

psalms

living in selah

A NEWSTORY CHURCH SERIES



part 4, Psalm 40

Pastor Tom Kang

REMINDER: This guide is intended to spark meaningful conversation, not exhaustive coverage. The goal is connection, not completion. So feel free to spend extended time on just one or two elements that resonate with the group. Aim for heartfelt connection & personal application. Finally, trust the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion in the areas most needed by your group and enjoy!

Ice-Breaker: What was the last concert you attended and/or name one of your all-time favorite songs.

1. Read Psalm 40:1-3 and then verse 17 aloud. David begins with thanksgiving for deliverance but ends crying out for help again. What does this teach us about the nature of faith and the Christian life?
 2. Pastor Tom mentioned how songs can “hold opposing truths simultaneously without needing to resolve them,” like U2’s lyric “I can’t live with or without you.” What are some examples of contradictory feelings or truths in your own spiritual journey?
 3. Psalm 40:1 says “I waited patiently for the Lord.” Compare this with Isaiah 40:31 and Lamentations 3:25-26. What do these passages teach about the spiritual discipline of waiting?
 4. Psalm 40:3 mentions God putting “a new song in my mouth.” This theme appears elsewhere in Scripture (Psalm 96:1, 98:1, Revelation 5:9). What might it mean for God to give you a “new song” in your current circumstances?
 5. Eugene Peterson said “praying isn’t being ‘nice’ before God ... the Psalms are not pretty, they’re not smooth ... but they are honest.” How comfortable are you with bringing raw, unfiltered emotions to God? What is it that might hold you back?
 6. One idea in the sermon was that “the Christian life isn’t a problem to be solved... but a song to be sung.” How does this perspective challenge your own pragmatism and/or Western Christianity’s tendency to seek quick fixes and solutions? What would it look like to live your faith more like a song than a code of conduct leading to reasonable (predictable) results?
 7. Pastor Tom observed that “most of our days are a tangle of both grace and grime.” Henri Nouwen wrote, “Joy and sorrow are never separate. When our hearts rejoice at a spectacular view, we may simultaneously feel sorrow that we cannot share it with someone we love who died.” How does this both/and reality of Christian experience offer comfort in difficult seasons?
 8. The sermon ended with some reflection questions about what honest song God might be calling you to sing. Which one resonates with you most and why:
 - What “miry clay” are you pretending isn’t actually sticky?
 - What solid rock are you afraid to fully trust?
 - What deep sorrow are you refusing to name before God?
 - What old wound is God wanting to transform into worship?
 9. Take a moment for SELAH—to pause and reflect on what God has revealed through this discussion.
- For the full interview of Eugene Peterson and Bono:
<https://fullerstudio.fuller.edu/bono-eugene-peterson-psalms/>



SEE YOU AT THE BEACH!