



## PRAYER SERVICE WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23<sup>RD</sup>, 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've been praying through the Psalms, one chapter at a time, because we believe that one of the keys to *thriving* in this journey with Christ is consistently making time to immerse ourselves in God's presence and God's word, together in fellowship with God's people. Or, to put it more simply, to pray God's Word together. Since the Psalms are the "prayer book" of the Bible, it's the perfect gateway to a life of prayer and worship. Tonight's Scripture, Psalm 37, is less of a prayer and more of a reflection on the right way to live and the wise way to respond to evil in this world. If we reflect on these words of wisdom, we'll learn to pray more deeply and truly: to trust God, to seek goodness, to pray in the midst of disappointments and evil in ways that really honor God. There's so much wisdom here to soak in, let's get started. *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." (Pete Greig, Lectio365)

"Jesus, I give everything and everyone to you. I give everything and everyone to you, God."  
(John Eldredge, Daily Pause)

*Pause and pray.*

As we read **Psalm 37** together, be open with the parts that confuse or challenge you; meditate on the parts that stand out to you:

***<sup>1</sup> Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; <sup>2</sup> for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. <sup>3</sup> Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. <sup>4</sup> Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. <sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: <sup>6</sup> He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun. <sup>7</sup> Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. <sup>8</sup> Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil. <sup>9</sup> For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land. <sup>10</sup> A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. <sup>11</sup> But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity. <sup>12</sup> The wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them; <sup>13</sup> but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he knows their day is coming. <sup>14</sup> The wicked draw the sword and bend the bow to bring down the poor and needy, to slay those whose ways are upright. <sup>15</sup> But their swords will pierce their own hearts, and their bows will be broken. <sup>16</sup> Better the little that the righteous have than the wealth of many wicked; <sup>17</sup> for the power of the wicked will be broken, but the LORD upholds the righteous. <sup>18</sup> The blameless spend their days under the LORD's care, and their inheritance will endure forever. <sup>19</sup> In times of disaster they will not wither; in days of famine they will enjoy plenty. <sup>20</sup> But the wicked will perish: Though the LORD's enemies are like the flowers of the field, they will be consumed, they will go up in smoke. <sup>21</sup> The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously; <sup>22</sup> those the LORD blesses will inherit the land, but those he curses will be destroyed. <sup>23</sup> The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; <sup>24</sup> though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand. <sup>25</sup> I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. <sup>26</sup> They are always***

*generous and lend freely; their children will be a blessing.* <sup>27</sup> *Turn from evil and do good; then you will dwell in the land forever.* <sup>28</sup> *For the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. Wrongdoers will be completely destroyed; the offspring of the wicked will perish.* <sup>29</sup> *The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever.* <sup>30</sup> *The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom, and their tongues speak what is just.* <sup>31</sup> *The law of their God is in their hearts; their feet do not slip.* <sup>32</sup> *The wicked lie in wait for the righteous, intent on putting them to death;* <sup>33</sup> *but the LORD will not leave them in the power of the wicked or let them be condemned when brought to trial.* <sup>34</sup> *Hope in the LORD and keep his way. He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are destroyed, you will see it.* <sup>35</sup> *I have seen a wicked and ruthless man flourishing like a luxuriant native tree,* <sup>36</sup> *but he soon passed away and was no more; though I looked for him, he could not be found.* <sup>37</sup> *Consider the blameless, observe the upright; a future awaits those who seek peace.* <sup>38</sup> *But all sinners will be destroyed; there will be no future for the wicked.* <sup>39</sup> *The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; he is their stronghold in time of trouble.* <sup>40</sup> *The LORD helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in him.*

- **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

CCLI Song # 2182124 David Crowder | Jack Parker © 1998 worshiptogether.com songs CCLI License # 870332

**“Come Thou Fount”**

**VERSE 1**

Come Thou fount of ev'ry blessing  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace  
Streams of mercy never ceasing  
Call for songs of loudest praise  
Teach me some melodious sonnet  
Sung by flaming tongues above  
Praise the mount I'm fixed upon it  
Mount of Thy redeeming love

**VERSE 2**

Here I raise mine Ebenezer  
Hither by Thy help I'm come  
And I hope by Thy good pleasure  
Safely to arrive at home

Jesus sought me when a stranger  
Wand'ring from the fold of God  
He to rescue me from danger  
Interposed His precious blood

**VERSE 3**

O to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be  
Let Thy grace Lord like a fetter  
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee  
Prone to wander Lord I feel it  
Prone to leave the God I love  
Here's my heart Lord take and seal it  
Seal it for Thy courts above

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- **PSALM 37: Don't**

The Psalm is a little too long to go through every verse, so let's break it down into three areas: in this Psalm, there are a lot of “do not's,” a lot of “do's,” and a lot of promises. Let's start with the “do not's.” Let's reflect on the things this Psalm advises us to avoid:

***“Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away.” (v. 1-2)***

***“...do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.” (v. 7b)***

***“Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil.” (v. 8)***

The resounding wisdom of this Psalm is: *do not fret, refrain from anger*. This is just the opposite of what we usually do when faced with the world’s problems. How do you respond when you see troubles in the world? The Bible does not teach us to ignore evil or be indifferent to injustice—quite the opposite. There is even a kind of righteous anger that is necessary and good (think of examples like Jesus clearing the Temple); but much of our anger, if we’re honest, is more about fretting, worrying, and giving in to the kind of malice that “leads to evil” by our words and deeds. *Do not fret, refrain from anger*. What problems in your life and the world at large are troubling you right now? Would you be willing to ask God to take these burdens in such a way that would allow you to truly seek holiness and goodness in the midst of the problems? *Pause and Pray*.

- **PSALM 37: Do**

We looked at the “negative” aspects, the things the Psalm tells us *not* to do, but the Psalm has even more *positives*. Here is some of what the wisdom of this Psalm encourages us to *do*:

***“Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.” (v. 3)***

***“Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this...” (v. 4-5)***

***“Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him...” (v. 7)***

***“Turn from evil and do good; then you will dwell in the land forever.” (v. 27)***

***“Hope in the LORD and keep his way...” (v. 34)***

***“Consider the blameless, observe the upright; a future awaits those who seek peace.” (v. 37)***

If the main theme of the “do nots” was “*do not fret*” then the main theme of the positives is “*trust*.” It really boils down to *not dwelling* on the success of evil, on the predominance of wickedness, but rather dwelling *on God*, delighting *in God*, and trusting *in God*, where we will find what we need to *do good* and persevere in a broken world. That’s the secret to living for good: don’t be overwhelmed by what’s wrong (and there is *much wrong*); rather, dwell on the goodness, the faithfulness, and the promises of God. This is easier said than done! One reason it’s so hard for us today is that we tend to get saturated with all the *negative information* that dominates our media—bad news sells, good news is hard to find. If we spend as much or *more* time absorbing the Daily News as we do absorbing God’s Word and seeking his presence, it’s a recipe for fretting, frustration, even despair. Do you ever get “stuck” on all the negatives? Take time to dwell on these positive instructions again: “*Trust in the Lord...take delight in the Lord...commit your way to the Lord...be still before the Lord...Hope in the Lord...consider the blameless...observe the upright...*” *Pause and Pray*.

- **PSALM 37: Promise**

Lastly, this Psalm contains a host of promises, affirmations, and observations about the Lord, the life of faith, and the life of wickedness. Here are some of those promises and reflections to dwell on:

***“He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun.” (v. 6)***

***“For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land. A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity.” (v. 9-11)***

***“Better the little that the righteous have than the wealth of many wicked; for the power of the wicked will be broken, but the LORD upholds the righteous.” (v. 16-17)***

***“The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.” (v. 23-24)***

***“<sup>35</sup> I have seen a wicked and ruthless man flourishing like a luxuriant native tree, <sup>36</sup> but he soon passed away and was no more; though I looked for him, he could not be found.” (v. 35-36)***

***“<sup>39</sup> The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; he is their stronghold in time of trouble. <sup>40</sup> The LORD helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in him.” (v. 39-40)***

When we immerse our lives in the presence of God, the word of God, and the people of God—when we live for his greater Story—this quiet confidence and trust becomes a part of who we are, second-nature. By the grace of God, we can live daily with this kind of trust even in such a world as this. Do you want that? Pick one of the passages above to reflect on, reread it slowly, meditate and let it guide your prayer for your life and others. *Pause and Pray.*

- **SONG**

**“See a Victory”**

**VERSE 1**

The weapon may be formed but it won't prosper  
When the darkness falls it won't prevail  
'Cause the God I serve knows only how to triumph  
My God will never fail, my God will never fail

**CHORUS**

I'm gonna see a victory, I'm gonna see a victory  
For the battle belongs to You Lord  
I'm gonna see a victory, I'm gonna see a victory  
For the battle belongs to You Lord

**VERSE 2**

There's power in the mighty Name of Jesus  
Every war He wages He will win  
I'm not backing down from any giant  
I know how this story ends, I know how this story ends

**BRIDGE**

You take what the enemy meant for evil  
And You turn it for good, you turn it for good

CCLI Song # 7129060 Ben Fielding | Chris Brown | Jason Ingram | Steven Furtick © 2019 SHOUT! Music Publishing Australia

- **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.” (Pete Greig, Lectio365)***