



BE THOU MY VISION

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Friends,

The Book of Psalms is one of the most beautiful and cherished parts of the Bible, but it is also a compelling reflection of the values that we should hold dear as the people of God. In this study we will use eight Psalms to emphasize and clarify the vision and values that shape and guide our congregation.

Since King David is the writer and compiler of many of the psalms, we have chosen events in his life that correspond to the values expressed in the psalm being studied. Although the particular psalm may not have been written about that event, it still flows from the heart of a person whose desire is to live a life that is honoring to God. As we reflect on David's attempt to live out these values, it is our hope that we will be guided to apply them to our own life with greater understanding and devotion.

This study is designed to supplement the sermon series that we will share at Kirk of the Hills from January 5 through February 23, 2020. You will benefit the most from both hearing the sermon and discussing it in community. If you are unable to be with us in person on a Sunday, the sermons are available to watch or listen at thekirk.com. May your faith be deepened and your heart for God enlarged through this study of his Word.

In Christ,

Dan Bair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Bair', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Pastor of Discipleship & Missions

Our Mission – What?

We are a church transformed by Christ
to transform the world.

Our Values & Measures – Why & When?

Prayer Saturated

Demonstrated by increasing dependence on God's direction
and provision through a prayer saturated life.

Measure: What am I talking with God about these days?

Worship Centered

Demonstrated by placing personal and corporate devotion
to God at the center of life.

Measure: How am I expressing devotion to God this week?

Bible Grounded

Demonstrated by grounding everything we believe, say and
do on God's authoritative Word.

Measure: What Scripture is guiding my thoughts today?

Relationship Focused

Demonstrated by focusing environments on developing
healthy, God-honoring relationships.

Measure: Who am I helping grow spiritually?

Gospel Driven

Demonstrated by a driven passion to have gospel conversations with people who are disconnected from God and the church.

Measure: With whom did I have a recent gospel conversation?

Generosity Filled

Demonstrated by an overflowing desire to invest time and money in the life and mission of the church.

Measure: How am I investing time and money in God's work?

Mission Mobilized

Demonstrated by lives compelled to go and participate in sharing Christ locally and globally.

Measure: Where am I going to do Kingdom work?



We are transformed by Christ to transform the world.

Psalm 1

The Vision in the Psalm:

Psalm 1 is a special psalm in that it was most probably selected by the editors of the book of Psalms to be the introduction to the entire collection. In much the same way, our mission statement is an introduction to all of the values that compel us forward as a congregation. Many of the psalms were compiled by David originally to be the hymn book for the worship of God in the temple he dreamed of building.

You could say David was “worship centered.” How does this psalm pick up other Kirk values like Bible Grounded, Relationship Focused and Gospel Driven?

The righteous person is described in verses 1 & 2. What are the things that a righteous person should and should not do?

In verses 3-5 the righteous and the wicked are compared to agriculture. Think about these images. What do they teach us about being transformed by Christ?

Share some of the insights you gained from listening to the Kirk sermon on this Psalm

The Vision in David's Life:

Transformation is an act of God, it is not because of our effort, connections, or position in life. Saul was the first king of Israel, the son of a prominent family in the tribe of Benjamin. He was tall, strong and connected, but he did not have a heart for God. Although he was selected by God to rule, mentored by the prophet Samuel, and enjoyed the support of the people he failed to allow the Spirit of God to transform him. He remained a selfish, power-hungry man who trusted in his own intellect and strength to rule Israel rather than trusting in God. Therefore, God chose a new king, one who would be different in every way than King Saul. In this story, God sent Samuel to anoint a new person to be the next king. He did not tell him who it was, but he was to go to the household of an insignificant man named Jesse who lived in the insignificant town of Bethlehem.

Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Why did Samuel expect Eliab, Jesse's oldest son, to be the one God had chosen to be king?

The Lord said, "People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." What are some of the external qualities that we look at in a leader and what are the internal qualities that are far more important?

Verse 13 gives us the secret to David's continued success. What was it and how does God do the same thing for us?

Read 1 Samuel 17:32-37

Chapter 17 records the story of David and Goliath. In the midst of the story, David tells King Saul about his youth and give us some insight into his heart. What do we learn about David's character?

Finally compare what we learned from Psalm 1 with the story of David's anointing. Knowing what you know about David, how did he apply the words of this Psalm to his life?

The Vision Lived out

We measure our vision and values by asking ourselves questions about their application in our daily life. If we just learn about God and his Word but never take the steps to apply it to our lives, then we will not be transformed. King Saul knew about God and his law, but he did not allow it to change the way he made decisions and treated other people. David, on the other hand, learned the Word of God and applied it to his life, whether he was tending the sheep, fighting in a battle, or leading a nation.

What does transformation look like for our congregation?

How can we be agents of transformation in the world?

Describe one way that you have been transformed by the Spirit of God recently.



Demonstrated by placing personal and corporate devotion to God at the center of life.

Measure: *How am I expressing devotion to God this week?*

Psalm 66

The Value in the Psalm:

Psalm 66 is bound together in a group of psalms of David. In this psalm, it seems that he steps back from his own personal circumstances and looks at God's greatness on a broader, more universal scale. It is healthy for us to step away from the cares of our own life and think about the Lord in this way.

In verses 1-7, David calls all of the earth to praise God. What are some of the attributes of God that the people of the earth should recognize in their Creator?

The psalmist continues to praise God in verses 8-12 but it is more of a testimony in the midst of hard times. What do you think he is describing? Are there times in your own life where God has taken you through a time of testing and you have felt the same?

Verses 13-15 describe David's devotion at the temple/tabernacle. How does our worship at church serve the same purpose as the vows and sacrifices described here?

The psalmist again turns to personal experience as he shares God's faithfulness. How was God faithful to him? How has he been faithful to you over the years?

Share some of the insights you gained from listening to the Kirk sermon on this Psalm.

The Value in David's Life:

As King David consolidated his control of Israel he chose Jerusalem as his capital and defeated the Jebusites who controlled the city. His desire was to bring the worship of God into the City of David. The Tabernacle at Shiloh had been moved after the Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines. The Ark had been returned to Israel but sat in the home of a private citizen during the entire 40 year reign of King Saul. David desires to return the Ark to the center of worship in its new home in Jerusalem, however, he decides to transport it on an ox cart, the way that the Philistines had returned it to Israel...

Read 2 Samuel 6:1-23

According to Numbers 4:15 there was a certain family of Levites who were to carry the Ark and they were not permitted to touch it or they would die. Why is God being so strict with these ordinances? Wasn't David's good intentions enough? How do we worship in our own way instead of the way that God prescribes?

Read 1 Chronicles 15:3-15

David takes three months to research and correct the problem. This passage tells us how David did it. The Word of God must govern our worship. Can you think of ways that our emotions or our culture can affect our worship in a manner that is contrary to the Bible?

David rejoices before the Lord as the Ark is being carried into the city. How did people react to his expression of worship and what was his response?

List the ways that David's heart for worship is a model for us to follow.

Finally compare what we learned from Psalm 66 with the story of David bringing the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. How did he live out the principles expressed in the psalm in his life?

The Value Lived out

Worship is at the center of our lives as Christ followers. We should be worshiping the Lord together with the people of God and individually in our private prayer and devotional practices.

What does being "Worship Centered" look like for our congregation?

What is one thing you can change in your daily/weekly routine to become more "Worship Centered"?

Our Measure for being worship centered is:

How am I expressing devotion to God this week?



Demonstrated by grounding everything we believe, say and do on God's authoritative Word.

Measure: *What Scripture is guiding my thoughts today?*

Psalm 119

The Value in the Psalm:

Psalm 119 is a twenty two stanza poem where each stanza represents a letter in the Hebrew alphabet. The stanzas all have 8 verses, each of which begins with that letter. This carries the idea of completeness. The Word of God is completely trustworthy, completely necessary for life and to be obeyed completely.

Just to get warmed up, take a couple of minutes to share different ways that we are guided on a journey. Think about tools we use, or have used in the past or different kinds of transportation.

In the first three verses, the psalmist says that those who walk according to the Law of the Lord are blessed. What does this mean? How have you been blessed by walking in accordance with the Word of God?

Verses 9-11 tell us the secret to staying on the path of purity. What does that look like in our lives today? How can we encourage young people with this passage?

The final verses of this stanza (12-16) paint the picture of a person whose obedience to the Word of God is internally motivated. How does this happen? What methods or spiritual disciplines have you used to hide the Word in your heart?

Share some of the insights you gained from listening to the Kirk sermon on this Psalm.

The Value in David's Life:

David reigned over Israel for 40 years. He was a man after God's own heart. Even though he sinned and made mistakes, David was an example to those around him and especially to his children and grandchildren of a king who endeavored to put God first in his life and work. In this passage David is on his death bed and he speaks these final words to his son and successor, Solomon.

Read 1 Kings 2:1-4

What are the three admonitions that David gives to his son?

David points Solomon back to the Law of Moses (the Word of God). He is told to walk in obedience to God and keep his laws. This is a personal command. Although he is to enforce the laws of Moses, he must start with keeping them personally. I think this was David's secret – he knew he was not above the law of God. How can we live this principle out ourselves?

What are the benefits of keeping God's laws and commands? For the kings of Israel, and for us today?

David was not a perfect parent, but here we see him using his authority and role as a father to influence his son. How can we build a heart for the Word into our children?

Look back at Psalm 119:1-16, how did David live out this psalm in his life, and especially in his last days?

The Value Lived out

The Bible is our foundation for living. If we do not base our life on the unchanging Word of God as the truth, we are left to develop our own truth or we are carried along by the ever-changing currents of our culture, which are increasingly moving away from a God-centered worldview.

What does being “Bible Grounded” look like for our congregation?

What is one thing that you could do differently or more consistently that would make you more “Bible Grounded”?

Our Measure of being Bible grounded is: *What Scripture is guiding my thoughts today?* Can I identify specific words from the Bible that are influencing the way I think, act, live ... on a daily basis?



Demonstrated by increasing dependence on God's direction and provision through a prayer saturated life.

Measure: *What am I talking with God about these days?*

Psalm 86

The Value in the Psalm:

Psalm 86 is the only psalm directly attributed to David in this third book of Psalms. David's attitude of humility comes through in the terms he used in addressing God in this psalm. Seven times he called God his Lord or Master (Heb. adonay), a title that stresses His sovereignty over David (vv. 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, and 15). It is called a Prayer of David, as he cries out to the Lord to hear him.

Is David concerned that God is not hearing him or is he confident that his prayers are getting through to God?

In verses 1-7 how does David see himself and how does he see the Lord?

In verses 8-10 David lifts up his head and “goes big.” Why is it an important part of prayer to contemplate the big picture sovereign power and majesty of the Lord?

In verses 11-15 David prays back to God what he has learned from the Word about God. Why is this a practice to follow in our own prayers ... doesn't God already know all those things ... does he need us to remind him?

In an interesting moment, David reflects on the faith of his mother (vs. 16). Who has been an example of prayer in your life? Share a way that that person's example has been an inspiration to you.

Share some of the insights you gained from listening to the Kirk sermon on this Psalm.

The Value in David's Life:

We are going to look at one of the most important chapters in the whole Bible, God's promise to David. It begins with David settling into his newly constructed palace in his permanent capital city of Jerusalem. David has been on the run for about 15 years of his life, finally he has a place and his throne is secure. Quickly he compares his permanent dwelling with the temporary/mobile worship center developed in the wilderness during the time of Moses and thinks, "God needs a permanent temple befitting his glory and relationship with his people, Israel.

Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17

When life was going well for David he turned to the Lord and looked for the way to honor him. How can we honor God when things are going well?

Look at what the Lord said to Nathan the prophet concerning David (5-16) and "his house" or dynasty. Discuss the different aspects of this promise and what impact it has on the coming of Jesus.

David prays to the Lord in response to the promise that God had made to him and to his offspring (verses 18-29). What is David's attitude as he addresses the Lord? How should we express this same attitude in prayer?

In verses 20-25 David "goes big!" Do you ever take time in prayer to think back across your own personal history with God and his faithfulness to you? What is the benefit of doing that?

From verse 25 on David prays back the promise that God has just made. What does this reveal about David? How can our prayers be a demonstration of our faith in God?

Review Psalm 86, How did David apply the principles from this psalm in his prayer?

The Value Lived out

Prayer is communication with God. It is kind of like speaking with a trusted friend or even a counselor. It is not just the advice that we receive but the exercise of putting into words our own emotions, beliefs and fears. As we pray we open our heart and adjust it to what is right and true from God's perspective. We express our fears and then allow the Word of God and His presence to comfort us and we receive his promises to us in faith.

What does being "Prayer Saturated" look like for our congregation?

After this study, what aspect of prayer would you like to develop over the coming weeks?

Our Measure of being prayer saturated is: *What am I talking with God about these days?* Is there anything you can share with the group that is continually in your prayers?



Demonstrated by focusing environments on developing healthy, God-honoring relationships.

Measure: *Who am I helping grow spiritually?*

Psalm 78

The Value in the Psalm:

Psalm 78 is a teaching psalm – it is a psalm of wisdom and the second longest psalm in the book. We will focus on the introduction but it recounts the history of God's interaction with his people, reminding them how they got to this place of peace and prosperity under the leadership of King David.

As we read the first three verses of the psalm we are reminded of all that God has done in our past and the wonders of God recounted in the Bible. Why is it important to remember the past acts of God?

In verse 4 we are told to tell the next generation what God has done. Name some of the ways that we can carry this out both personally and in the context of the church.

In verses 6-8 it talks about the importance of communicating the law of God from generation to generation. This, of course, involves our families but how can we apply this to discipling younger Christians? What are the benefits of discipleship indicated in this psalm?

Share some of the insights you gained from listening to the Kirk sermon on this Psalm

The Value in David's Life:

As we know, David was just a young man when he appears on the scene and faces Goliath. This catapults him into leadership in the military and in the eyes of the king. David, however, does not come from a prominent family, and he has no real experience with national leadership. He needs a mentor, he needs to be disciplined so that his faith and raw talent can be refined to the point that he can be the king that God is calling him to be. He finds this mentor in the son of King Saul, Jonathan.

Read 1 Samuel 18:1-9

Describe the relationship between David and Jonathan according to verses 1-4.

Think about the things that Jonathan gave to David. What do they symbolize? How might they indicate that he was discipling his younger friend.

Why was King Saul concerned about David's popularity?

Read 1 Samuel 19:1-6

How did Jonathan advocate for David before his father? How can we be an advocate for younger leaders that God has placed under our care?

In spite of his promise not to harm David, Saul continued to seek a way to destroy him. In 1 Samuel 20:30-33, the king reveals his frustration with Jonathan. What was the cost to Jonathan of his support for and protection of David? Can you think of examples of how discipleship can come at a cost to those who are discipling younger believers?

The Value Lived out

Relationships are important in the body of Christ. Sometimes, however, we think of them only as a benefit to us personally. God wants us to think about our relationships with a Kingdom perspective. He has given you children so that you may teach them the stories, truths, and commands of our faith so that they may walk in the ways of the Lord as they grow into maturity. He has given us friendships so that we can encourage and instruct one another in the ways of God. Sometimes we are disciples, learning from the example of others, and sometimes we are disciplers teaching what we have learned through the Word or the trials and triumphs of life.

How would our church change if we were all intentionally being “Relationship Focused?”

What is one practical way that you can live a more “Relationship Focused” life in the coming weeks?

Our Measure of being relationship focused is:
Who am I helping to grow spiritually?



Demonstrated by a driven passion to have gospel conversations with people who are disconnected from God and the church.

Measure: *With whom did I have a recent gospel conversation?*

Psalm 30

The Value in the Psalm:

As the title suggests, Psalm 30 was written by David to be used in the dedication of the Temple, for which he was preparing and would eventually be constructed by his son Solomon. It is a song of praise to God for his mercy and grace as he saves us from our own destruction.

In the first three verses, David reflects on his salvation. He paints three distinct pictures of what that salvation is like. What are they and how are they fitting examples of how God has saved us from our own sin?

In verses 4-5 David encourages us, as believers, to sing praises to the Lord because weeping lasts only a short time but rejoicing comes soon after. What does this mean to you and how have you seen it in your own life?

Verses 8-10 are addressing our prayer for help from the Lord.
What do we learn from David's prayer?

By the end of the song, David has experienced transformation.
What would David's illustration of transformation look like in modern terms?

Share some of the insights you gained from listening to the Kirk sermon on this Psalm.

The Value in David's Life:

David experienced the power of the grace of God in his own life and he was quick to share it with other people through his songs and his actions as the king. Psalm 30 is a poetic representation of the Gospel, but there is a story in David's life that is such a powerful example of grace that it could almost be a parable for our own salvation. It comes in the wake of David's rise from being the ruler over his tribe of Judah to becoming the national king over all 12 tribes of Israel. For this to happen the dynasty of King Saul needed to be wiped out. Against David's will, the family of Saul was executed except for one grandson who escaped. David wanted to honor his covenant with Jonathan, his friend, the son of the former king.

Read 2 Samuel 9:1-13

In what ways is Mephibosheth like us in our unredeemed and sinful state?

How are David's actions as the king similar to the way that God treats us?

In verse 8 Mephibosheth expresses how we feel when we realize the grace of God in our lives? Which verses from Psalm 30 capture how Mephibosheth felt when his life took such a dramatic turn as he experienced the kindness of the king?

The Value Lived out

The Gospel is the good news of God's grace being poured out in our lives. Just like Mephibosheth, we have received favor from God that we do not deserve. It is not because of what we have done but because of the covenant between God and his Son, Jesus Christ, who died so that we could be redeemed. David proclaimed that grace in the Psalms and lived it out in his actions. We must do the same. We must be Gospel Driven!

What does being a "Gospel Driven " church look like? How would it be different than what the Kirk is today?

How can your life be intentionally "Gospel Driven." What step could you take tomorrow to move closer to that goal?

Our Measure of being gospel driven is:
With whom did I have a recent gospel conversation?



Demonstrated by an overflowing desire to invest time and money in the life and mission of the church.

Measure: *How am I investing time and money in God's work?*

Psalm 49

The Value in the Psalm:

Psalm 49 is a wisdom psalm. In this poem the writer explores the temporary nature of wealth. The psalm begins by calling all of the peoples of the earth to contemplate this subject. He is using both the method of a proverb and the appeal of a song to cause us, the readers, to grow in wisdom and understanding.

Think about this for a minute, why is the accumulation of wealth and our own mortality like a riddle?

In verses 7-9 use the idea of a ransom being paid to extend life or escape death. Why is this a fitting image?

Verses 10 and 11 talk about the houses of the poor and the wealthy who perish. Read verses 16-17, how is the psalm encouraging us to have the proper perspective?

How is death like a shepherd for those who trust in themselves? (vv. 13-14)

Verse 15 is the focal point of the psalm. How does it give us assurance in the face of our own mortality?

Finally this psalm helps us to put wealth in its proper perspective ... what does that mean for us today?

Share some of the insights you gained from listening to the Kirk sermon on this Psalm

The Value in David's Life:

King David went from a poor shepherd boy to a wealthy monarch who accumulated vast amounts of resources from his conquest of surrounding nations and taxation on the prosperity of his own people. How did David handle becoming rich? Did it change him from being a wise and godly man to a fool?

Read 1 Chronicles 29:1-9

David makes the decision to give vast amounts of wealth to the construction of the temple instead of leaving it all as an inheritance to his son, Solomon... Why? Was this wise?

Look at the list of resources that David gives from his treasury and from his own personal portfolio... How does this demonstrate what is in David's heart?

In verses 6-9 we see the result of David's extravagant and sacrificial gift to the work of the Lord. What was the result and how is his giving a model for us today?

Read the beginning of David's prayer in verses 10-12. What does it reveal about his attitude toward his kingdom and his personal wealth?

How does David live out the wisdom of Psalm 49?

The Value Lived out:

Keeping wealth in its proper place is very difficult in a culture that idolizes materialism. We are influenced every moment of every day to hold on to money and possessions as if they could bring us life and happiness. At the end of our life, our wealth is left behind, and the only way that it takes on any real eternal significance is if it is generously invested in the Kingdom of God.

How can our congregation be more "Generosity Filled?"

List the areas in our own lives where we can practice the value of generosity? What decisions could we make in the long-term that would increase our ability to live a generosity filled life?

Our Measure of being generosity filled is:

How am I investing time and money in God's work?



Demonstrated by lives compelled to go and participate in sharing Christ locally and globally.

Measure: *Where am I going to do Kingdom work?*

Psalm 67

The Value in the Psalm:

Psalm 67 is focused on the nations of the earth. Using the more general word for God (Elohim) rather than the covenant name of Israel for the LORD (Yahweh), this psalm is an evangelistic call to people everywhere to be included in the saving purposes of the creator God.

Notice the wording of verse 1, it sounds like the priestly blessing found in Numbers 6:24-26. What is the difference in audience? Why is that both surprising and significant?

What does God do for the nations that will lead them to praise him? (vv. 4-6)

Verse 7 prays, “May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.” How is God’s blessing on us a testimony to the nations? And how can we “get the word out” to them about what he has done for us?

By singing this song, what was God trying to build into the heart of his people Israel? What is he building in our hearts?

Share some of the insights you gained from listening to the Kirk sermon on this Psalm

The Value in David’s Life:

As we read in the last lesson, David amassed his resources to build a glorious temple for the Lord in Jerusalem, but as God promised it would be Solomon who would actually construct it. Once David passed away, Solomon completed the Temple and began a process of dedication that is very important in our understanding of God and his desire to dwell among his people.

Read 1 Kings 8:6-16

When the Ark of the Covenant is placed in the inner chamber of the temple, called the Holy of Holies, what happened?

King Solomon addressed the crowd and emphasized that God had selected David to rule. Why do you think that this is important? Remember the promise that God made to David concerning “The House” in 2 Samuel 7 – it has eternal implications.

Solomon continues by giving a lengthy prayer of dedication for the temple and in it he addresses the nations of the world. Read verses 41-43.

Was the Temple only for the people of Israel? How would it benefit the nations of the earth?

The Value Lived out:

The culmination of David's life was the Temple and the ultimate purpose of the temple was to be a visible testimony to the whole world of the glory of God. He fought against the nations, he loved the people of God and he worked for their benefit, but when it came to his greatest and final act of worship it went far beyond himself and the people he knew. This is what God desires of us. That our life would be lived beyond ourselves and the people we love – that we would love the world as he loves the world and desires that they would sing his praises one day for the glorious salvation that he has provided for them as well as for us.

How can the Kirk be a more effective testimony of the grace of God to people outside of our walls?

What practical step can I take to participate in taking the good news to the peoples of the world, or those who are unlike me in my own community?

Our Measure of being mission mobilized is:
Where am I going to do Kingdom work?

Our Strategy – How?

At Kirk of the Hills we believe that the vision and values that we have seen expressed in the Psalms and exemplified in the life of King David are best lived out as we engage with other believers through worship, small groups, serving and mission. Worshiping together in community is at the center of our Christian devotion. It is through small groups, however, that we build relationships and discover our gifts. As we serve inside the church and are called to mission outside the walls, we experience the grace of God moving through us as we carry out the ministry of Jesus in our community.



