

# BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



## FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

***Entering Into God's Presence – Living a Pure Life***  
**Psalms 15:1-5; 24:3-6**

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:**

Copy the reading from Psalm 24 which is given at the close of the Worship Time materials. Ask three readers to read the material. If possible, give them the verses ahead of time so they may read with great emphasis.

### **Bible Study Leader:**

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

## **Worship Time Leader:**

### **Music Sources:**

**How Majestic Is Your Name**, *The Worship Hymnal* #52; CCLI #26007

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

**Purer in Heart, O God**, *The Worship Hymnal* # 591; CCLI # 297623 Public Domain

**Refiner's Fire**, *The Worship Hymnal* # 592; CCLI #426298

**Take My Life (Holiness)**, *The Worship Hymnal* #589; CCLI # 1617154

**Sanctuary**, *The Worship Hymnal* #588; CCLI # 24140

# 1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

**Gathering Time:** (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

## ***Entering Into God's Presence – Living a Pure Life***

### **Focal Text**

Psalms 15:1-5; 24:3-6

### **Background Text**

Psalms 15; 24; 26

### **Main Idea**

The one who will truly worship God must live a life of purity and right relationships with others.

### **Question to Explore**

Are the requirements for pure living different today than in the Psalmist's day?

### **Teaching Aims**

Learners should desire to be in God's presence as they study these passages.

Learners should understand and practice concrete ways in which a blameless walk with God is achieved.

### **Gathering together:**

Sing:

**How Majestic Is Your Name**, *The Worship Hymnal* #52; CCLI #26007

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

### **First thoughts:**

**Reader 1:** The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.

The world, and all who live in it

For he founded it upon the seas

And established it upon the waters.

**Reader 2:** Who may ascend the hill of the Lord?

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*Entering Into God's Presence – Living a Pure Life* – 25-52-10

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Who may stand in his holy place?

**Reader 3:** Lift up your heads, O you gates;  
Be lifted up, you ancient doors,  
That the King of glory may come in.

**Reader 1:** Who is this King of glory?

**Reader 2:** The Lord strong and mighty,  
The Lord mighty in battle.

**Reader 3:** Lift up your heads, O you gates:  
Lift them up, you ancient doors,  
That the King of glory may come in.

**Reader 1:** Who is he, this king of glory?  
The Lord Almighty –  
He is the King of glory. (Psalm 24: 1, 7-10)

### **Closing the Gathering Time:**

May these words from Psalm 24 help us focus on the King of glory as we consider our theme for today's study ***Entering Into God's Presence – Living a Pure Life***. We will consider the connection between our worship and our life style. A pure life is essential if we are to be worthy to enter into God's presence.

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.

# 2

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

### *Entering Into God’s Presence – Living a Pure Life*

#### **Focal Text**

Psalms 15:1-5; 24:3-6

#### **Background Text**

Psalms 15; 24; 26

#### **Main Idea**

The one who will truly worship God must live a life of purity and right relationships with others.

#### **Question to Explore**

Are the requirements for pure living different today than in the Psalmist’s day?

#### **Teaching Aims**

Learners should desire to be in God’s presence as they study these passages.

Learners should understand and practice concrete ways in which a blameless walk with God is achieved.

#### **Introduction to your personal study:**

Read the verses to be studied again and again during your devotional time this week. Memorize them if possible. Ask the Lord to create in your heart a desire to worship Him with a pure life and heart.

#### **Background:**

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:**

### **Psalm 15: 1-5**

***Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary?  
Who may live on your holy hill?***

***He whose walk is blameless  
And who does what is righteous,  
Who speaks the truth from his heart  
And has no slander on his tongue,  
Who does his neighbor no wrong  
And casts no slur on his fellowman,  
Who despises a vile man  
But honors those who fear the Lord,  
Who keeps his oath  
Even when it hurts,  
Who lends his money without usury  
And does not accept a bribe against the innocent.***

***He who does these things will never be shaken.***

### **Psalm 24: 3-6**

***Who may ascend the hill of the Lord?  
Who may stand in his holy place?  
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
Who does not lift up his soul to an idol  
Or swear by what is false.***

***He will receive blessing from the Lord  
And vindication from God his Saviour.  
Such is the generation of those who seek him,  
Who seek your face, O God of Jacob.***

Both of the passages are character portrayals similar to others found in the Old Testament. There are several references to treatment of other persons which are given as direct proofs of relationship to God. "Israel took the opportunity to worship seriously. People wanting to enter the Temple were asked to confess basic character traits" (**Disciple's Study Bible**, Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1988, p. 653).

In Psalm 14:2 we read ***The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.*** That question is asked again in Psalm 15:1 ***Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on***

***your holy hill?*** And in Psalm 24: 3 the question is ***Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place?***

John W. Peterson in his interpretation called **The Message** asks ***God, who gets invited to dinner at your place? How do we get on your guest list?***

“This psalm was used by Jewish pilgrims entering the Temple to worship. They would ask the question in verse 1 at the entrance. From inside the Temple courtyard, priests would answer (vv.2-5)” (**Shepherd’s Notes, Psalms 1-50**. Nashville, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999, p. 37). “The worshiper is considered the guest of God, enjoying divine hospitality” (Shepherd’s Notes, p. 38). That idea is reflected in the familiar Psalm 23: 5-6 ***You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.***

***“The Pilgrims’ Question (15:1).*** The pilgrim is considered a sojourner or guest who enjoys the hospitality of God as his host. The question is, What kind of person must this guest be?

***The Priests’ Answer (15:2-5b).*** The answer is one that stresses the ethical imperatives of the Law and the Prophets. No ceremonial qualifications are mentioned. Yet, the guest in God’s house made use of ceremonies in worship. This means that the ceremonies of worship, to be acceptable, must come from lives that are ethically akin to God, and this kinship to God is demonstrated in one’s treatment of others (compare I John 4:20). The requirements in this Decalogue are typical, not all-inclusive.

***The Divine Reward (15:5c).*** The reward of godliness is security in God (compare Matt. 7:24-27) (**The Layman’s Bible Commentary Vol. 9**, Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1960, pp.41-41.)

This is an amazing concept. The worshiper is considered a guest of God, enjoying divine hospitality. Surely our worship experience will be transformed when we grasp this idea. These words must cause us to consider the anticipation of our own worship experience. Whether we are worshipping in a large congregation or in a house church, we must realize that we are guests of the Lord of the Universe. ***Sanctuary, holy hill, hill of the Lord*** all refer to the place where we meet God. Sometimes that is in community and sometimes it is alone. It may be as we walk or as we sit quietly in a corner of our home.

One holy place for this writer is found within Banff National Park in Alberta, Canada. An abandoned town which for several years was the site of a major coal mine system and processing plant exists within the trees and soaring mountains. A fairly large church was there and when the town was moved, the church was moved as well. Only the concrete steps and the empty basement remain. It is truly a holy hill and to sit on those steps and look at the mountains and forest around is always a wonderful worship experience. We need to find those places which cause us to worship even when we are not physically present in that place.



But most of the time, we go to worship in more mundane places. New church starts often meet in community halls or schools. Home churches meet in homes which are often crowded with even a small group. Nonetheless, we are encouraged by this psalm to know that it is a sanctuary, a holy hill and we are there to meet the King of Glory.

“The question is put directly to Yahweh: **“Who can settle down in your holy hill?”** The second form of the question advances the thought of the first moving from a visit to residence with Yahweh” (The Broadman Bible Commentary, Vol. 4. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971, p. 196).

Integrity is the first requirement for the one who desires to be in Yahweh’s Presence. He or she must walk in honesty doing what is right and speaking the truth. This is a heart commitment; it is the very nature of the one who desires to be in God’s Presence. In a world where integrity is so little valued by politicians, sports heroes, business people and sadly, sometimes even by those in ministry, we must, absolutely must, consider the fact that there is no way to take up residence in God’s presence unless we seek to be persons of integrity. There will be times of failure, but that failure must cause great anguish of spirit and great repentance.

“The second requirement involves a judicious use of conversation” (The Broadman Bible Commentary, p. 196). If ever this was a consideration for Christians, it is one today. Christians share opinions on the internet that they would probably never say in person. Political opinions and forwarded information is often inaccurate or falls far short of the admonition in verse 3 which indicates that the one who dwells with God **has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman.**

The third refers to an attitude of despising that which demeans one. Vileness comes in many forms. Obvious immorality is a part of it, but so are all of the aspects of character which are considered in this psalm – untruthfulness, slander, broken promises, and greed. The despising is focused on the action of the person. Other Biblical admonitions would focus on the concern and love we should have for the person in spite of his/her actions. We must know to what and to whom to give honor. This is as pertinent today as it was when it was written many years ago. We are so prone to honour those with money or fame and often overlook the truly honorable people among us.

“The fourth requirement is similarly set by what Yahweh is – it is consistency, even in changing circumstances. The man who is to dwell in Yahweh’s Presence may give his word (swears), only to find later that this very word is to his own disadvantage; but he **does not change** – he sticks by his word (cf. Deut. 23:21) (The Broadman Bible Commentary, p. 196).

The fifth requirement concerns the use of money. Some Old Testament teaching prohibited the taking of interest (Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25: 35-37; Deut. 23:19-20). Interest rates in the ancient world were enormous, ranging variously from 20 to 50 per cent. The larger teaching here concerns the attitude we have toward money. That it is wrong

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9

**Entering Into God’s Presence – Living a Pure Life – 25-52-10**

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to acquire money at the expense of others is the underlying teaching. That might be charging unreasonable interest or it might be selling a product which is not trustworthy. It has implications for advertising and merchandising at every level. It speaks to how we pay employees. The person who is focused on gaining more and more money will have a hard time dwelling on the holy hill.

The acceptable person is not only negatively good, but positively good; not only is he above blame in his relationships with his fellow man, but he seeks to serve their welfare. What he says is in accordance with what he thinks; his promise and his intention are one. "To speak in the heart" is a Hebrew idiom for "to think". (*The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. IV*, New York: Abingdon Press, 1955, p. 79).

Psalm 24 is much like Psalm 15. "The first section, which is an instructional poem, falls into two parts: (a) vs. 1-2, a statement of the fact of the Creator and his universal authority, followed by (b) a description of the qualities of the true worshiper, reminiscent of Ps. 15" (*The Interpreter's Bible*, p. 131). The second part of Psalm 24 which we have heard in the Gathering Time is descriptive of pilgrims coming to Jerusalem for a festival. They would march in procession. After coming around the Mount of Olives and crossing the Kidron Valley, the procession would halt at the gate to the Temple courtyard. The psalm was sung antiphonally with the choir outside asking "**Who is this King of glory?**" The priests within would reply, "**The Lord Almighty, He is the king of glory**" (Shepherd's Notes, p. 49).

The final thought of Psalm 15 is **He who does these things will never be shaken**. A similar promise is found in Psalm 24: 5 **He will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God his Savior**. Stability, blessing or happiness and vindication are gifts given to those who seek to live the pure lives outlined in these psalms.

These two psalms serve to instruct but also to lead us to feel the emotion and excitement of understanding what it is to worship God. We are encouraged to understand ourselves as guests of God when we come to worship. This should direct our worship endeavors into deeply meaningful and reverent expressions. We should desire that our character reflects the attributes which the Psalmist indicates are essential for one to worship God.

### **Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:**

Leading others to understand worship in the way this psalm indicates will require you as leader to prayerfully consider how you view worship and what changes you may need to make before leading the study. The list of character traits is not so much a list to be followed as a way of viewing ourselves as people of God preparing ourselves to worship the Lord Almighty.

## **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)

### ***Entering Into God's Presence – Living a Pure Life***

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**

Psalms 15:1-5; 24:3-6

#### **Background Text**

Psalms 15; 24; 26

#### **Main Idea**

The one who will truly worship God must live a life of purity and right relationships with others.

#### **Question to Explore**

Are the requirements for pure living different today than in the Psalmist's day?

#### **Teaching Aims**

Learners should desire to be in God's presence as they study these passages.

Learners should understand and practice concrete ways in which a blameless walk with God is achieved.

#### **Connect with Life:**

Ask participants to share where they most easily enter into a worship experience with God. For some it may be as they drive home from work each day; others may find that ordinary tasks such as cleaning house or mowing the lawn allow them to think about God.

## Guide the Study:

Have two different people read Psalm 15: 1-5 and Psalm 24: 3-6.

Then have someone read Psalm 15: 1 and Psalm 24: 3.

Ask: What is the question being asked here? (Who can worship God)

Say: A modern version of this question is seen in John W. Peterson's interpretation in **The Message** which reads **God, who gets invited to dinner at your place? How do we get on your guest list?**

Continue: The worshiper is considered the guest of God. This amazing concept is reflected in Psalm 23: 5-6 **You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.**

Examine verses Psalm 15: 1 and 24:3 to find the descriptive words used for the place of worship. (Sanctuary, holy hill, hill of the Lord, holy place).

Consider this: What makes a place or an occasion fit these descriptions?

Explain if needed: It can be the beauty of a church building or the quiet of a forest, but it is not limited to these places. As mentioned before it can also be in the midst of daily life. Sometimes it is in community; sometimes it is alone.

Continue: The verses move from the concept of visiting the holy place to residence with God.

Seek an answer: What kind of person can be a guest of God?

Have someone read Psalm 15: 2-3.

Enter in a brief discussion of this: What word might sum up this requirement? (Integrity. Walking in honesty and doing what is right and speaking the truth.) Allow time to discuss what this means.

Tell the group: The second requirement involves a judicious use of conversation.

And ask: How does this apply to our use of the internet? Spend time in adequately discussing how Christians may fail in this respect.

Have someone read Psalm 15: 4-5.

Discuss with your group how we keep ourselves from evil without alienating those people we wish to win to Christ.

Explain: The fourth requirement is similarly set by what Yahweh is – it is consistency, even in changing circumstances. The man who is to dwell in Yahweh's Presence may give his word (swears), only to find later that this very word is to his own disadvantage; but he does not change – he sticks by his word.

Have someone read Deuteronomy 23:21.

Have someone read Psalm 15: 5.

Comment: Some Old Testament teaching prohibited the taking of interest (Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25: 35-37; Deut. 23:19-20). Interest rates in the ancient world were enormous, ranging variously from 20 to 50 per cent. The larger teaching here concerns the attitude we have toward money. It is wrong to acquire money at the expense of others is the underlying teaching. That might be charging unreasonable interest or it might be selling a product which is not trustworthy. It has implications for advertising and merchandising at every level. It speaks to how we pay employees. The person who is focused on gaining more and more money will have a hard time dwelling on the holy hill.

Examine Psalm 24:4.

Encourage opinions for these questions: (Be sure not to embarrass those with wrong answers or opinions different from yours.)

Are the requirements the same?

What has been included that was not in Psalm 15.

Say: No one list of character traits given in Scripture will encompass all that we are to be and do in order to be worthy of worshiping God. These are to help us understand how we must live in order to be worthy guests of God.

Ask: Is there a promise given in Psalm 15: 5b and 24: 5 which we can claim?

## **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.

Share with your group: These two psalms serve to instruct but also to lead us to feel the emotion and excitement of understanding what it is to worship God. We are encouraged to understand ourselves as guests of God when we come to worship. This should direct our worship endeavors into deeply meaningful and reverent expressions. We should desire that our character reflects the attributes which the psalmist indicates are essential for one to worship God.

Close the study with a participant leading in prayer.

**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.

### ***Entering Into God's Presence – Living a Pure Life*** **Psalms 15:1-5; 24:3-6**

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.

#### **IN THE PRESENCE OF YOUR GOD!!!**

If you have been to a youth camp, you may have enjoyed the excitement of lively worship music and messages designed to speak directly to young people. Sometimes, ordinary worship services seem dull in comparison. How can you help your home church to include elements which help you to worship more completely? Is there a need for an attitude change on your part?

*Discuss this with each other.*



**Worship Time** (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Entering Into God's Presence – Living a Pure Life*****Psalms 15:1-5; 24:3-6****Beginning the Service:****Purer in Heart, O God**, *The Worship Hymnal* # 591; CCLI # 297623 Public Domain**Refiner's Fire**, *The Worship Hymnal* # 592; CCLI #426298**Offering:****Praying for the World:**

Scattered over the harsh regions of South Sudan and often roaming from place to place to find grazing for their cattle, the Dinka people have very few Christians among them. There are 958,800 Dinka of South Sudan whose primary religion is closely tied to their people group and ancestors. Known as fierce warriors, their cattle represent security, wealth, and life to them. Pray that the Dinka may come to rely on the wisdom and help of God.

**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.

## **O Worship the King** **Psalm 104:1**

A familiar hymn of earlier days was called **O Worship the King**. Our theme today has been that of worship and the requirements for pure living which are necessary if we are to be guests of the King.

Listen to the words of the old hymn.

O worship the King, all glorious above  
And gratefully sing His wonderful love;  
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,  
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

O tell of His might,  
O sing of His grace,  
Whose robe is the light,  
Whose canopy space!  
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form  
And dark is His path on the wings of the storm.

Thy bountiful care  
What tongue can recite?  
It breathes in the air,  
It shines in the light;  
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,  
And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

Frail children of dust,  
And feeble as frail,  
In Thee do we trust,  
Nor find Thee to fail:  
Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end;  
Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend!

(Words by Robert Grant, Music by Johann Michael Haydn, Public Domain)

It is easy to worship the King as we are carried along by these wonderful words.

He is glorious above.  
We can sing His wonderful love.  
He is our Shield and Defender.  
He is mighty but full of grace.  
His garment is light; he is at home in space.  
No one can describe the care He gives to us for it is so bountiful.

His care is in the very air we breathe and the light which guides us.  
His care comes from the very hills down to the plain.  
We experience it in the dew and the rain.  
We are frail and feeble.  
But we can trust in the King and He will never fail.  
His mercies are tender and will last all of our life.  
He is our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.

Psalm 104:1 expresses the only response we can give to such a King. ***My soul, praise the Lord! Lord, my God, You are very great.***

Psalm 15:1 asks:

***Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary?  
Who may live on your holy hill?***

Psalm 24: 3 repeats the theme.

***Who may ascend the hill of the Lord?  
Who may stand in his holy place?***

The Psalmist answers:

***He who has clean hands and a pure heart.***

### **Call to Commitment:**

We find that affirmation in Proverbs 3:5-6.

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
And lean not on your own understanding;  
In all your ways acknowledge him,  
And he will make your paths straight.***

We know God's expectations for us. We need to commit to live out those expectations.  
The choice is ours each and every day.

### **Concluding the Service:**

Sing:

**Take My Life (Holiness),** *The Worship Hymnal* #589; CCLI # 1617154  
**Sanctuary,** *The Worship Hymnal* #588; CCLI # 24140

## **Psalm 24: 1,7-10 Reading for the Gathering Time**

Enlist three readers ahead of time and, if possible, practice the reading so that it may be a truly meaningful introduction to the study of the day. Make a copy for each reader.

**Reader 1:** The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.  
The world, and all who live in it  
For he founded it upon the seas  
And established it upon the waters.

**Reader 2:** Who may ascend the hill of the Lord?  
Who may stand in his holy place?

**Reader 3:** Lift up your heads, O you gates;  
Be lifted up, you ancient doors,  
That the King of glory may come in.

**Reader 1:** Who is this King of glory?

**Reader 2:** The Lord strong and mighty,  
The Lord mighty in battle.

**Reader 3:** Lift up your heads, O you gates:  
Lift them up, you ancient doors,  
That the King of glory may come in.

**Reader 1:** Who is he, this king of glory?  
The Lord Almighty –  
He is the King of glory. Psalm 24: 1,7-10