

# Thirsting After God

Psalm 63

## MEMORY VERSE

PSALM 63:1

“O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Several paper towel rolls, glue stick, brown construction paper and a flash light (optional – you can obtain orange or red cellophane to cover the light to imitate a fire).

A “Hiding Under His Wings” template for each child, poster board, scissors, glue stick and markers.

A “3D Star” template (included) copied onto yellow card stock paper (3 stars are needed for each child), glue stick, scissors, a hole punch and string.

## ATTENTION GETTER!

### Set the Scene

In today’s Psalm we are going to learn about a very difficult time in David’s life. He was in the wilderness hiding out from someone who was trying to kill him. It was his son! But we are going to find out what got him through this experience. To help us begin, we are going to set the scene. Psalm 63:6 talks about how David thought about God through the watches of the night. Let us turn our classroom into a wilderness and learn about God’s goodness.

You will need several paper towel rolls, a glue stick, brown construction paper and a flash light (optional – you can obtain orange or red cellophane to cover the light to imitate a fire). Cover the paper towel rolls with brown construction paper (this can be done before class). Set your logs in a “teepee” fashion and place

the flashlight in the center. Turn on the flashlight and turn off the classroom lights. Set the scene by describing the type of wilderness scene that David may have been hiding in. Ask the children to describe the wilderness. As an option you may also want to bring in other items that help to describe a “wilderness” experience. After you introduce your setting you will want to turn back on the lights to continue your lesson.

## **LESSON TIME!**

This psalm was written by David when he was in the wilderness of Judah. It may have been written when he was running away from his son Absalom, who was trying to kill him (2 Samuel 15-18). We do know that he was king when he wrote this psalm. David was in the wilderness, fleeing for his very life, and we find that he does not turn away from the Lord, but rather turns to the Lord in his difficulty and writes a new psalm.

David was a worshipper and had a close relationship with the Lord. Even in the middle of the wilderness and while his life was threatened he chose to praise his wonderful Lord. C. Spurgeon comments on this psalm, “There was no desert in his heart, though there was a desert around him. We, too, may expect to be cast into rough places as we journey through life. In such seasons, may the Eternal Comforter abide with us, and cause us to bless the Lord at all times, making even the solitary place to become a temple for Jehovah.” **When you have problems, turn to God.**

We are going to learn in our lesson today how David turned to God and how that whenever we have problems we need to go to the Lord. Maybe you have had problems in your life. Maybe you have wondered where the Lord is during your problems. We can know that the Lord may allow us to go through tough things in our lives, but He is always with us and He promises to walk us through them. We can turn to Him and praise even in the middle of great problems. **When you have problems, turn to God.**

### PSALM 63:1-3

O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.

So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory.

Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You.

We find David in these verses crying out to God. It is very hard to have people angry with you, isn't it? Maybe you have had someone say hurtful things to you or about you. But can you imagine if someone you loved very much, even a relative, decided to try to kill you and take everything you had as their own? That happened to David. His own son decided he wanted to be king, and for that to happen, David had to die.

Absalom chased David into the wilderness to try to kill him. Who did David run to? Did he get his army together and try to fight against his son? No! He ran to his Lord and God. What a great relationship that David had with the Lord. David says, "O God, you are my God..." What a glorious statement. He is our God. So we should acknowledge His love, mercy and grace towards us.

David knew the Lord, and ran to Him in trouble. David did not doubt his relationship with his God. And we can do the same thing as Christians today. We can proclaim, "O God, you are my God." Knowing his Lord, David sought Him, and sought Him early. The word "early" has not only the sense of early in the morning, but that of going to the Lord right away. Think about a time when you had a really big problem in your life. Did you go to the Lord right away? Or did you try to figure out a way to handle it yourself? David's example teaches us to go to the Lord immediately. **When you have problems, turn to God.**

We see a beautiful picture of longing in David's heart for the Lord. His soul was "thirsty" for Him, his flesh "longed" for the Lord in a dry and thirsty land, where no water was. You get the picture that David's heart may have felt a lot like the place he found himself hiding. In the wilderness it was hot and dry. He may have been very thirsty physically and that made him think of his thirst and desire for the cool waters of God's Holy Spirit to come and comfort his heart.

We also see that David did not seek after revenge against his son or his enemies. He desired only the Lord. Have you ever been so thirsty, that you thought you would faint from thirst? Imagine being that thirsty, but instead of wanting water, you want the Lord in your life.

In Psalm 42:1 David says, "As the deer pants after the water, so my soul longs after you, O Lord." If our heart is not thirsty for the Lord, then we need to pray for forgiveness and ask Jesus to give us that thirst. We need to "hunger and thirst after righteousness", as Jesus told us in Matthew 5.

David was in a dry and thirsty land where there wasn't any water. He could have only thought about how he was going to find some water and take care of his physical needs. But he didn't. His concern was that God would be with him, and as he knew that God was with him that he would be all right.

There are times in our lives when we may be in the "wilderness," and going through a tough time. We can either get frightened by the problems or seek the Lord with all of our hearts. He can turn these times into times of blessing. It is easy for us to forget about all the Lord has done for us in the past. We need to remember the stories of God's people in the Bible who went through tough times with the Lord's help. God is everywhere with us. He is in the desert and in the place of comfort. He is with us in the good times and bad times. Because God is with us, we can face anything.

In verse 2 we see that David knew that as he gazed at God in His “power and glory,” his strength would be renewed for what was ahead in his life. When we see God in His holiness and glory, things seem to look a lot better. We need to remember that God is holy, powerful, and that He loves us. It is also good for us to remember that God’s divine power and glory are not confined to buildings, but are everywhere we go. Knowing God was with him was enough for David. Let us pray that the Lord would help us to look up when we have problems and not look all around. **When you have problems, turn to God.**

In verse 3, we see why David could turn to the Lord with confidence. He talked about how that God’s lovingkindness was better than life itself. In the bigger picture, David knew that he belonged to the Lord and he could trust and rest in God’s love. God would only allow what was best in his life. Even in the face of someone trying to kill him he could rest in the Lord.

To have a relationship with God is better than life at its very best. “In Him we truly live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17); He is our all in all. As David thought about these things his response was, as ours should be, to praise the Lord with his lips. He was not ashamed to praise the Lord, to openly make known the glory and power of God to the world. David did not allow the problems in his life to determine whether or not he would praise the Lord. What David did do was to gaze upon the face of his precious Savior and it was then that he could worship God.

Problems in our lives can be very difficult, but that is why it is so important for us to have a personal relationship with the Lord. This way through the problems we can praise Him for who He is and what He has already done for us. It has been said that if God never did another thing for us, it would be more than enough with what He has already done. Give God glory at all times, not just

when you feel like it. A sacrifice of praise costs us something, often our feelings. He is above our feelings, and loves us. He is a good God, and cares for us as no one else ever can. **When you have problems, turn to God.**

### PSALM 63:4-8

Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name.

My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips.

When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches.

Because You have been my help, therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.

My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.

David's desire in life was to bless the Lord with his entire life. He did not want to live for himself, but to live to serve God. We are God's people and we should live our lives in such a way that pleases Him in everything we do. David lifted up his hands to the Lord - what a beautiful picture of complete surrender to Christ. We can struggle or fight with our hands, but when we lift them in sweet surrender to God, He takes our act of surrender and is blessed. To see a man or woman with their hands outstretched to heaven is a sign of total submission to the Lord.

In verse 5 we see that although David was not able to feast at his tables in the palace anymore, he knew that his soul would be filled with spiritual joy because of the Lord. God's love fills us. Jesus said, "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that

proceeds from the mouth of God.” Having the food on this earth is not the most important thing in life. Rather, having the Word of God to feed our spirit is. As our souls are filled with God’s Word more joy and more praise comes out of our very being. **When you have problems, turn to God.**

When you lay awake in your bed at night, what do you think about? David meditated on God. His heart was so full of the goodness of God that even in bed David thought about the Lord. He could not take his mind off of the Lord. He did not let his mind dwell on his problems, but upon the Lord who delivers us out of all our troubles.

David responded to God’s love for him. In verse 7 he says, “Because you have been my help, therefore, in the shadow of your wings will I rejoice.” As David meditated and thought about all the Lord had done for him, it brought back to his mind all the times the Lord had helped him. Under the wings of the Lord, David chose to hide from all of his fears, and found his place of safety. As we find shelter and safety in the Lord, we can rejoice in our salvation.

Does that mean that God really has wings or feathers? Well it is really a picture for us to understand what God does for us when we go to him. Picture a mother hen protecting her chicks from dangers. She will spread out her wings and provide a covering of safety for the little ones. That is the picture that David wants us to see about going to God. He will cover us and protect us from all harm when we hide under His safety.

David stayed glued to God. We must remember that we are part of His body, one with Him. Who or what can separate us from His love? Nothing! And God, knowing how weak we are holds us up with His mighty right hand. He never lets us go. **When you have problems, turn to God.**

## Hiding Under His Wings

For this craft you will need a template for each child, poster board, scissors, glue sticks and markers.

Have each child cut out the dove from the template (included). They should then glue it with a glue stick onto the poster board. After gluing, cut out the shape again. Next have the children write verse 7 of Psalm 63 – “Because You have been my help, therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.” Optional – The children can punch a hole in the tail of the dove and with string hang them on the bulletin board at church or in their room at home.

### PSALM 63:9-11

But those who seek my life, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.

They shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for jackals.

But the king shall rejoice in God; everyone who swears by Him shall glory; but the mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped.

As much as David sought after God, there were people who were seeking to hurt him. David was aware of the fact that his enemies were after him to kill him. We must remember that we have a very real enemy who is out to destroy and kill us. “Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion walks about, seeking whom he may devour” 1 Peter 5:8.

David said, that the destroyers will be destroyed. David is prophesying about what will happen to those who are trying to kill him. The wicked will fall into the pits, which they have dug for others. David said his enemies would fall by the sword, and they did. We also see that these enemies were given to the animals for food.

In verse 11 David said that those who were lying about him would be stopped. His prosperity would be publicly acknowledged as a gift of God. David calls himself the king, for he was God's anointed, and God would always be with him. Again, we see David rejoicing in the Lord. In good or bad circumstances, David praised God. We see the difference between the mouth that praises God, and the mouth that speaks lies. The mouth that praises God will never be stopped. The mouth that speaks lies shall be made speechless in the presence of Almighty God. In the speaking of the truth, the lies and slander would be stopped. **When you have problems, turn to God.**

May the praises of God ring out of our mouth everyday as we meditate upon His goodness and grace in our lives. As David praised God in the difficult wilderness experiences, let our hearts praise Him.

### 3D Star

Have you ever been frightened at night. We can always remember to pray to the Lord and He will help us. This craft will help us to do that. You will need a "star" template (included) copied onto yellow card stock paper (3 stars are needed for each child), glue sticks, scissors, a hole punch and string.

This craft is very similar to the dove craft before. But this craft will help the children remember to think of the Lord when they are afraid.

Have the children cut out the stars from the cardstock templates (3 each). Next, have the children write Psalm 63:6 on the front of one star and draw a picture on the other two stars (anything that reminds them to trust in the Lord when they are afraid). Next, glue the three stars together to make a 3D star with the verse and picture sides showing on the outside. With a hole punch, punch a hole at the top point of the star and using fishing line or yarn, have the children hang the star from their ceiling to remind them to trust in the Lord if they are ever afraid at night.

## **PRAYER**

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to place their trust in the Lord even when they are having problems. To praise the Lord and hide under his wings when times are tough. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.



