

Prayer stations

Inspired by journeying with Psalm 119

At the Sanctuary, one of the stimuli for our daily prayer rhythm is the psalms. We cycle around them, taking a different one each day. Psalm 119 is the longest, but we are always delighted when it comes round! It is so rich and full – we're big fans. When it came round in July 2016, Jonny Rudd was the pray-er leading our morning session. He created this series of five impromptu prayer stations – which we've written up and shared with you – inspired by different sections of the psalm. We loved them and hope you will too.

We'd also like to underline that you could also extend these prayer stations and create a number of additional ones from this psalm if you would like to as it covers and alludes to the importance of God's word in relation to so many different situations... for example for people at different stages of life.

1. Words as sweet as honey

You will need: a jar of honey; enough spoons for everyone taking part; something to rest or contain the clean spoons, and something for those which have been used; pens and small pieces of paper; a Bible opened at Psalm 119, or a print out of the relevant section, with verses 103-104 highlighted; a print out of the sign you have made using the text below.

Instructions for setting up:

In advance: Enlarge and print out the sign using the text in the 'For display' section and gather together all the items listed above.

On the day: Lay out all the items you have gathered together and display the sign you have made.

For display:

1. Words as sweet as honey

- Read Psalm 119:103-104 and reflect on the truth of this famous scripture as you taste a spoonful of honey.
- Think back on a time – or a number of times – in your life when you have truly experienced the sweetness of God's word providing just the encouragement, wisdom or clarity that you needed at that time.
- Thank God for his word as a whole and especially for the particular scriptures which have come to life for you in specific situations.
- Write a couple of sentences about the testimony of this experience/these experiences and/or write out the scriptures, or scripture references that you have been thinking about.
- If you are happy to do so, leave what you have written behind to encourage others who use this station after you.

2. Words and actions of integrity

You will need: print outs of pictures of key leaders in society (these could be UK or global politicians or influencers such as the media or celebrities); a bottle of scented or olive oil; a Bible opened at Psalm 119, or a print out of the relevant section, with verses 1-8 highlighted; a print out of the sign you have made using the text below.

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For display:

2. Words and actions of integrity

- Read Psalm 119:1-8 and reflect on its words...
- Pray for the leaders and influencers pictured in front of you, and any further individuals or groups that come to mind.
- Pray that God would bless them with joy, especially those who are facing particularly challenging situations and contexts at the present time.
- If you would find it helpful, anoint their pictures with oil, praying that God would give them his heart for the people they are seeking to lead and/or influence and with respect to the decisions they have to make.
- Pray that they will be able to see what God wants for the areas under their leadership/influence and act in accordance with his decrees (v.5).

3. Words of rescue

You will need: information about the persecuted church from an organisation such as Open Doors or Christian Solidarity Worldwide; red wool; scissors; a cross; (optional) a heart shaped memo board or memo holder; a Bible opened at Psalm 119, or a print out of the relevant section, with verses 81-88 highlighted; a print out of the sign you have made using the text below.

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For display:

3. Words of rescue

- Read Psalm 119:81-88.
- Read one or two of the stories or pieces of information provided about the persecuted church. What is your reaction to these? Offer your thoughts, feelings and questions to God.

- Look at the cross, and reflect on how Jesus endured persecution – ultimately unto death – at the hands of oppressors.
- Write down the thoughts, questions and prayers about and for the persecuted church that are on your heart. Offer them to God by folding them up and placing them on the memo board next to the cross.
- If you would like to, cut a short piece of red wool and tie it round your wrist as a reminder to keep praying for the persecuted church throughout the day.

4. World Wide-Open Word

You will need: enough tea-lights for each person to be able to light at least one; matches; pens and paper; a large print out of the world map; a Bible opened at Psalm 119, or a print out of the relevant section, with verse 105 highlighted; a print out of the sign you have made using the text below.

Instructions for setting up:

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On the day: Lay out all the items you have gathered together and display the sign you have made.

For display:

4. World Wide-Open Word

- Read and reflect on Psalm 119:105.
- Light a candle and pray especially for the places in the world that God has given you his heart for.
- Write down any prayers for specific places, laying them down around the edge of the world map.
- If the location of your future life and ministry – or the next season of your life and ministry – is unknown to you, ask God to help you trust him to be 'the lamp to your feet' even if he only chooses to show you the next step, rather than very much of the journey ahead.

5. Word unlimited

You will need: a world map; several Bibles of different versions laid out around the outside of the map; information from the Bible Society about places in the world experiencing Bible poverty and/or information from Open Doors about the World Watch List of persecuted countries; a Bible opened at Psalm 119, or a print out of the relevant section, with verse 130 highlighted; a print out of the sign you have made using the text below.

Instructions for setting up:

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On the day: Lay out all the items you have gathered together and display the sign you have made.

For display:

- Read and reflect on Psalm 119:130.
- Pray for God's word to become available in the heart language of every people group in every nation of the world.

- Pray for all Bible translators and distributors, especially those who are smuggling or passing on Bibles to others in places where it is illegal to do this.
- Use the information and world map available to pray for countries and people groups where Christians are not permitted to have Bibles, or are persecuted for having Bibles or expressing their faith in Jesus in any other way.
- Pray for yourself going forward that you will value Psalm 119, and all of God's scripture, more deeply – taking every opportunity with such riches of translations, study and freedom available to you, to read, meditate and live God's word out more fully.