

Psalm 25:4-5a "Make me to know your ways."

O P P D: teach me your paths. Lead me
in your truth and teach me...

PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE



WEEK
4




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week 4

Prayer for Guidance

Psalm 25:4-5a: “Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me...”



introduction

Have you ever agonized over a decision and feared that making the wrong choice might mess up, or even ruin, your life? We have all faced great challenges when we could not even fathom how to move forward. Instead of spinning our wheels to solve our problem alone, we must stop, look to God, and entrust our situation to Him. We must remind ourselves what we already know about His character and faithfulness.

While we're concerned about specific guidance on our circumstances and decisions, we lose perspective on God's desires. God cares most about our heart toward Him and our willingness to follow His guidance (or path) laid out in Scripture.

Sometimes, our challenges reveal how we fail to trust God and demonstrate our poor choices. In this psalm of lament, David provides a vivid example of choosing God's healing over our hiding as he pours out his heart before God and confesses his sin. Psalm 25 offers us hope because we have a God who hears our prayers when we come to Him, and He delights in forgiving us and showing us the way.

SIMPLE PRAYER: Make me to know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me.

PRAYER PRACTICE: Go on a prayer walk around your neighborhood block. As you step down the familiar path, thank God for His guidance through His Word, which gives believers a well-tried and trustworthy path. Ask God to help you keep your feet on His path and to lead you in your specific decisions and challenges.



POSTCARD: Remove this week's postcard in the back of this guide, and put it in a prominent place as a reminder to pray. When you pray for someone else, write a note on the back of the postcard, and give it to them as an encouragement and an opportunity to start a conversation about Jesus.

day 1

READ PSALM 25

This week, pray that God will enliven the words in this psalm so they become your own prayer.

1 | What repeated words or phrases do you notice as you read this psalm?

2 | What clues do you see about David's situation and state of mind when he wrote this psalm (vv. 2-3)? What affirmation does he make as he approaches God in prayer (vv. 1-2)?

3 | In general, what are the 3 main requests David makes in this psalm?

In vv. 4-5:

In v. 7 and 11:

In v. 20:

4 | What difficulties or decisions are you currently facing? Where do you need to turn to God for wisdom and guidance?

PRAY

In the space below, copy this week's simple prayer: **Make me to know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me.**

Bring your circumstances to God as you pray these words from *The Divine Hours: Prayers for Summertime* by Phyllis Tickle:

"O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your servant who calls upon you, and grant that I may know and understand what things I ought to do, and that I also may have the grace and power to faithfully accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen."

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day 2

READ PSALM 25 ALOUD

1 | How does v. 5 reflect David's heart attitude toward God?

2 | As David asks for mercy and forgiveness (vv. 6-7), to what characteristics of God does he appeal?

3 | Vv. 8-10 transition to a meditation on God's nature. What affirmations does David make about God's character and actions toward the humble? How do these affirmations relate to his prayer in vv. 4-5?

4 | We see a rhetorical question in v. 12: "Who is the man (person) who fears the LORD?" Scan vv. 1-11 again. What words or phrases describe the heart attitude of a person who fears God?

5 | What benefits come to the person who fears the Lord (vv. 12-14)?

PRAY

Ask God to guide you in your life and circumstances as you pray this week's simple prayer: **Make me to know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me.**

day 3

LISTEN TO PSALM 25 ON YOUR BIBLE APP, AND FOLLOW ALONG IN YOUR BIBLE.

Way (ESV): דֶּרֶךְ *derek*

Road, way, journey, direction; also a manner or habit; figuratively, a course of life or mode of action.

**blueletterbible.org*

The Hebrew word “derek” refers not only to a literal road, but also to a “direction, manner, habit, and a course of life.” The word “way” is mentioned four times in this psalm, and the related word “path” is used twice.

1 | On Day 2, we saw that God would instruct the person who follows Him in the “way” that he or she should choose (v. 12). How is God’s Word related to His general guidance in showing us the path of life He has for us?

2 | How does following God’s guidance and commands better prepare us to discern His specific guidance in our situations?

3 | Look up Psalm 25:4 in the New Living Translation, and write the verse here:



4 | When it comes to discerning God's specific guidance, we are rarely 100% sure we understand His leading. Instead, we take tentative steps based on our understanding and trust that God will straighten our path, if needed. Has God ever guided you on a particular decision or path you felt He wanted you to choose? How did He guide you? Was it difficult to trust that God was leading you?

5 | In closing this psalm (vv. 16-22), David expands on the troubles of his heart that he mentioned at the beginning of his prayer. What words or phrases does he use to describe his situation and his feelings?

6 | We do not know when David wrote this psalm, but based on what you know of David's life, what are some possible troubles, afflictions, or enemies he might have faced? How does this encourage you to seek God in your current situation?

PRAY

This week, pray for parents at our church as you pray our simple prayer: **Make me to know Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me.**

- Pray that God would give them wisdom.
- Ask God to show them the way forward in difficult situations with their children.
- Pray for someone you know who needs God's guidance.

day 4

READ PSALM 86

God's Word is full of prayers. Every week, we will examine a prayer in the Bible with a similar theme to our study.

Lament

Lament expresses grief, despair, or pain due to loss or a difficult situation.

Psalms of lament typically have these parts:

- Turning to address God
- Expression of complaint, trouble, or grief
- Confession of trust in God
- Petition or prayer for God to intervene
- Expression of praise

***Psalms,** The Bible Knowledge Commentary*

Scholars classify Psalm 25 as a psalm of lament because David pours out his grievances to the Lord. Today, we'll read another prayer of lament written to express discouragement and entrust circumstances to God. As you read, think about how lament enables us to choose healing over hiding in our relationship with God.

1 | Many of the ideas expressed in Psalm 86 parallel those of Psalm 25. What words does David use to describe his troublesome situation in Psalm 86:1, 14, and 17?

2 | What echoes from Psalm 25 do you see in the petitions presented in Psalm 86:2, 11, and 16?

3 | As we consider David's prayer in Psalm 86:11, the phrase "unite my heart" sounds strange. The NIV says, "Give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name." What do you think it means to have a divided heart? Why is this prayer important to our growth in Christ?

4 | Even in trouble, David praises the Lord. How does he characterize God in Psalm 86:5, 8, 10, and 15?

5 | Psalm 86 ends with an affirmation: "...because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me." How has God helped and comforted you, either in your current situation or in the past?

PRAY

Based on Psalm 25:4-5a or Psalm 86:11, write a simple prayer asking God for guidance.

day 5

READ PSALM 25, MAKING IT YOUR PRAYER AS YOU DO SO.

1 | This week, we saw David pouring out his troubles to God, asking God to “consider” his afflictions and forgive his sins (vv. 18-19). Why should we pour out our problems to God if He already knows them? What is the benefit of explaining to God a situation He already knows?

2 | Make a quick bullet point list of a few concerns or circumstances where you need God’s wisdom. Take a minute to lift them to God in prayer. In living out our Northwest value of choosing God’s Healing over our hiding, consider sharing one of these concerns with a friend or small group member. Ask them to pray for you this week.

3 | Even in his struggle, David affirms, “My eyes are ever on the LORD” (v. 15, NIV). He declares his confidence that God will deliver him. In your current situation, what are some ways you could seek to keep your eyes on the Lord?

4 | In the New Testament, the Greek word for “way” also refers literally to a traveled road or journey and figuratively to a course of conduct. Jesus affirms, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). As you consider your current circumstances and need for direction, how does it encourage you to remember that Jesus Himself is the way?

PRAY

Direct your heart to Jesus. Write a prayer asking your Savior to help you navigate the challenges you are facing.

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