

## Small Group Study Summer Semester Week One

*Remember, these questions are just tools for discussion. You don't need to 'get through them all'. Use the questions that are helpful, skip the questions that are not. And let the conversation flow naturally.*

### Optional Ice Breaker(s)

- a) What is the longest book you have read / movie you have watched? Was it 'good' long, or 'not so good' long?
- b) If your house was on fire, and you could grab one thing to save (besides family / pets), what would you save? What makes that item so important to you?

### Passage and Discussion

**Read Psalm 119:65-72** (or the whole Psalm if you're up for it)

- a) What stands out to you upon first reading of this passage? What is a theme, verse, or word that you find encouraging? What do you find challenging in this passage?
- b) Richard pointed out that this Psalm is an acrostic, with each shorter section beginning with the next letter in the Hebrew alphabet. Does the knowledge of this structure excite you? What does this poetic intentionality say about the nature of the Psalm, the nature of God and the intention of the Psalmist?
- c) This Psalm starts off by saying, 'do good to your servant, *according to Your Word*'. What does God's Word say about the way in which He relates to us? Do you know some verses or passages that point to God's goodness and care for His people?
- d) In **v66**, the Psalmist says that He 'trusts the commands of the Lord'. Would you say that you trust God's commands? Are there any commands of scripture that you have a difficult time trusting? What are some commands that our culture does not trust?
- e) Richard made the statement that 'affliction' was the answer to the Psalmist's prayer. Do you share this experience? Have you ever (in hindsight) seen that what you thought was negative, was actually God doing something for good?
- f) Share a time when you were 'afflicted', and when you look back, you are glad that you went through that circumstance? What did you learn about God through this?
- g) **Read v71**. This is not a statement many of us make very often - "it was good for me to be afflicted." Why do you think we do not see our trials in this way. **Read James 1:2-4**. What is the Biblical way to see our 'afflictions', according to this passage?

- h) Richard ended by sharing several promises of God. How do the promises of God help us trust God when we seem to be afflicted? Do you have a specific Biblical promise that you cling to, or that is an encouragement in your life?
- i) Was there anything else in the message on Sunday that stood out to you as impactful or challenging? Did you learn anything about the Psalms that you didn't know before?

### **Take it Home (Optional Ideas for Response this Week)**

- a) This week, continue reading through the Psalms! Over the next few weeks, we will be exploring a new Psalm each week, so continue reading them to have them in your mind as we learn them together as a church community.
- b) Take a moment to make a list of some things that you would like God to do in your life (think character development, etc.). Then write down some of the ways in which God may encourage that growth (for example, praying for patience may mean needing to wait for something). Then, if you are still open to it, pray that God would bring those things about, that you may grow in the likeness of Christ.

### **Optional Ideas for Prayer Time**

- a) Pray that God would give each member of your group an increased desire for God's Word. That he would give you an appetite for the Bible and God's will.
- b) In this season, it is important for us to be intentionally praying for each other. This also means that we must each choose to be honest and vulnerable with our prayer requests. Take time to 'check-in' about how each person is doing, and pray for them.