



Studying the Psalms

Psalm 145: 1-8

I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed, and I will declare your greatness. They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness, and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Last week our Psalm taught us about seeing God in nature all around us. We were challenged to go out into the world and look for God. Today, our Psalm is about our personal relationship with God. This week our Psalm is a prayer, written by King David, to God. It shows David's devotion to God. David joyfully and boldly declares that he will celebrate all that God has done for him and for his people. David was a mighty king who won many battles and yet in this Psalm he gives all the credit to God.

Today our study has two parts: first, we will meditate like David. We will take some time to relax, think, and ponder about what God has done in our lives. Then we will put our thoughts into words and write about it just like David.

What is meditation?

Meditation is simple: it's taking time to sit, lay, or recline, quietly, and think about something or nothing at all. Meditation is different for everyone and can be a wonderful experience when life is getting noisy and complicated.

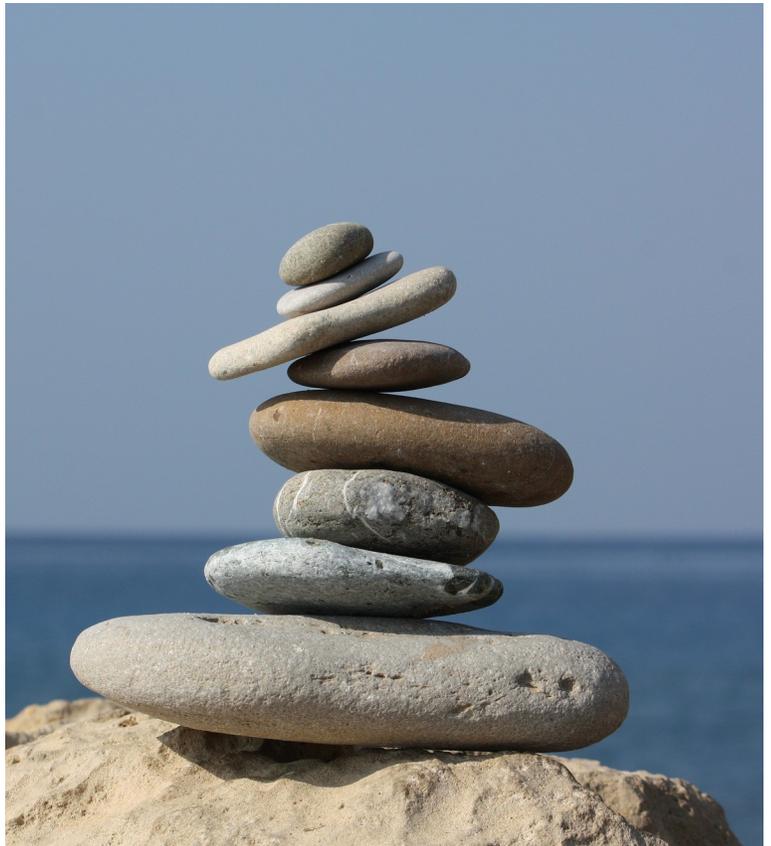
How do I meditate?

How do you meditate? Try sitting quietly with no sounds or distractions around you. Take a few deep breaths and listen to the sound of your breathing. Concentrate on just listening to and feeling yourself breath. Breath in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to clear your mind and think of nothing else but your breathing. Try this for only 3-5 minutes. There is no perfect way to meditate and it can be hard even for people who have done it for years. The point is just to relax and be quiet for a few moments a day. Now take a minute to reflect on your meditating process in the box on the next page. Did you feel relaxed? Was it hard? Will you try it again? Were you able to concentrate on just your breathing?

Reflect on your meditation experience here. Write about what you learned.

Finding *balance*...

Meditating or taking quiet time to reflect are all about finding balance in your life! This is why people wrote poetry, songs, or Psalms — to take time out of their busy days to reflect and thank God for all their blessings. A fun, unique and interesting way to practice balance is an activity called 'stone balancing.' You may have seen pictures of this or even seen one in person. The point is to concentrate on stacking the stones or rocks so that they balance on top of each other and don't fall over. You can do this anywhere—a park, the beach, on a nature trail, or even in your own backyard. As you stack the rocks try to concentrate on simply finding balance. Take deep breaths, just like you did when you were meditating. Think about what God has done in your life. This is a great activity to do with kids! Use each rock to name something you are thankful for or a blessing in your life. Use a sharpie marker to write on the rocks the things you are praying about. However you do this activity make sure it is *relaxing*. Don't be discouraged if your rocks fall over, keep trying and breath. Remember this is about finding balance, relaxing, and meditating.



Closing prayer...

Dear God, help me to take time out of each day to relax, breath, and find balance in my life. Like David, I want to meditate on all the wonderful things you have done in my life. Give me the time and opportunities to take a break each day. Continue to bless me and the ones I love. Amen.