

THE PSALMS

Read The Psalter, Anderson Chapter 16, Read *Answering God* by Eugene Peterson

Write **Make a chart of the Psalm Types** (choose one that appeals to you)

Describe the characteristics of each type

Give several examples of each type

Compose a Psalm it does not have to be long, either an acrostic (use the alphabet, your name, another word) or a history psalm telling how God has been present in your life. Remember it is more important to balance thoughts (half verse by half verse or full verse by full verse) than to rhyme endings.

Questions for Class Discussions:

How was the Psalter put together?

Who wrote the Psalms?

Where else in Scripture can you find psalms or hymns? Be specific.

Eugene Peterson in his book, *Answering God* characterizes the Psalms as “tools of faith” and “Prayer Masters”. How do the Psalms help us to pray? How do they teach us to pray?

What kind of rationale would you use to defend the use of the whole psalm in prayer, even when some parts of them seem ugly and unseemly (e.g. 63:9-10 or 137:9) How can we give meaning to “my enemies” today.

“It is reported that Athanasius, an outstanding Christian leader of the fourth century, declared that the Psalm have a unique place in the bible because most of Scripture speaks to us, while the Psalms speak for us.”¹

“The Theological tradition of the reformation concluded that the Psalms articulate the whole Gospel in a nutshell. Calvin said that the psalms are an “anatomy of the soul”²

¹ Bernard w. Anderson, *Out of the Depths*, Westminster Press 1983 p. 9

² Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms*, Augsburg, 1984 p.17