

Here's a simple how-to guide to assist you in praying the Psalms.

- **Pray through the whole Psalter.** Multiply the day of the month by five and pray those psalms. If today is the 15th, then I'd pray Psalm 71–75 today. You'll pray through the whole book of Psalms every month. Or start with Psalm 1 and pray it in the morning, afternoon, and evening (Ps. 55:17). Then move to Psalm 2 the next day. Use your ribbon to pray through all 150 psalms, then start over. Don't mind if you miss a day just pick up where you left off. This way your prayer life will be nourished by a full diet of psalms.
- **Make the psalm's words your words.** Augustine of Hippo said, *"If the psalm prays, you pray. If the psalm laments, you lament. If the psalm exalts, you rejoice. If it hopes, you hope. If it fears, you fear. Everything written here is a mirror for us."* As you pray the Psalms, you will learn how to pray in every season, whether rejoicing with those who rejoice or mourning with those who mourn.
- **Meditate on the Psalms.** By meditating before we pray, we are following in the way of the psalmists themselves (Ps. 1, 19:14, 63:6, 77:12, 119, 143:5 145:5). If anything in the psalm sticks out to you: pause, ask the Spirit to shine His light on it, then mull it over in your mind until it begins to ignite your heart. Without a doubt, the warmth of the Psalms is due to the kindling of meditation.

- **Memorize the Psalms.** Nothing has been more fruitful in my prayer life than memorizing the Psalms. I always have words to give voice to my soul even when I'm speechless. Jesus modeled this by praying the Psalms from the cross (Matthew 27:46).
- **Pray the psalm like an apple tree or a Christmas tree.** You can either take the pleas and praises of the Psalms as your own, picking them like apples. Or you can decorate the psalm like a Christmas tree, hanging your pleas and praises on it. Use its words to respond to God, who has already initiated the conversation.
- **Pray the psalm through Jesus & with Jesus.** Jesus is both the one through whom we pray to the Father and the one who prays these psalms to the Father (Hebrews 2:12). As you're praying the psalm, imagine what the words would mean coming out of Jesus' lips as both a human and God, in His suffering and in His glory. He said that all the Psalms are about Him (Luke 24:44).