

How LONG, O LORD?

AN EXERCISE THROUGH PSALM 13

DISCIPLE
HOPE FOR ADDICTION
MAKING
TOOLS

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disciple making
TOOLS

Just as David wrestled through the realities of his suffering, we are invited to do the same. Scripture does not require us to ignore our suffering. The Psalms are a model for us to follow to be real with our struggle, with our feelings, with our suffering and then to bring the truth of Who God is and what has been done for us in Christ. This is where hope is found. It takes work and effort, but as we honestly interact with the Lord and apply biblical truths, we will see change in our hearts and we will have hope.

Instructions:

Don't rush. If you need more than a week for each section, that is okay! The purpose of this exercise is to connect you with truth. When you read each scripture, read slowly. Look up key words in the dictionary for deeper understanding. The goal is to know God more, to align your heart to biblical truth and to allow the Holy Spirit to bring hope and change... even if your circumstances don't change, God will change your heart as you stand on HIS truth.



PART ONE:

1. Read Psalm 13 each day.
2. Underline or highlight everything the Psalmist says that you connect with, the things you feel.

ESV Gospel Transformation Bible Commentary:

“Only a sovereign Father would allow his suffering children to complain in order to draw them to greater faith (vv. 1–2). Even more magnanimous is the Lord’s endurance of David’s demand to “consider” (v. 3). Like a lawyer interrogating a witness, David demands an “answer” (v. 3), for he is afraid of dying at the hands of God’s mockers (v. 4). By the end of the prayer, the Father’s strategy works. Being drawn to the Father’s knee, David remembers that God’s love is “steadfast” (cf. v. 5a and Ex. 34:6–7), as our God acts according to covenant commitment that we now know would ultimately be sealed in Christ’s blood (cf. Ps. 13:5b and Luke 22:20). David also knows that “salvation” will come from God alone, which will cause David to “rejoice” (Ps. 13:5). We remember that a salvation was indeed announced, to a group of shepherds, as “news of great joy” (Luke 2:10).

David is so confident that God will deliver him that he begins to “sing” even before resolution has occurred (Ps. 13:6). We have an even greater basis for such confidence because we know this salvation hope finds its final fulfillment in Christ, who provides “hope” that “does not put us to shame” (Rom. 5:3–5). Such an honest prayer by David invites Christians to express all of their pain to the heavenly Father. After all, Christ’s substitution means that the believer can never be rejected (2 Cor. 5:21). Our experience of God’s goodness will be the same as

the psalmist's—never mere sustenance, but bountiful blessing from an extravagant God who 'graciously' gives us 'all things,' because he gave his Son for us all (Rom. 8:32)."

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Consider:

Read verse 1:

In what ways do you feel God has forgotten you or hidden His face from you?

What feelings do you have about what has happened?

Response/Truth to Apply:

Do you remember a time when God DID hide His face or turn away?
Read Matthew 27:46

Though it feels this way, God has not turned away, even in our sinfulness. Because He turned His face away from Jesus, He won't ever turn away from us. Read Deuteronomy 31:6, Matthew 28:20. Write an honest prayer about how you feel and then bring **biblical truth** to help you.

Reflect on these **truths** this week as you struggle through the reality of your emotions. Write out what you are thinking and feeling. Share this struggle with your discipleship leader.

PART TWO:

Read Psalm 13 each day.

Consider:

Read verse 2:

Does it appear that you will have sorrow forever?

In what ways do you believe that you will have sorrow forever?

Response/Truth to Apply:

Right now it feels that sorrow and suffering will take you out, that you won't survive, that you will be crushed and destroyed. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-10. What is true about your suffering?

PART THREE:

Read Psalm 13 each day.

Consider:

Read verse 3:

What are the questions that you are asking of the Lord?

What are your heart's cries? Be specific.

Write a prayer honestly talking to the Lord about these areas in which you are struggling to believe and share this with your discipleship leader:

PART FOUR:

Read Psalm 13 each day.

Consider:

Read verse 4:

Do you feel that your enemies have prevailed over you? (Your enemy can be a situation, a person, etc.). Explain. Look up the word “prevail” for better understanding.

In what ways do you think your enemies have prevailed? Be specific.

Response/Truth to Apply:

When Jesus was crucified, it appeared that His enemies had triumphed. But God was working a redemptive plan. This redemptive plan also extends to all that you have gone through. The darkness seemed to prevail but God saved the world. It seems that you will be in darkness and sorrow forever and that your enemy has won.

God’s people had been waiting with great expectancy for Messiah their whole lives. Read Isaiah 9:6-7 and Psalm 72:1-4, 8-14. What were their hopes for the Messiah? What did they think the Messiah was going to do?

Jesus Christ is Messiah. He is the fulfillment of the prophecies in the Old Testament. Christ was the conquering King who would lead His people to victory. Then Jesus died on the cross. It all seemed hopeless, all their hopes and dreams died with Christ. What do you think the disciples felt in that moment?

In what ways can you relate with how the disciples must have felt when Jesus died?

Do you believe that Christ can bring you through the darkness you are experiencing? Why or why not? Explain.

When Christ was resurrected, He conquered sin and death and He has power to redeem and rescue your brokenness and your darkness and your suffering. Read 1 John 1:5 and Psalm 139:11-12. What **truths** bring you hope?

Write a prayer, talk to the Lord about all that you are feeling and all that you have learned this week. Apply **truth** to your feelings:

PART FIVE:

Read Psalm 13 each day.

Consider:

Read verse 5:

What does steadfast mean? Look it up in a dictionary or online.

Notice the word “but” at the beginning of verse 5. The Psalmist pours out all his feelings and emotions. He does not hold back. Then he grounds himself in the truth of Who God is. All of his feelings, all of the circumstances were still true, but he changes the focus of his thoughts to the steadfast love of the Lord. He makes a **choice** to trust. What are your thoughts and feelings now as you try and align your heart with truth? In what ways are you struggling to recognize and believe God’s love toward you?

Response/Truth to Apply:

God’s steadfast love for you cannot, will not change. This love is not dependent on you, it is because of Christ. As a believer in Jesus, God’s love **cannot** be removed from you. Read Hebrews 7:22-25, Isaiah 43:1, Romans 5:8, Romans 8:38-39, and Psalm 136. It seems insurmountable all that you are facing. God’s steadfast love is greater, and Christ’s shed blood is the commitment we have of this love. **It cannot be taken away.**

Are you trusting in His steadfast love for you? If yes, how do your actions show your trust in His love for you?

In what ways can you see God’s steadfast love for you? Write these down. If you can’t “see” them right now because of the darkness, what are the ways you KNOW God has expressed His steadfast love? **Focus on these truths and redirect your thoughts and prayers toward these truths.**

What are you learning? What is God showing you?

PART SIX:

Read Psalm 13 each day.

Consider:

Read verse 6:

What do you think rejoicing is? Look up the meaning.

How can you rejoice and be grateful in the midst of this suffering?

Response/Truth to Apply:

Rejoicing and singing and gratitude is part of our healing process. You might not **feel** like singing and rejoicing. As you reflect on the steadfast love of the Lord, what is ONE thing, one way that God has dealt bountifully with you that you CAN rejoice in?

The shame, guilt and pain weighs you down. Read Psalm 3:3. The Lord is a shield about you and the one that lifts your head. He is with you. He loves you, He has not abandoned you. How has Christ's work at the cross, His love for you taken care of the burden that keeps your head bowed?

PART SEVEN:

Read Psalm 13 each day.

Review:

Go back through and review the **truths** that helped you in this study. Write them here:

Biblical Truth	Scripture

Write these scriptures on index cards. On the back write a prayer using the scripture as your guide. Keep these cards with you and when you are tempted to despair, review these truths. Stand on truth, not your feelings or emotions.

Look back at the first section of this study. How has Jesus helped you? How are you different?

Take a few minutes to thank the Lord for helping you, for changing you and for His steadfast love and faithfulness toward you. Share with your discipleship leader the ways the Lord has met you, how He has grown you and your hope for how He will be with you and help you in the future.

Connecting the desire to change
with the Power to change



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