

Small Group Resource Guide

Psalm 146, Week of December 1st

Opening Reflection: (5 minutes)

Take a minute or two to journal or reflect on this question: Where in your life right now do you feel like you're asking God for help? Describe the situation and how things are going.

Pray for your time together and then read this introductory information: The last five Psalms in the Bible are called the "Hallelujah Psalms." They serve as a finale of the entire book of Psalms, celebrating and praising the Lord--almost like the finale of a 4th of July firework display. They all start with a "Hallelujah," meaning "Praise the Lord." Then these psalms explain why God is worthy of praise. Although the author of Psalm 146 isn't stated specifically, some commentators assign it to David.

Before reading all of Psalm 146, read only v.1-2 and v. 10 aloud. (5 minutes)

Based on these "Bookends" and repeated words in what you just read, what's your prediction about what the focus of this psalm will be?

Read all of Psalm 146 aloud

Exploration (15-20 minutes):

1. Verses 3-4 talk about "princes" of that day. Take a minute and notice the words and phrases that are used to describe the "princes."
2. Verses 5-9 focus on the Lord. Using the chart below, find words and phrases that describe what the Lord does (look for actions and verbs) and who the Lord helps.

What does the Lord do?	Who does the Lord help?

3. Look at the lists you made. According to this psalm, what types of people does the Lord help and act for? Discuss with your group.

4. Look again at verse 5. The psalmist calls the person who finds her help and hope in God "Blessed." Does feeling needy or helpless feel like a blessing? Why do you think the psalmist calls these people "blessed?"

Gospel Connection (15 minutes) : Read the following passages together. As you read, underline portions of these verses that echo ideas in Psalm 146.

(Context Clue: Jesus at the beginning of his ministry, reading in the synagogue from Isaiah 61.) **Luke 4:18-19**: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Matthew 9:35-36: And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Luke 7:18-22: The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'" In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them."

Keeping these cross references in mind, where do you "see Jesus" in Psalm 146?

Video Conclusion (15 minutes)

Application (5-15 minutes)-next page

- Looking back at the types of people God helps in verses 7-9, which one of these descriptions do you relate most to? How does God's care inspire you to praise him?
- One commentary speaks to the modern translation of the word "princes." The author says "princes" would mean "the influential, whose backing may well seem more solid and practical than God's." Who are the "princes" in your life and how do you trust them more than the Lord?
- Thinking back to the "Bookends" of this psalm, where is praise of the Lord happening in your life? What things inspire you to praise? If you're struggling to praise God right now, what do you feel might inspire your heart towards praise?
- Go back to the original journaling you did for the opening exercise. Share the situation with your small group if you feel comfortable. How does your study of this passage encourage you to keep asking for help and trusting God?

For Further Study and Reflection:

- **For More Study:**
 - Read the creation account in Genesis 1-3. What are some words and images used both in the story of creation and in Psalm 146? Why do you think the psalmist draws our attention to these words and images? What connection do you think the psalmist was trying to make for the people of that time? For us?
 - In verses 7 and 9, the psalmist brings up the idea of justice and judgment. Why is this important or meaningful in the context of this psalm?
 - Go back and read through Psalm 1 and 2. What are some themes and ideas similar to Psalm 146 that you see?
- **For More Practice:**
 - Write out a portion of Psalm 146 on an index card, on your calendar, or as a reminder in your phone. (For example v. 5-6) When you find yourself needing help during the day, look first at this reminder and repeat it as a breath prayer to God before moving on to your first step of action.
 - Ask yourself where you feel most needy right now. Take one minute to talk to God about that need. Close your prayer by praying aloud Psalm 146:1-2,10:

Praise the Lord!
 Praise the Lord, O my soul!
 I will praise the Lord as long as I live;
 I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
 The Lord will reign forever,
 your God, O Zion, to all generations.
 Praise the Lord!
- **For More Worship:**
 - Listen to Indelible Grace's version of "[Praise My Soul the King of Heaven](#)." Reflect on the words and use them to help you praise God.
 - Use [this song](#) from Keith and Kristyn Getty to sing "Hallelujah" to God.
 - If you're in a Christmas mood, here's an [Andrew Peterson song](#) to reflect on.