

Neighborhood Communion Group
Discussion Questions
The Psalms, part 3

Background

The idea behind neighborhood communion groups arose from the earliest Christian communities that gathered regularly in homes for a time of eating and talking, something often missing in our busy lives. As you gather with friends, think of it as a throwback to the early church, or a dinner party in our day. Below, you'll find a Scripture passage, along with some suggested questions. Neighborhood Communion is a chance to enjoy food and food for thought.

Scripture Passage

Psalm 27 (selected verses, inclusive version)

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid? One thing have I asked of the Lord; one thing I seek; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, beholding the fair beauty of the Lord and seeking God in the temple. For in the day of trouble, O God, you shall keep me safe in your shelter; you shall hide me in the secrecy of your dwelling and set me high upon a rock. Even now you lift up my head above my enemies round about me. Therefore, I will offer in your dwelling an oblation with sounds of great gladness; I will sing and make music to the Lord. What if I had not believed that I should see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living! O tarry and await the pleasure of the Lord; be strong, and God shall comfort your heart; wait patiently for the Lord.

Discussion

Dr. Graves preached on these verses from Psalm 27 early in 2020, noting it is a psalm of reorientation. Such psalms arise after a time of testing, coming to a new place of trust in God. And yet, doubts can linger. With this in mind, think about the following questions:

- 1) In the selected verses above (or looking at the whole psalm), what verses stand out as confident praise in God? Is there a particular image or line that gives you renewed hope? Can you think of a time in life when a new perspective emerged out of a time of suffering and despair?

- 2) Isolate the verses of doubt present in the psalm. One of the more common refrains in the psalms are worries about triumphant enemies. What do "enemies" look like in today's world, in your own life? Does this seem like a timely category or a dated one?

(More on back)

- 3) What do you make of the somewhat schizophrenic nature of the psalm, praising at one moment and despairing in another? What sorts of experiences have you had like that? Do psalms of disorientation make you feel better about the ups and downs of life? Is there one word or image in this psalm to which you feel drawn?