

## Learning to Love the Psalms (I)

### The Attraction of the Psalms

- the beauty of the language and the poetic expression of the great truths of the faith, *i.e.*, Ps 23:1, 103:2-5, 56:8
- The more you dig into the Psalter, the more you discover.
- There are psalms for all the important spiritual moments and emotions in the lives of the people of God.

“I have been accustomed to call this book, I think not inappropriately, ‘An anatomy of all the parts of the soul: for there is not an emotion of which any one can be conscious that is not here represented as in a mirror’ (John Calvin, *Commentary on the Books of Psalms*).

- The Psalms are full of Christ.

“Always a psalm in the mouth, always Christ in the heart” (*semper in ore psalmus, semper in corde Christus*)

### Throughout the history of the church, the people of God lived in the Psalms. Does the contemporary church similarly rely upon the Psalms?

The French Calvinists known as Huguenots “The Psalter was the French Reformation.”

Psalm 114 (“Egyptian Hallel,” Psalms 113 – 118)

The Power of God

The Presence of God

The Provision of God

### If the Psalms are so rich, why is it that many of us today do not treasure and appreciate them as the church did in the past? There are several reasons.

- The first is the failure of many Christians in our time to study and use the Psalms.
- The second is the complexity of the Psalms. Few Christians sing the Psalms anymore.
- The third is the apparently random arrangement of the Psalter.

**RECURRING THEMES IN THE PSALMS** - The great theme of the Psalter is the providence of God (John Calvin). *God’s goodness and unfailing love for the righteous*. For an example, let us read Psalm 25.

THEME	HUMAN RESPONSE
<i>God’s goodness and unfailing love for the righteous (8, 10)</i>	Praise (1, 3)
the sinfulness of the righteous (7, 11, 18)	Confession of sin and lamentation
the mystery of providence in the success of the wicked (19)	Expressions of envy and prayer for relief
the mystery of the suffering of the righteous (16, 17)	Complaint and prayer for relief
confidence in God and the future despite present suffering (3, 15, 20)	Prayer for relief and praise

What emotions have you personally experienced while reading the Psalms?

How are the Psalms like a mine? What role does meditation play when studying the Psalms?