

The Power of God's Promises “When God Becomes Our Refuge”

INTRODUCTION

There tends to be places we go to when we are faced with daunting challenges or are fearful of something. We seek out a refuge in times of storms. But the places we seek shelter, safety, and security aren't always the most helpful and don't provide the protection we think, especially when we are desperate and forced to make emergency plans. But there is a place we can trust to safely shelter us. It is found in the 'shadow of God's wings' (Ps 36:7). People throughout the ages have sought this place and found refuge, and it is in this place that we focus our present study.

Ice Breaker Question - Optional (8 min): When you were a child, where did you go to find safety and security?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

Lessons from David - Read Psalm 18:1,6

Q1. Think to yourself of a person you can rely on so much that you would call them your 'rock'. Now think of a place that you know would provide you protection from any storm or attack – your 'fortress'. Finally, think of someone who could rescue you from any danger – someone who would 'deliver' you. Now what if you could find your rock, fortress, and deliverer all wrapped up in God. What emotion would you feel for God as a result? Do you think that David had this feeling toward God? (v.1)

Q2. What phrases would you use to describe the degree of closeness, reliance and trust that you have with God?

Lessons from Paul - Read 2 Timothy 1:8-14

Q3. Paul is writing to his protégé Timothy to not be ashamed of testifying about Jesus, just as he himself is not ashamed. From v. 12, why is it that Paul is not ashamed? Where does our help come from as we too witness Christ's life in us? (v. 14)

Lessons from Jesus - Read Hebrews 5:7, Luke 22:44

Q4. What does it tell you to know that even Jesus cried out to God in his most tested times?

Read Matthew 27:46 and Psalm 22:1

Q5. From Matthew 27:46, while on the cross, Jesus could likely be quoting Psalm 22:1 (a passage that most people there would know). To see what Jesus could have been referencing from Psalm 22, read it in its entirety. Would you say that Jesus on the cross is proclaiming abandonment or trust in the Father? What encouragement do you find from the last 8 verses?

Developing Our Plan

Don't wait to develop your escape plan during your crisis, but plan ahead. Use a simple pattern of:

1. Confessing our need for God (**read Revelation 3:16-17**),
2. Committing ourselves to Him (**read Jeremiah 29:13**), and
3. Connecting with others on the same journey.

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Acts 2:42, 46-47

Q6. Who do you have that you can call on in times of testing or crisis?

Q7. How have you positioned yourself to be there for others in need?

WRAP-UP

Jesus tells us in Matthew 11:28-29 (NIV) "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Run to God for refuge from the storms of life and there He will strengthen you and uphold you for now and eternity.

Memory Verse: Isaiah 41:10 (NIV). "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members' needs (use other side also):

Challenge: Read Revelation 3:17-19 and meditate on it asking God to reveal areas of false reliance and ask Him to be your refuge there.