

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

God Delivers Us
Psalm 34

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of each series (Bible Teaching #....). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

Ensure that each youth has a copy of the Bible study application for youth ("Take Ten!!).

Read the "Connect with Life" introduction of your **Teaching Plan**. Make sure that you have enough sheets of paper and pencils for each one in the group. (Include the children, even the small ones who will not understand the activity). Using a ruler, draw

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a straight “base line” straight across the middle of each sheet. On that line, write the words **Average Time**. Or, use the sample sheet at the end of this session (page 20) and make copies for each attendee.

Worship Time Leader:

Music Sources:

Everlasting God, *The Worship Hymnal* #121; CCLI #4556538

You Are My Hiding Place, *The Worship Hymnal* #125; CCLI #21442

Open Our Eyes, Lord, *The Worship Hymnal* #426; CCLI #1572

Holy Ground, *The Worship Hymnal* #72; CCLI #21198

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

God Delivers Us

Focal Text

Psalm 34

Background Text

Psalm 34

Main Idea

God's care and deliverance happened in the Psalmist's day and it happens today.

Questions to Explore

Do we acknowledge the care and deliverance which God gives us on a daily basis or are we prone to only call upon Him in times of crisis?

Can we trust God to deliver us from our fears?

Teaching Aims

Help participants to be aware of God's care and deliverance in concrete ways in daily life.

Gathering together:

Sing one or both:

Everlasting God, *The Worship Hymnal* #121; CCLI #4556538

You Are My Hiding Place, *The Worship Hymnal* #125; CCLI #21442

First thoughts:

Delivered

Leader: Read Mark 10:46-52

A testimony at a Missions conference was so powerful it seemed to take the breath away from the people attending. It was the story of a blind woman by the name of Pani.

She was listening to the Jesus film in her village as those with their sight were watching. Pani was greatly moved when, she heard on the film that Jesus restored the sight of the blind man. When Pani heard these words she cried out, "I want to receive my sight too." At the conclusion of the film a miracle took place. Pani could see! Jesus restored her sight! As the mission conference attendees heard this wonderful story they began to show emotion for such a miracle. They were stopped of their emotional exuberance by the missionary as he gave them a reminder. The restoration of Pani's sight was not the greatest miracle that evening.

A greater miracle took place than the restoration of her sight. Pani received forgiveness of her sins that night by trusting Jesus as her Saviour! She heard Jesus speak the sweetest words of all, "Your sins are forgiven."¹

You may not be able to testify than once you were blind but now you can see, but if you have trusted Jesus you can testify of your deliverance from sin. The lesson today will focus on concrete ways you can identify God's deliverance in areas of your life.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

¹ David Yarbrough, Sermon Central

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Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

God Delivers Us

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Psalm 34

Background Text

Psalm 34

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Questions to Explore

Do we acknowledge the care and deliverance which God gives us on a daily basis or are we prone to only call upon Him in times of crisis?

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Teaching Aims

Help participants to be aware of God’s care and deliverance in concrete ways in daily life.

Introduction to your personal study:

Psalm 34 is a companion to Psalm 25. They are both acrostic poems. Each verse begins with succeeding letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Psalm 25 is a lament and Psalm 34 is a thanksgiving and an invitation to try faith in God. Both, as part of “Wisdom Literature” have a teaching purpose.²

Background:

² Alton H. McEachern, “Layman’s Bible Book Commentary”, Vol. 8, Psalms, Broadman Press, Nashville, TN, 1981, pg. 55.

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Introduction**” article found at the beginning of this series (Bible Teaching #....) of Bible Study and Worship sessions. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

Focusing on the Meaning:

The Bible does not gloss over sin. It presents man as fallen and in need of deliverance. David is a good example of this. There are times when it would be good to emulate his behavior and times when it would be disastrous to do so.

The psalm for study is written by David after he was pursued by Saul. He fled to Gath, a city of the Philistines. His life began to be endangered there too. He was fearful that the King of Gath would kill him so he feigned insanity in hopes he would simply be sent away. The account was recorded in 1 Samuel 21:10-15.

One commentary breaks the psalm down to two sections. Vv. 1-10, “Rejoice with me” and vv. 11-22, “Learn from me”.³ The first section is his testimony and the second section is his teaching.

1. DAVID’S TESTIMONY OF PRAISE (vs. 1-3).

1 I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.

2 I will glory in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

3 Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together.

Verse 1 stresses the frequency of his praise. The idea is that he will praise without ceasing. He will avail himself of every opportunity to praise God. Praise is not limited to the good times. It should be a normal activity of one who seeks God and receives His grace.

Praise rolls off his lips. Notice the different words he uses: extol, praise, glorify, rejoice, and exalt.

Verse 2 indicates the focus of his prayer. It is the LORD. The Lord is both the subject and the object of his praise.

Verse 3 is all about collective praise. The afflicted are those gathered to worship with David. He calls for corporate worship and praise.

2. DAVID PRAYED AND GOD ANSWERED (vs. 4-7).

4 I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.

³ Derek Kidner, “Psalms 1-72”, pgs. 138, 140.

5 Those who look to him are radiant; their faces never covered with shame.

6 This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

David was a man of prayer. He “sought the LORD” and he “called” out to Him. As a result of his prayers God answered David and delivered him from all his fears. The word “delivered” literally means the Lord “snatched” him from danger at the last moment.⁴ David showed humility (v. 6) and God “heard him”. He saved him “out of all his troubles. God used an angel to protect and deliver David. This could be a reference to Christ.

When people seek God their countenance is changed. Like Moses who spent time with God on Mt. Sinai, their faces were radiant. They do not have to cover their faces in shame because they had sought God.

3. DAVID’S ADVICE FOR HOLY PEOPLE (vs. 8-14).

8 Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

9 Fear the Lord, you his holy people, for those who fear him lack nothing.

10 The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

11 Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

12 Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days,

13 keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies.

14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

God satisfies. It does not take long to taste something. David is not asking for a hard task to be performed. Just spend a little time with God, get some firsthand experience, and one will find He is good. Once one takes the first step one finds blessed security in Him.

Fear or “reverence” the Lord and a person will “lack no good thing”. David does not leave one hanging without any knowledge of what to do. His call was for them to come and let him teach them. He had the experience to teach. He taught them as a wise father teaches his children.

In vs. 12-14 are his instructions. If one wants a long and good life then:

Watch your tongue. Do not speak evil or tell lies.

Repent. “Turn from evil and do good.” Repentance is more than ceasing to do evil; it must result in the actively doing good.

⁴ McEachern, pg. 55.

Actively seek peace.

A person who seeks God reverently will have a life changing experience that can be seen by others.

4. DAVID CONTRASTS THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED (vs. 15-22).

***15 The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears attentive to their cry;
16 but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to blot out their name from the earth.***

God is pictured in anthropomorphic terms. He has characteristics of a man. He has a head with a face, eyes, and ears. With His eyes and ears He pays attention to His own. But, His face is steadfastly toward the wicked. Though the wicked think no one sees they are wrong. God does. He will remove their names. This may refer to the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 21:27).

17 The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.

18 The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

19 The righteous person may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all;

20 he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.

Here we see a contrast. The wicked are blotted out and the righteous are completely delivered. It will not matter that they might be broken-hearted and crushed in spirit. No matter what trouble they are in, God will deliver them.

Verse 20 is a Messianic verse which looks forward to the crucifixion of Christ.

21 Evil will slay the wicked; the foes of the righteous will be condemned.

22 The LORD will rescue his servants; no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.

Those who are wicked will be caught in their own schemes and perish. Their judgment will be condemnation. However, those who serve the LORD are not condemned. Verse 22 summarizes why the godly should praise God. He ransoms His own.

An overarching theme of this psalm is this: the person who seeks God will never be alone no matter the circumstances. Therefore, He deserves that person's continuous praise.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Reread the “Questions to Explore” for this study. Even believers in God’s grace and mercy still tend (human nature?) to seek God’s protective care more when we find ourselves and those we love in serious crisis than in the everyday cares we all face. This Psalm gives us encouragement to call for God’s protective care and presence every hour of every day. As leader, guide your group toward that conviction and that practice.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

God Delivers Us

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Psalm 34

Background Text

Psalm 34

Main Idea

God's care and deliverance happened in the Psalmist's day and it happens today.

Questions to Explore

Do we acknowledge the care and deliverance which God gives us on a daily basis or are we prone to only call upon Him in times of crisis?

Can we trust God to deliver us from our fears?

Teaching Aims

Help participants to be aware of God's care and deliverance in concrete ways in daily life.

Connect with Life:

Have the group do this: Using the sheet of paper and a pencil or pen, each of you draw a line that represents your life since accepting Christ. Mark upward for the better times in your life and downwards for the more difficult times. Identify the highs and lows. How did God care for you in the lows.

Ask for volunteers to share their timeline.

Guide the Study:

Tell the group: The Bible does not gloss over sin. It presents man as fallen and in need of deliverance. David is a good example of this. There are times when it would be good to emulate his behavior and times when it would be disastrous to do so.

1. DAVID'S TESTIMONY OF PRAISE (vs. 1-3).

Ask for a volunteer to read aloud Psalm 34:1-3,

Say to the group: This is David's testimony of praise.

Question: How often does David praise God? (All the time.)

Ask: When should you and I praise the Lord? Then is it too much to ask this of us?

2. DAVID PRAYED AND GOD ANSWERED (vs. 4-7).

Ask for a volunteer to read aloud Psalm 34:4-7.

Share this notice with the group: There is a sequence here that we should consider. David praised the Lord and then David prayed to the Lord.

Tell them: The word "delivered" literally means "snatched".

Ask: Who does David say encamps around those who fear God? (Angels.)

Say to the group: There is told a story of missionaries who were surrounded one night by enemies. As the missionaries prayed and waited, they did not attack. Several years later one of the missionaries won a man to Christ. In conversation the missionary discovered the man was among those who had surrounded them. The missionary asked why they did not attack. He replied, "There were men around you". The missionary said, "There was no one". Angels protect God's own. Even when physical or other persecution is not stopped, the presence of God is still there to comfort and carry us through the dark hours, even death.

3. DAVID'S ADVICE FOR HOLY PEOPLE (vs. 8-14)

Ask for a volunteer to read aloud Psalm 34:8-14.

Say: These verses contain David's advice for a holy life-style.

Important: When a person "tastes" or tries out the Lord he will discover God is good. That person is to "fear" or "revere" the Lord.

Question: What are some of the good things a person will find about God? (They will lack nothing; They will lack no good thing.)

Be sure the group understands: In order for good things to come into your life one must change and that comes through repentance. One must turn from evil and do good. One must actively pursue peace and truth. This is not to be understood as salvation by works.

4. DAVID CONTRASTS THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED (vs. 15-22).

Read or have someone read aloud this section, vs. 15-22.

Ask: In vs. 15 and 16, how is God described? (He has eyes, ears, and a face.)

Contrast: How are the righteous described and how are the wicked described?

Let the group call out the descriptions of the righteous (vs. 17-20) and the descriptions of the wicked (vs. 21-22). Write them on material (poster paper or a whiteboard) at hand.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

God is always ready to hear from His children. Take time to share needs within the group and then close with prayer for God to meet those needs. Do not forget to praise Him.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

YOUTH!!! TAKE TEN

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

God Delivers Us

Psalm 34

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

The Good, the Bad, the ???????

Psalms 34

12 Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days,

13 keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies.

14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

According to this psalm, what is necessary to have many good days in this life?

What might be included in the concept “keep your tongue from evil”? (bullying, critical attitude, swearing)? What else???

How easy is it to keep “your lips from telling lies”?

What do we do when we turn from evil? (How do you fill a stinky hole with good smells?)

What would be involved in seeking peace?

How do we pursue peace?

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***God Delivers Us***
Psalm 34**Beginning the Service:**

Sing:

Open Our Eyes, Lord, *The Worship Hymnal* #426; CCLI #1572

Holy Ground, *The Worship Hymnal* #72; CCLI #21198

Offering:**Praying for the World:**

Within Southeast Asia, Myanmar (still officially recognized as Burma by some nations) is the poorest country. Within Myanmar, the Rakhine state is the poorest state. That is where the Gospel found Tha Yah Maung studying in his monastery. He heard a radio broadcast about Jesus! This truth of the Gospel radically changed his life. Since then he has endured being beaten, kicked out of his village and imprisoned, which he describes as the greatest time in his life. While incarcerated, all he could do was read God's Word day and night. This year, after leading several villagers to faith and baptizing them, he has started a small church in his home. This week, pray each day for Tha Yah Maung and his small and persecuted church. Pray that God will bring many people across Rakhine to know our Saviour through the testimony of Tha Yah Maung and those in his church.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

What Happens When the Church Prays

Acts 12:1-16

Introduction:

The Scriptures we are about to read are an account of Peter's imprisonment and how the church prayed for his release. Listen carefully to the reading of the passage.

1 It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. 2 He had James, the brother of John put to death with the sword. 3 When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. 4 After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

5 So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

6 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. 7 Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.

8 Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. 9 Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. 10 They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.

11 Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were anticipating."

12 When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. 13 Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door. 14 When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!" "You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel."

16 But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. (Acts 12:1-16)

In chapter 12, attention turns from the Antioch church to Jerusalem. Since the martyring of Stephen, the church had not experienced much persecution. That situation radically changed with Herod Agrippa assuming control. He beheads James and puts Peter in prison.

We are going to divide this story into four parts beginning with:

1. Herod's Desire to Please the Jews (vs. 1-2).

Herod Agrippa I came from a long line of Herods. He was educated in Rome and grew up with Roman aristocracy which eventually led to his ruling over a Jewish kingdom. Emperor Caligula gave him the title of king. In A.D. 41 he was given rule over all of Judea, Samaria, Galilee, the Transjordan, and the Decapolis. He was truly "king of the Jews" at that point.

He could not count, however, on the good graces of Rome. So he cultivated the good graces of the Jews to bolster his position. He made every effort to please the Jews.

You have known leaders who were more interested in pleasing a few than ruling justly.

Herod was doing Satan's work. He was vexing the church. But, the Bible story doesn't end with Herod. It ends in victory.

But, before we get too far ahead. Let's look at:

2. Peter's Arrest and Confinement (vs. 3-6).

Peter was never hard to find. Herod saw that it pleased the Jews when he executed James; he arrested Peter and confined him in a jail. He was going to bring him out after Passover for a public trial and possibly an execution.

A substantial unit of guards was assigned to guard him. There were four watches of three hours each. Peter was chained by the wrist to a guard on each side of him and two other guards were stationed at the door. It was a heavy guard for one man.

This does not seem to bother Peter. He goes to sleep. And apparently his guards did, as well.

Perhaps Peter had learned from Jesus not to be anxious. How about you?

While Peter slept the church was mounting an offensive. They were in corporate prayer. Prayer is the mightiest weapon God gives the church.

3. Peter's Miraculous Release (vs. 7-13).

Peter was not delivered until the night before his trial. It was a last-minute deliverance. As the story begins to unfold we see that Peter was passive in the actions. He was out of it. The bright light that lit the cell did not fully awaken him. The angel who was sent to deliver him kicked him and had to give specific instructions for Peter to dress himself.

Peter followed the angel thinking at first it was a vision. The angel loosed his chains, led him past the guards, out an open gate, and into the city where he disappeared. It was at this point he realized he had been delivered. He goes to the house of Mary the mother of John.

Angels are messengers and protectors. Have you ever taken time to look back at your life and seen where God has miraculously delivered you or taken care of you? God is still in the miracle working business.

4. The Astonished Church (vs. 14-16).

Peter goes to the house of Mary the mother of John Mark. The church was in prayer for him. He knocks on the gate to the outer courtyard and a servant girl named Rhoda answered. She was in charge of keeping the gate, a task often given to female servants.

When she discovered who was there she did not open the gate but hurried back to tell the group the good news. She just left him outside where he might be seen and arrested. Even though she interrupted prayer for Peter's release, the people did not believe her. They thought "it must be his angel". Jews believed each person had a guardian angel. They thought she was crazy.

Peter's persistent knocking finally got their attention.

This is a commentary on what many prayer meetings are like. Many pray for God to act and then are astonished when He does. It shows a little lack of faith.

Perhaps it is time you and I re-examine our prayer time. Is it a time of vain babbling?

Conclusion

Moses prayed and God spared Israel from judgment.

Joshua prayed and God caused the sun to stand still.

Hannah prayed and God gave her a baby boy.

Solomon prayed and God gave him wisdom.

Elijah prayed and God sent fire down from Heaven.

Jonah prayed and God brought him out of the belly of the whale.

The thief on the cross next to Jesus prayed and God gave him eternal life.

Today, God answers millions of prayers around the world every day of our lives.

Never forget the power of prayer, both individual and corporate.

Call to Commitment:

Take time to share requests. Pray for each one.

Concluding the Service:

Speak the following blessing on the congregation as you dismiss—or choose to read another:

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Amen. (Ephesians 6:18)

Average times (not wonderful, not bad)
