying out for help and deliverance from the many threats of life. What’s interesting is that this prayer for deliverance is followed up by the request, *“Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior...”* There’s an important connection here: if we want to find help in this life through its many trials, we need to depend on God’s wonderful revelation of truth that leads us on the paths of true and abundant life.

² *Interpretation Commentary: Psalms*

Do we depend completely on God's ways? Do we desperately seek His truth to guide us? Or are we merely trying to make our own way and occasionally asking for help when things get hard? If we want what this Psalm is asking for, it all goes back to the first line: "To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul." A song by *The City Harmonic* captures this heart cry: "*I give my heart up in my empty hands / And as I look it's like I see the sum of who I am / All my hopes, all my dreams, all my thoughts and the things I love / All my sin, all my fear, all my sorry's for the things I've done / You can have it all it's Yours / All of it Yours.*"³ So, let's pray through this together. Consider even lifting up your hands to God as you pray it: "*To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust...*" *Pause and Pray.*

- **PSALM 25:8-15**

"⁸ Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. ⁹ He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. ¹⁰ All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant. ¹¹ For the sake of your name, LORD, forgive my iniquity, though it is great. ¹² Who, then, are those who fear the LORD? He will instruct them in the ways they should choose. ¹³ They will spend their days in prosperity, and their descendants will inherit the land. ¹⁴ The LORD confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them. ¹⁵ My eyes are ever on the LORD, for only he will release my feet from the snare."

The good news of the Bible is this: God in His goodness doesn't merely cast us off because of our rebellious ways; rather, "*he instructs sinners in his way.*" If we will humble ourselves, if we will "*fear the LORD,*" (that is, live in reverence, holy awe of His greatness and authority), He will forgive us and teach us the right way to go.

Read the passage above again, slowly and prayerfully. Find one verse or phrase that stands out to you right now and let it become your prayer. *Pause and pray.*

- **PSALM 25:15-22**

"¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. ¹⁷ Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish. ¹⁸ Look on my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins. ¹⁹ See how numerous are my enemies and how fiercely they hate me! ²⁰ Guard my life and rescue me; do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. ²¹ May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope, LORD, is in you. ²² Deliver Israel, O God, from all their troubles!"

This Psalm mostly comes across as a personal prayer, between and individual and God; yet, multiple times it takes the focus off the individual and reflects on others, on the world as a whole, or on Israel. The whole prayer ends with a petition for all God's people: "*Deliver Israel, O God, from all their troubles!*" Take time now to direct your prayers outward, to give intercession for others you know who come to mind: perhaps close friends or families, someone in need, or situations in the world at large. On behalf of that person, people, or situation, pray these words and ask that God in His goodness would intervene:

³ *The City Harmonic, "Yours" © 2011*

“Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish. Look on my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins.” Pause and pray.

- **SONG**

“Touch the Sky”

VERSE 1

What fortune lies beyond the stars
Those dazzling heights too vast to climb
I got so high to fall so far
But I found heaven as love swept low

CHORUS

My heart beating my soul breathing
I found my life when I laid it down
Upward falling spirit soaring
I touch the sky when my knees hit the ground

VERSE 2

What treasure waits within Your scars
This gift of freedom gold can't buy
I bought the world and sold my heart
You traded heaven to have me again

BRIDGE

Find me here at Your feet again
Ev'rything I am reaching out I surrender
Come sweep me up in Your love again
And my soul will dance on the wings of forever

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- **Closing**

“Father, help me to live this day to the full, being true to you in every way. Jesus, help me to give myself away to others, being kind to everyone I meet. Spirit, help me to love the lost, proclaiming Christ in all I do and say. Amen.” (Lectio365)