

When to read?

Often with the 'In Sync' Bible reading we encourage reading a Bible book in a few sittings – perhaps even a single reading. However, with a couple of exceptions each Psalm stands alone; so you may like to take the opportunity to slow the pace of your reading and read two Psalms at the start of each day.

Of course, if you read in fewer sittings then it will be interesting (and no doubt a blessing) to see what characteristics of God come to the fore in your reading.

In either case, it is advisable to pick in advance a good time for your reading and stick to it.

Memorisation suggestions

'[The blessed man's] delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night' (Psalm 1:2)

Many of the Psalms are short and well known. This month may be an opportunity to learn some Psalms by heart. Why not consider from the following suggestions:

- Psalm 1
- Psalm 8
- Psalm 14
- Psalm 23
- Psalm 24
- Psalm 32

Reflection Meeting : 6 April
In Sync in April : Matthew



Psalms 1-50



CAREY BAPTIST
CHURCH

Reading the Bible Together

March 2014

What is 'In Sync' Bible Reading?

'In Sync' encourages us to read the same Bible book through a month, and then reflect together on what we have read and learnt from God's Word. In March we are reading **Psalms 1 to 50**.

Why do we do this?

There are many advantages to reading together like this, including opportunities to:

- Develop the regular habit of Bible reading
- Become more familiar with the Bible
- Encourage one another by sharing the different things we have learnt through our Bible reading
- Read the Bible with family members and friends
- Handle a whole Bible book, when often we focus on much smaller sections of the Bible in our times of study together.

'I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.' (Psalm 119:16)

Questions to consider

Reading the Bible does not have to be an intellectual study. Anyone can read the Bible and by God's grace understand it. The main thing is that we pray for God's help as we read.

Some questions to help you think over and think through what you are reading include the following:

1. What have I learnt about God and about Jesus?
2. What does this teach me about humanity and myself?
3. What has most encouraged me from this book?

4. How does this teach me to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul and mind? (Matt 22:37-40)
5. How does this teach me to love my neighbour as myself? (Matt 22:37-40)
6. Is there anything else I should learn here to be 'equipped for every good work' (2 Tim 3:17)

Psalms: What can we expect?

The book of Psalms is actually a collection of songs and poetic prayers from a number of different sources that were probably finally compiled around 300BC.

The Psalms cover a range of topics, including:

- Prayers for the Psalmist or for God's people
- Praise to God for His help
- Praise to God for His greatness
- Statements of confidence in God
- Royal Psalms about the king
- Liturgy and instruction

The majority of the Psalms are not written with the primary purpose of instructing or teaching in the same way as (for example) the letters of Paul in the New Testament. Rather, the Psalms are an expression of the *experience* of the life of faith. They honestly convey the faith, joys, anguish and crises of the believers who wrote them. For this reason many people find the book of Psalms an immense blessing in understanding their own Christian walk.

In echoing the thoughts of the Psalmists many people have found it helpful to pray through the Psalms, write a parallel poem, or even make up a tune and sing a Psalm in praise to God. Perhaps this month's reading would be an opportunity for you to consider such creative engagement with the Bible?