

# 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 rolls of paper towels, glue sticks, 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**

David was in the wilderness when he wrote the psalm we will study today. It was no vacation for David, he was most likely fleeing from his son, Absalom, who was trying to kill him! Yet, David got through this rough time. 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 set the scene.

You will need several rolls of paper towels, 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. You may also want to bring in other items that help to describe a “wilderness” experience. After you introduce your setting, turn the lights on and begin the lesson.

## LESSON TIME!

David wrote this psalm while in the wilderness of Judah. It may have been written at the time he was fleeing from his son Absalom who was seeking to kill him (2 Samuel 15-18). We do know that he was king when he wrote this psalm. In his time of need, David was well aware of where his help came from. Turning his heart toward God, he wrote Psalm 63.

David was a worshipper. 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.**

### 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.

David cried out to the Lord, His God. It is a difficult thing to have people angry with you, isn't it? Perhaps you know how bad it feels when someone says 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's what may have been happening to David when he wrote this Psalm. His own son decided he wanted to be king; and for that to happen, David had to die.

David could have reacted to his situation by pulling together an army...by writing a strategy for battle or at least escape. Instead, he wrote a Psalm. He ran into the arms of His God. David says, "O God, you are my God..."

Because David knew the Lord—His nature, His character, His willingness to help, His record of faithfulness, His lovingkindness—he knew to call upon Him; he knew to seek him early. The word "early" has not only the sense of early in the morning, but also means coming to the Lord right away, early in the situation. David proclaimed, "Your lovingkindness is better than life..." In the bigger picture, David knew that he belonged to the Lord and he could trust and rest in God's love, even in the face of someone trying to kill him.

Think about a time when you had a really big problem in your life. Did you go to the Lord early (right away)? Or did you try to figure out a way to handle it yourself? David was quick to seek the Lord in time of need. He knew where His help would come from. **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 wilderness place he found

himself hiding—hot and dry. Perhaps his physical thirst in that dry land reminded him of his desire for the cool waters of God’s comforting Holy Spirit.

Have you ever been so thirsty, that you thought you would faint from thirst? Imagine being that thirsty, but instead of wanting water, your desire is the Lord in your life.

In Psalm 42:1 David again describes his thirst for God: “As the deer pants after the water, so my soul longs after you, O Lord.” Are you thirsty for God? If not, get to know God—His nature and character and David did. You will find the more you know Him, the more you love Him, and the more you desire to know Him and fellowship with Him! In Matthew 5 Jesus exclaimed, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Blessed means “oh how happy.”

In verse 2, we see that David knew his strength would be renewed that as he gazed at God in His “power and glory.” When we see God in His holiness and glory, our situation looks a lot better. 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.**

To have a relationship with God is better than life at its very best. As David thought about these things his response was, as ours should be, to praise the Lord. David did not allow the problems in his life to determine whether or not he would praise the Lord. With his focus and gaze upon God, he praised Him

When problem and difficulties come our way, where is our focus? How important it is at that time that we know the Lord as David did and turn all our attention to Him! Consider all He has done in the past and is doing for you now presently. The result of really seeing God clearly will always be praise. Even if you do not feel like

it, praise the Lord. He is above our feelings and loves us. God is good to us and cares about 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 was to bless the Lord with his entire life—as long as he lived. He did not want to live for himself, but to live to serve God. Do you desire to live your life in a way that pleases God?

David lifted up his hands to the Lord--what a beautiful picture of surrender to Christ. We can struggle or fight with our hands, but when we lift them in sweet surrender to God, we are honoring Him.

David was no longer able to feast at the tables of the palace, but he was able to feast at God's table. His *soul* would be well satisfied. Jesus said, "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Having food on this earth is not the most important thing in life. The most important food is spiritual—the Word of God. **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 delivered him out of all of his problems.

Considering God's work in the past, David rested in the future, "Because you have been my help, therefore, in the shadow of your wings will I rejoice." David chose to hide from all of his fears under the shadow of God's wings. We, too, can find our place of shelter and safety in the Lord and rejoice as David did.

Does God have wings or feathers? It's really a picture for us to understand what God does for us when we go to him. Picture a mother hen, in the face of danger, spreading out her wings and providing a covering of safety for her little chicks. David creates that picture of God. He will cover us and protect us from harm when we hide in Him.

David stayed glued to God. We must remember as David did, we have an awesome relationship with our heavenly Father. 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) and glue it with glue stick onto the poster board. After gluing, cut out the shape again. 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. 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. The wicked will fall into the pits that they have dug for others. David prophesied his enemies would fall by the sword, and they did.

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 and rejoices in God; for he was God’s anointed and He knew God would always be with him. **When you have problems, turn to God.**

As we meditate upon God’s goodness, may the praises of God ring out. Even in the midst of our wilderness experience—our problems and difficulties—may we remember who God is and rejoice in Him.

## **3D Star**

Have you ever been frightened at night. Remember to pray, for God desires to help you. 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.

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 remember the goodness of God and turn to Him in time of need. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.



