

PSALM 119

SESSION 4:

PSALM 119:49-64

Quick Start



READ

Take some time in advance to read and consider the Bible study questions and come up with personal examples to encourage discussion.



PRINT

Before meeting, make enough copies of this session's handout for your entire group. The handouts came with your download.



WATCH

Make sure everyone can see the screen and the audio is at a comfortable level.

Note: For more detailed information, please see the How to Use The Leader's Guide document.

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OPEN

Describe a time when you found the courage to face something difficult or scary because of the assurance of someone with you (a parent teaching you to swim, helping you ride a bike, learning to drive, etc.).

Why did you believe in their assurance? What made them trustworthy to you?

How did their encouragement give you the courage to take that risk?

Throughout life, there will be times when we will face difficulty. During those seasons, it may even be difficult to see God in the midst of the pain. When those times come, we can find great comfort in the assured promises of God, which is where we want to focus our time today.

READ

Read 119:49–64.

WATCH

Show Session 4: *Psalm 119:49–64* (12:30 minutes)

DISCUSS

We live in a Genesis 3 world, which is to say we live in a broken world. Life does not function the way God intended from the beginning and because of that we experience suffering.

What were the three causes Matt gave for suffering?

1. The fallenness of our world
2. The sin of others
3. Our own sin

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How have you experienced suffering in your own life?

How do you tend to respond to suffering? What do you turn to for comfort and support?

As we know from Psalm 119, David was experiencing oppression and slander from those around him. He suffered like the rest of us and wrote about where he turned for comfort and support, which is important for us because his answers are true for us today as well.

Someone re-read verse 50. Matt first pointed out that we find comfort in the promises of God. **When you hear that phrase—the promises of God—what comes to mind?**

What are some biblical promises that stand out to you? Why?

Go Deeper

Learn more about God's promises to His people from the following passages:

John 4:14; 14:2–3; Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 5:17; Phil. 1:6; 4:6–7

What do these passage promise to those who believe in Christ? (Sustenance, an eternal home, freedom from condemnation, new life, completion, and peace that surpasses all understanding)

What are some of the obstacles that cause you to lose sight of these promises?

How are you in need of encouragement today? In what ways do these promises breathe life into the areas where you feel weak?

What can you do practically in the coming days to anchor yourself in these promises, which are yours through faith in Jesus?

How should the promises of God reshape the way you respond to times of suffering?

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Matt described the promises of God as a “warm blanket for a weary soul.” During his journey through chemotherapy, he focused on biblical promises as light in his darkness. They continually remind us of the future that awaits us, but they are not the only source David describes as offering comfort.

DUST OFF THE HEBREW

The verb *chaya*, meaning, “to be alive” is used 16 times throughout Psalm 119—the majority of them referring to spiritual life (vs. 25, 50, 93, 107). In verse 50, the verb is constructed in a way that intensifies the action and is sometimes translated “revives me” to reflect this intensity. According to David, the promises of God are a “comfort” to him in times of affliction because they revive his weary and deadened soul. This truth echoes throughout the whole counsel of Scripture and remains a comfort to us today. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we receive the promises of God as comforts that revive us in our affliction.

What did Matt identify as a second source of comfort from verse 57? (The nearness or presence of God)

One of the lies we often believe is that giving our lives to Jesus will lead to a comfortable life. Yet, nearly every book of the New Testament promises that those who follow Christ will experience suffering. As Matt said, the true gift of our faith in Jesus is that we get God and He is enough regardless of life’s circumstances.

How have you experienced suffering as a result of your faith in Jesus?

How did you experience the presence of God in those times? In what ways did you receive peace and comfort as a result?

How have you found God’s presence to be a sufficient “portion” in difficult times?

If God Himself is our portion, then so are all of His attributes, which is where David turns in verse 58 by asking that the Lord extend to him favor and grace. In the same way, those who are in Christ enjoy not only the presence of God, but also His character, especially that of His grace.

How would you define grace? (Unmerited favor)

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As Matt explained, through faith in Christ we are reconciled to God by His grace. Our salvation is not dependent on our own works, but upon the grace of God extended to us in Christ. His grace is unchanging, constant, and redefines all that we experience in life.

What should change about our view of suffering as recipients of God's grace? (God does not intend suffering for our punishment, but allows it in the same way that a surgeon wounds for the sake of removing what would ultimately harm us.)

What would look different about your response to suffering if you were able to fix yourself continually on the truth that God is good to you in the midst of it?

In addition to God's grace, we also receive His testimonies. Typically, the term "testimony" used in this context refers to God's instruction, meaning the Old Testament Law. But as Matt pointed out, it highlights for us the truth of God's sovereign work within human affairs and we see that story played out through the stories of many important figures throughout the Bible.

What did Matt describe as "the story of the Bible"? (It is the story of God working in the mess.)

When you think about the stories within the Bible, what are some examples that demonstrate God at work in the hurt, pain, and sorrow of humanity?

What attributes of God do they illustrate?

Leader: Answers to this question can vary (power, sovereignty, mercy, etc.), but be sure to lead them to the recognition that the stories of the Bible demonstrate for us all what King David has listed as his comforts up to this point. They reveal God's presence among His people, His grace extended, and the trustworthiness of His promises.

The stories of the Bible also mature our perspective on suffering. **If people like Moses, David, and even Jesus were not exempt from suffering, how should that cause us to prioritize our comfort?**

With God as our portion, we enjoy His constant presence, His grace, and His testimonies, but we also receive the invitation to approach Him at any time. In fact, He tells us to come to Him with our needs for He is willing and ready to provide. David points out two crucial provisions in verses 62–63, the first of which is that God is always available to us even in the dark

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hours of the night.

How should the truth of God's constant availability encourage us in times of darkness?

Jesus says in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." **In the weeks ahead, what can you do to be more proactive about running to God in times of weakness, failure, and suffering?**

In addition to the nearness of God, David also touches on God's provision of companions who will walk alongside of us. Let's look back at verse 63.

How have you found the companionship of other believers to be a comfort to you in difficult periods of life?

Do you have that kind of community today? Why or why not?

Who could you invite into your life to help you carry whatever pain and loss you may be experiencing?

LAST WORD

If you're struggling or hurting today, don't suffer alone. Devote yourself to cultivating a heart and mind that embraces the promises of God as true for you in Christ. He is near to the broken hearted and desires to give rest.

He has also created a common fellowship across the body of Christ. As believers, we are called to bear one another's burdens and that can only begin when we are honest about the things that burden us. Ask God to open your eyes to the trustworthy believers He has placed around you and invite them into your pain and loss. God is faithful to provide for us and carry us through trial no matter how difficult it may seem.

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LIVE IT OUT

Pray: Whatever pain or struggle you are feeling today, spend some time each day this week confessing it to God and asking for Him to meet you in your need.

Resolve: Whether you are in a season of struggle or one of comfort, resolve to face times of difficulty with confidence that God is at work in the mess.

Memorize: Select 2-3 of the biblical promises mentioned in the session and devote those passages to memory. Ask that God would comfort you with them in times of trial.

Encourage: If you know someone who is struggling, reach out to them and encourage them with the promises of God. Schedule a time to get coffee or take them to lunch and be intentional about offering them refreshment through the truth of Christ.

Invite: Be proactive about seeking community this week. Invite trusted believers into whatever pain, hurt, or doubt you are experiencing and allow them to help you bear that burden.