

Learning to Pray From the Psalms

The **P.S.A.L.M.S.** Acronym (5)
Making

Lesson 7
May 21

We're learning, discussing, and memorizing a simple acronym - **P.S.A.L.M.S.** - that can provide a framework for prayer:

- **Praise:** "God, I praise you for..."
- **Satisfaction:** "God, if I have you, it is enough; I am satisfied because..."
- **Acknowledgement:** "God, please be merciful and gracious; I..."
- **Leading:** "God, I need you; lead me in..."
- **Making:** "God, I surrender to you; make me..."

Let's focus on the fifth letter: **MAKING**. In Psalm 23, the LORD is described as the perfect shepherd who "**makes me** lie down in green pastures." Similarly, in Psalm 4:8, David writes, "In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O LORD, **make me** dwell in safety."

It's one thing to ask God to "lead me" when I'm in need or in trouble. Lots of people look for God's help when life is tough. But it's another thing entirely to surrender to God and trust him to "make" me into what I need to be. Listen to David's prayer in Psalm 25:1-5:

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

O my God, in you I trust;

let me not be put to shame;

let not my enemies exult over me.

Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;

they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

Make me to know your ways, O LORD;

teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth and teach me,

for you are the God of my salvation;

for you I wait all the day long.

- In your own words, what is David saying to God? How is this different—a better attitude—than simply, "God, I could use some help in the moment"?

Notice David's bold prayer in Psalm 39:4:

O LORD, make me know my end
and what is the measure of my days;
let me know how fleeting I am!

- We may not be used to praying like that, but why is this "make me" a very good thing to pray? James 4:13-16 might also be helpful here...

Finally, consider how much this idea shows up in Psalm 119. Listen carefully to 119:25-27:

My soul clings to the dust;
give me life according to your word!
When I told of my ways, you answered me;
teach me your statutes!
Make me understand the way of your precepts,
and I will meditate on your wondrous works.

What does the psalmist mean by "make me understand," and how does the LORD do that? If I'm really serious about saying to my Creator, "I surrender to you; make me..." what sort of things from the psalms can I pray? Just listen...

Open my eyes, that I may behold
wondrous things out of your law. (119:18)

Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes;
and I will keep it to the end.

Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart.

Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight in it.

Incline my heart to your testimonies,
and not to selfish gain!

Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things;
and give me life in your ways. (119:33-37)

- When we pray those sorts of things, what are we saying to God?
- As we put all of this together, what does the LORD want to "make us" into, and as we pray these sorts of things, how might he go about doing what we're asking him to do?