

Lenten Guided Prayer 2017

Restore us, O God!



Prayer Sheet 2: *We wonder/wrestle*

Week starting March 12

Call to Prayer

In a world that strives for control and easy answers, where the information that we desire is often at our fingertips, we have become increasingly uneasy with uncertainty. Nicodemus was a man with much knowledge, yet when it came to matters of faith he simply could not fully understand. His questions to Jesus begin to pry open the realm of mystery and reveal the limitations of human understanding. In matters of faith, there must be room to wrestle with terrible and tragic realities while holding on to hope.

Opening Prayer: *God of Mystery, help me to trust in you even when I do not fully understand.*

Meditative Reading

Set aside distractions, take a few deep breaths, become still, and turn your attention toward prayer. Read **John 3:1-17** and/or **Psalm 121**. As you are reading, notice if there is a word or phrase that catches your attention. Spend a few moments allowing the word or phrase to sink in; notice how it might relate to your own life. You may choose to underline it in your Bible or note it in your journal before continuing your reading. Carry this word or phrase with you throughout your week.

For Reflection

- What is conjured up for you when you read the word *mystery*? ...how about *wonder* and *believe*?
- In what ways have you experienced ***the LORD as your keeper*** (Ps. 121:5)?

Additional Prayer Options

Select a prayer suggestion from the list below that grabs you, challenges you, or causes you to question. You may stay with one way of praying throughout the week or try several options.

Praying with Scripture

John 3:1-17: Imagine that, like Nicodemus, you witnessed the signs that Jesus has performed. Jesus has just turned water into wine at the wedding of Cana, driven out the animals and moneychangers at the temple while prophesying that the temple will be rebuilt in three days after it is destroyed, and performed signs during the Passover festival in Jerusalem (John 2). Nicodemus acknowledges that, ***no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God*** (v. 2). Now you are in Nicodemus's place; what questions would you ask of Jesus? How would you respond to Jesus' cryptic answers?

Thoughts and Reflections

Praying through your life

In **Psalm 121** the Psalmist is recalling the help experienced from the Creator. Recall a specific time in your life when you experienced help from God. Is there a particular image or metaphor that captures how you experienced God's presence during that time (ie. parent, teacher, coach, force of love, source of peace, etc.)? Using Psalm 121 as your template, consider writing a psalm outlining your experience of God's care and keeping. (For more on writing your own psalm, search online: [Psalms - How to Write a Psalm.](#)) Alternatively, illustrate your metaphor/image or offer a prayer of gratitude for God's provision.

Praying with music

Listen to, sing or play one of these (or your own) musical selections as prayer.

You are all we have

STJ 29

Lord, you sometimes speak in wonders HWB 594

Indescribable by Chris Tomlin

[Youtube: Chris Tomlin - Indescribable](#)

Praying with movement

Take a copy of **Psalm 121** along with you as you run, walk, exercise, or spend time in nature this week. Find the rhythm of the Psalm in your body's breath and movement. You may choose to focus on one phrase and repeat it as a mantra while you run/walk; you may also do this breath mantra while sitting. For example, (inhale) **The LORD will keep** (exhale) **your going out** (inhale) **and your coming in** (exhale) **from this time on** (inhale) **and forevermore.** (exhale) **Amen.**

Praying for our world

What current political, economic, environmental, or social event is on your heart and mind this week? Or is there a situation in your own life, family, church or community that is in need of prayer? Wonder where God's Spirit is present or moving. If you catch a glimpse of God's presence, prayerfully inquire if there is an invitation for you to join in God's activity in the world. If God's presence seems void or absent from the event, pray a prayer of intercession; ask for God's light and love to pierce the darkness, perhaps in surprising or unexpected ways.

Closing Prayer

God beyond my knowing,

*I confess that there are times when I hold tight to my own understanding
because I don't recognize your wisdom that might be right in front of me.*

Awaken a spirit of wonder, wrestling and surprise in me

so that I may meet you anew and believe.

Amen.