



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK 3

We continue our look at the way songs inform and bring life to our faith. Our hymns give us words to proclaim both what God has already done and what God's promises to lead us towards in the future.

Peace of Christ,
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Pastor of Discipleship

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: EXODUS 15.20-21

Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing.²¹ Miriam sang to them:

*"Sing to the LORD,
for he is highly exalted.
Both horse and driver
he has hurled into the sea."*

- Miriam looks back at recent history to proclaim what God has done. God has saved her people from the approaching enemy and the rescue is worthy of a song. The look back at God's acts of salvation leads Miriam to instruct others to sing with her. The singing creates a forward looking hope of what God will yet do for God's people. **Can you remember such a time when God's past activity seems to point to God's future activity?**
- *God, I look backwards and see your faithfulness in my life. I look forward and long for You to move again in mighty ways that will form the memories of future generations. Amen.*

TUESDAY: PSALM 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

² *He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,*

³ *he refreshes my soul.*

*He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.*

⁴ *Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,*

*for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,*

they comfort me.

⁵ *You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.*

*You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.*

⁶ *Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.*

- The hymn that Pastor Jacob focused on this week was “Precious Lord Take My Hand.” The line that says, “Lead me on, take my hand” reminds us of a shepherd like the one referred to here in the 23rd Psalm. The shepherd is both humble and strong. Even as we are led by the shepherd, we might find ourselves calling out for him (Hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall), and we have the assurance that he hears us, holds us, and refreshes our soul. **Does the image of Jesus as a shepherd bring you comfort? Can you name moments when he has clearly been guiding you towards better things?**
- *Jesus, I look to you to bring me to green pastures and quiet waters. I want to dwell in your Father's house forever. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: 2 CHRONICLES 20.14-16, 21

Then the Spirit of the LORD came on Jahaziel son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph, as he stood in the assembly.

¹⁵ *He said: “Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: ‘Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's.’”* ¹⁶ *Tomorrow march down against them.--*

—After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying:

*“Give thanks to the LORD,
for his love endures forever.”*

- Taking a moment to dig deeper into this passage from 2 Chronicles, you will find the story of God's victory for God's people. Jahaziel is empowered by the Spirit of God to bring comfort to the people in the face of what looked to be certain defeat. Based on the promise alone, the men sang praise to God! In the following verses we read of God's intervention to bring confusion among the enemies of Israel, so that they turned on each other—the battle truly was God's. In verses 27-28 the people return to Jerusalem rejoicing once again with song. **Is there a battle that you are facing that you need to turn over to God? Spend a moment offering praise to God for what he will yet do!**
- *God, forgive me for thinking that I must fight my battles alone. Help me not only give them to you, but sing my own version of “Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever.” Amen.*

THURSDAY: HABAKKUK 3.2

*LORD, I have heard of your fame;
I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD.
Repeat them in our day,
in our time make them known;
in wrath remember mercy.*

- Stories of God's intervention can bring us hope and comfort, but sometimes they seem like distant memories. We could say, "I have heard of this God, but is he still around? Is he still at work in this world?" The prophet Habakkuk prays a bold prayer—*repeat your wonderful deeds in our day. Let us see it. Have mercy on us!* **Think of a past miracle or action of God. What would it look like if he were to repeat it today, in our time?**
- *God, you have been faithful before. As I lift up my situation to you today, I ask that you would repeat your mighty acts of mercy. Amen.*

FRIDAY: ACTS 16.25-30

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.²⁷ The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped.²⁸ But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas.³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

- This is one of my favorite scenes in the early days of the church. From their prison cell, Paul and Silas demonstrated their trust in God by singing to God. We could maybe imagine what our song would be as we sat in prison. I hope that my song would be one that would teach the other prisoners about a God who can free them from more than their physical imprisonment—who can free them for an eternal life through Jesus. Even the jailer and his entire household were baptized and came to believe. **You may not be in an actual jail cell today, but what is it that has you feeling caged in today? What is holding you back from life? Pick a song of worship and lift it up to God.**
- *God, put a song in my heart and on my lips today so that I can muster up praise even when I'm feeling trapped or persecuted. Amen.*

SATURDAY: COLOSSIANS 3.15-17

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

- The admonishment through song referred to by Paul in his letter to the Colossians, sounds like a tactic of a shepherd who is showing his sheep the way. A song can function like a rod or a staff to

teach us and to admonish us. So can you picture our Shepherd Jesus guiding us in the Way that leads to life by singing a song? The songs he sings give us hope and truth so that we can stand even when we are tired, weak and worn. **How do the songs of our Shepherd sound different from the songs you hear from other places or sing to yourself?**

- *Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd. Guide me and teach me. Admonish me with your wisdom so that I might find my way home. Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Read through (or listen to) the words of the hymn [Precious Lord Take My Hand](#).

*When my way groweth drear
Precious Lord, linger near-ear
When my li-ight is almost gone
Hear my cry, hear my call
Hold my hand lest I fa-all
Take my hand, precious Lord
Lead me on*

*Precious Lord, take my hand
Lead me on, let me sta-and
I am tired, I'm weak, I am worn
Through the storm, through the night
Lead me on to the li-ight
Take my hand, precious Lord
Lead me home*

*When my work is all done
And my race here is are you-un
Let me see-ee by the light
Thou hast shown
That fair city so bright
Where the lantern is the li-ight
Take my hand, precious Lord
Lead me on*

*Precious Lord, take my hand
Lead me on, let me sta-and
I am tired, I'm weak, I am worn
Through the storm, through the night
Lead me on to the li-ight
Take my hand, precious Lord
Lead me home*

- What are the core teachings of this hymn?
- What does it tell us about ourselves?
- What does it tell us about God?
- Underline a phrase that particularly stands out to you today. How can you carry it with you as the song of your heart in the days to come?