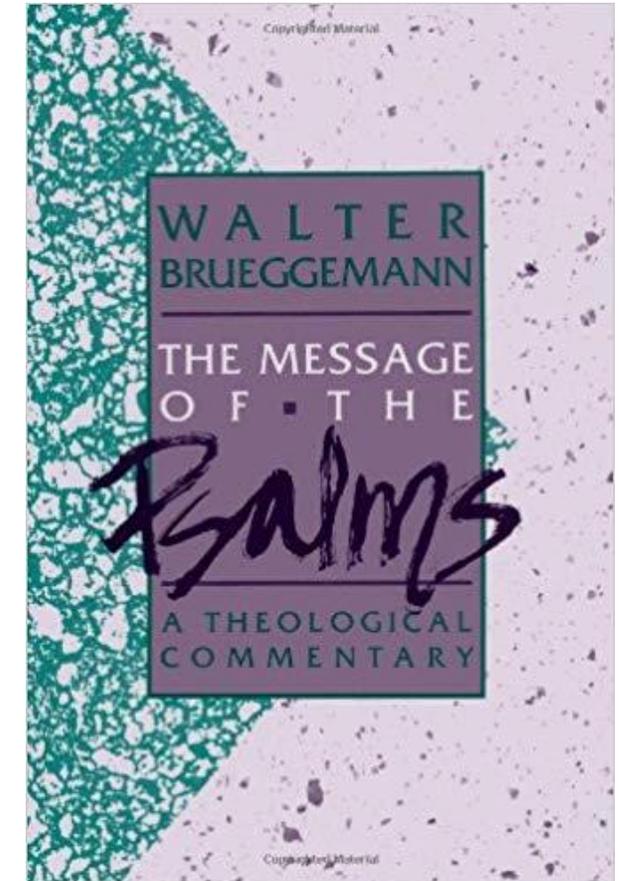
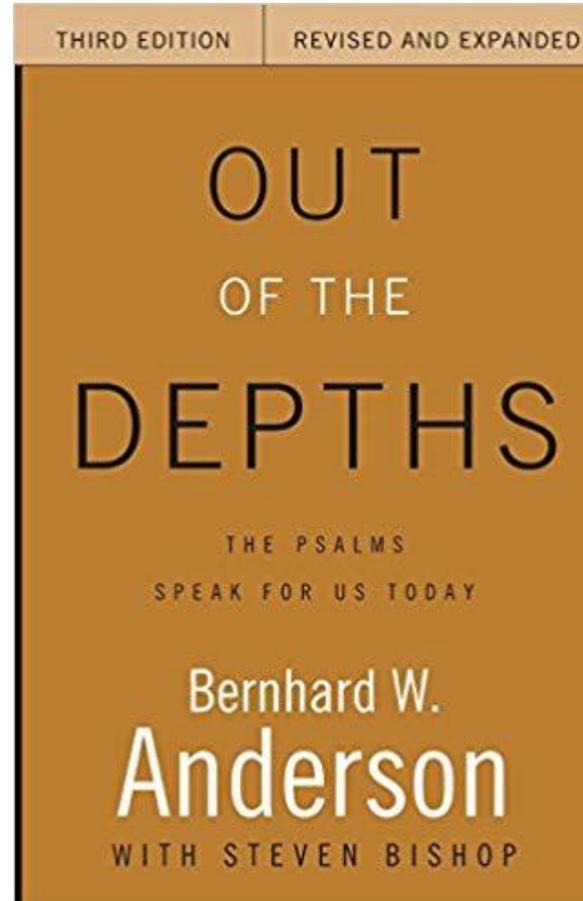
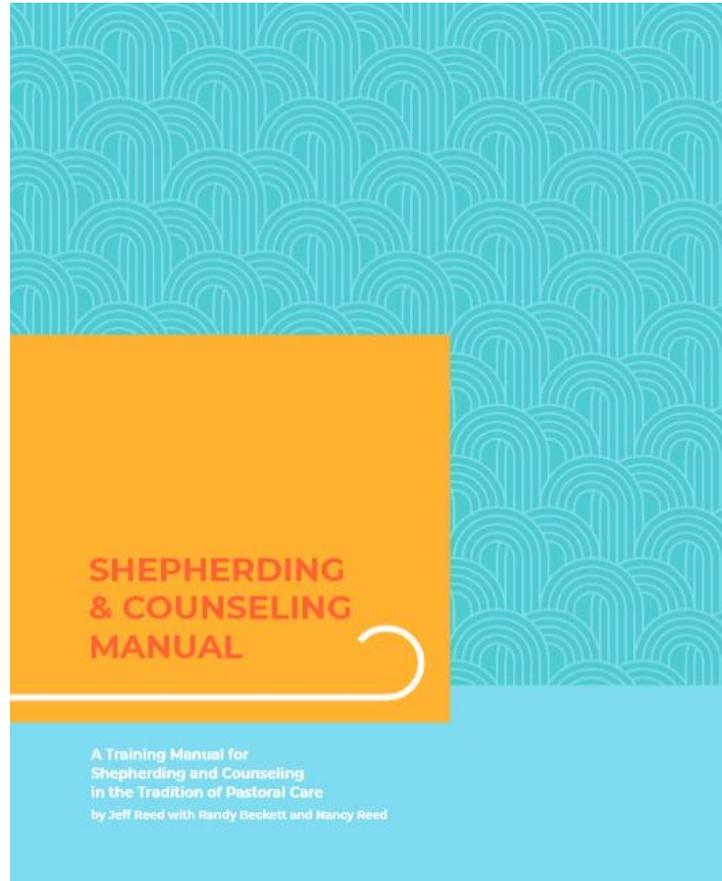
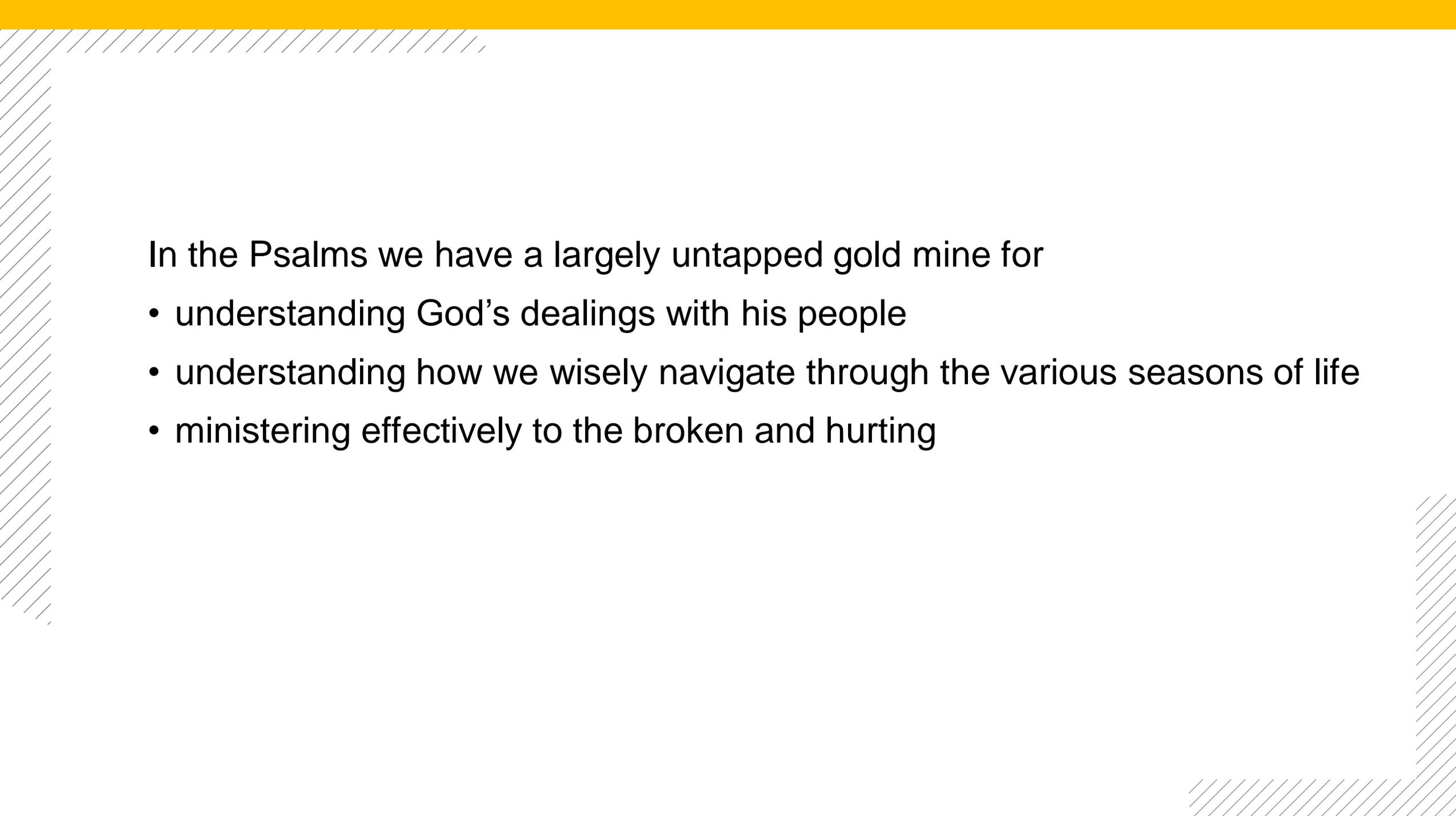


Heart and Mind and Life Under God's Plan

Using the Psalms

My recent work





In the Psalms we have a largely untapped gold mine for

- understanding God's dealings with his people
- understanding how we wisely navigate through the various seasons of life
- ministering effectively to the broken and hurting

How many Psalms can you use right now to orient yourself or to help someone else?

2 ?

5 ?

10 ?

15 ?

20 ?

How many Psalms can you use right now to orient yourself or to help someone else?

2 – 1%

5 – 3%

10 – 6%

15 – 10%

20 – 13%

How many Psalms can you use right now to orient yourself or to help someone else?

Psalm 1

Psalm 2

Psalm 13

Psalm 19

Psalm 23

Psalm 51

Psalm 90

Psalm 111

Psalm 112

Psalm 119

The stakes are huge. There is a difference between...

A basic faith and a biblical worldview that is up to the challenges of life.

A worldview that is adequate for now and knowing how to strengthen your faith understanding as life keeps get more complex.

Having your own worldview developed and being able to enter into someone else's world and help them.

Discussion

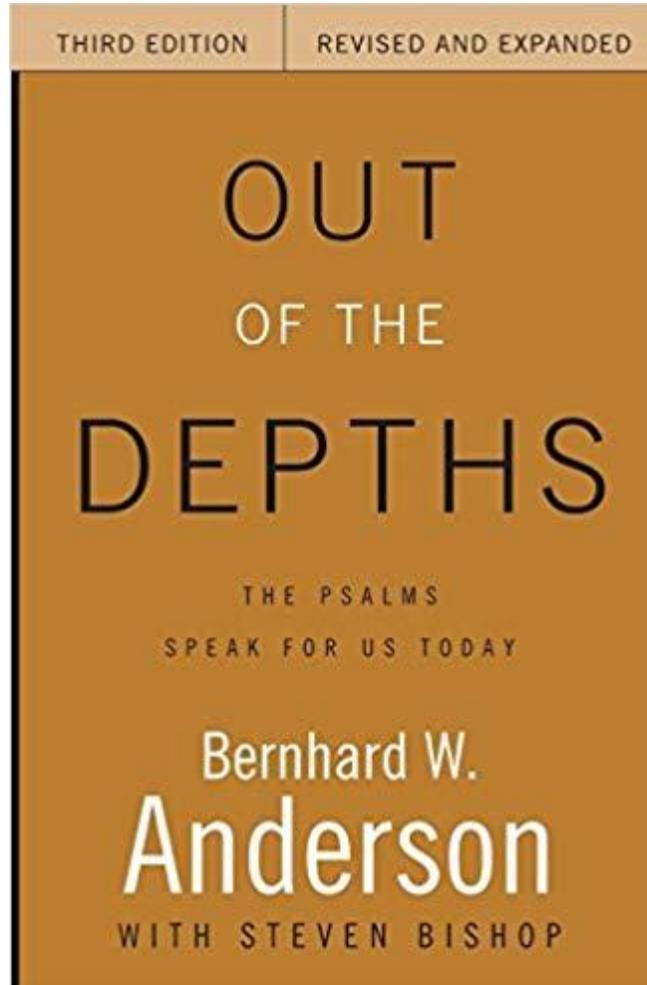
1. What do you typically use the Psalms for? Why do you read them? What Psalms do you go to repeatedly? Why those particular ones?
2. Why do we have an ancient song book as part of the scriptures? What do the Psalms do that other portions of scripture do not?
3. How many Psalms can you go and use in the spur of the moment? What could you do to gain greater mastery of the Psalms as a whole over the next 3 years?

Importance of the Psalms

After Isaiah, the Psalms are the most quoted and alluded to book in the New Testament.

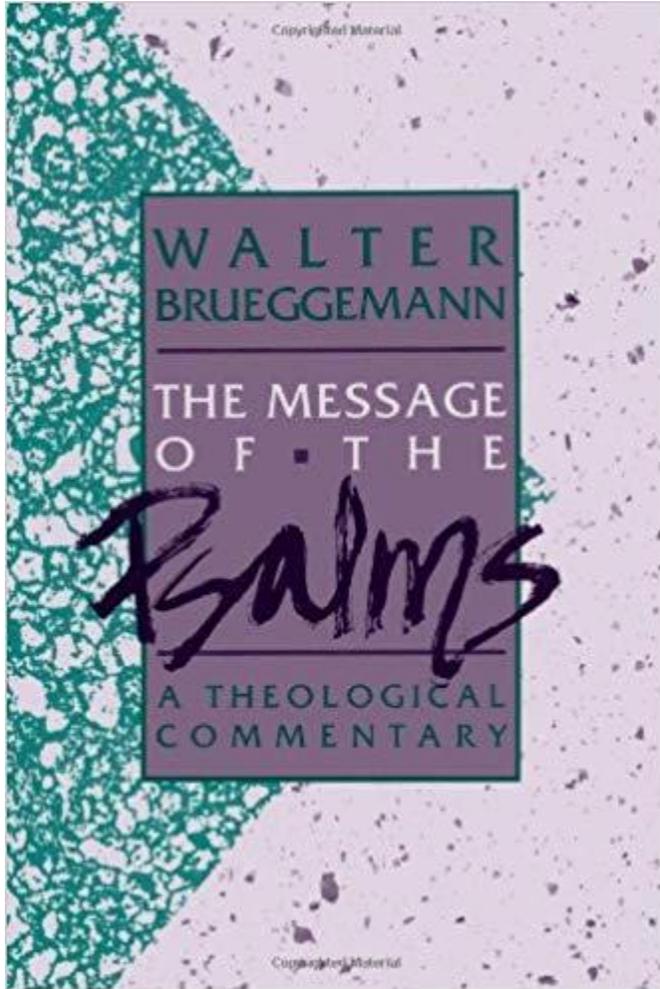
The apostles, speaking to churches of their participation in God's purposes, pointed back to how God's people Israel processed their own place in God's plan.

Types of Psalms



Torah Psalms
Wisdom Psalms
Individual Laments
Community Laments
Royal Psalms
Hymns
Thanksgiving Psalms
Songs of Trust
Storytelling Psalms

(Appendix B)



Three broad groupings

Psalms of ...

Orientation

Disorientation

New Orientation

Psalms of **Orientation**

- Captures the things about God and his dealings that are constant and are the reason for blessing and stability in our lives
- Expresses the faith matters that are settled and trustworthy, the matters we can bank our lives on

Psalm 1

1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.

3 He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season
And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers.

4 The wicked are not so,

But they are like chaff which the wind drives away.

5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,

Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

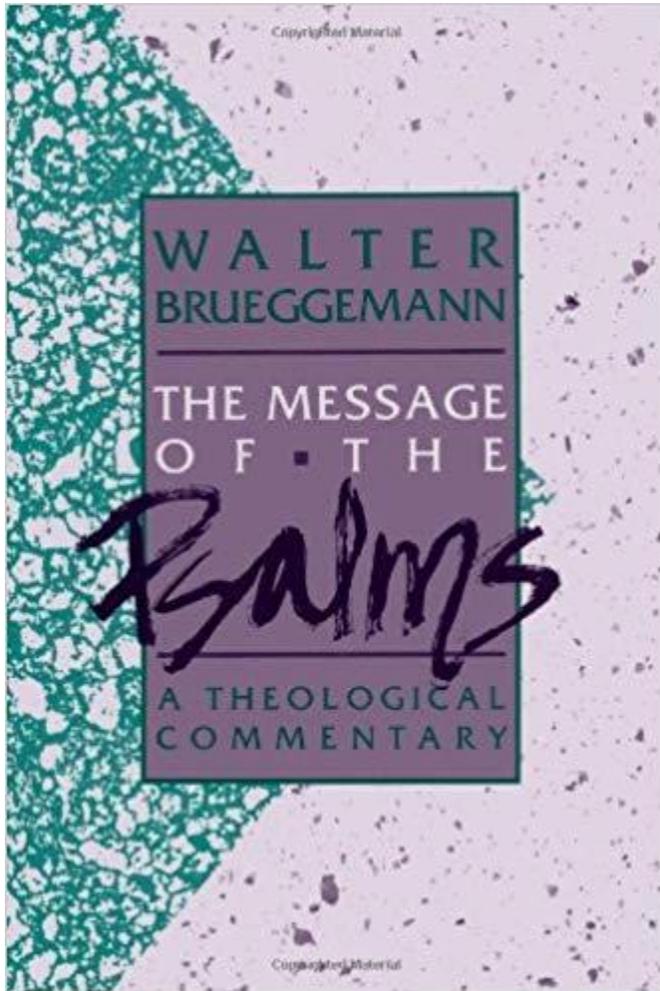
6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,

But the way of the wicked will perish.

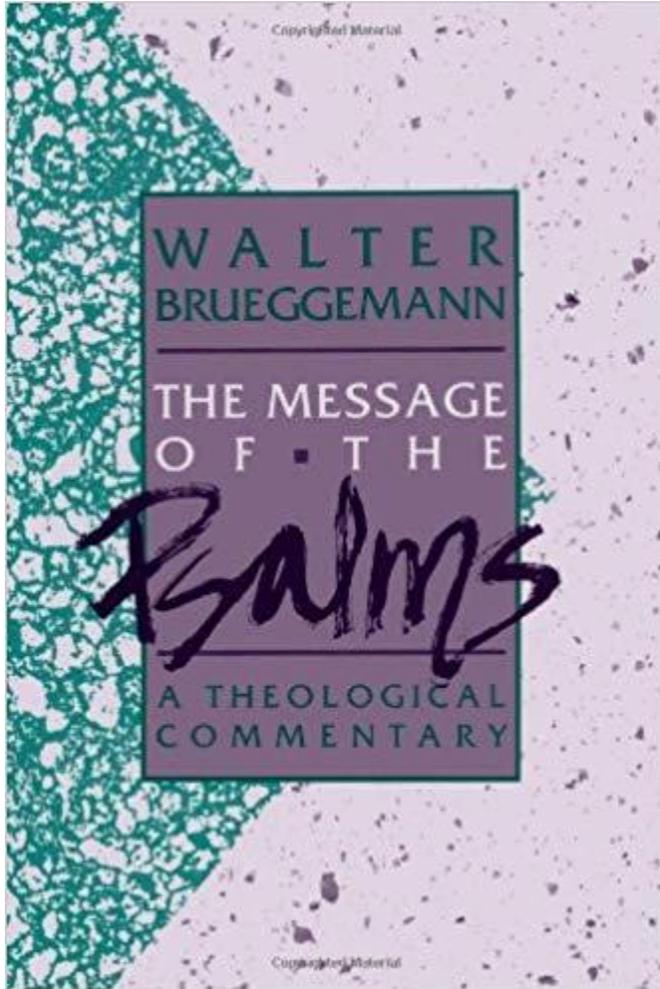
Other examples: Psalm 145, 104, 33, 8, 119, 15, 24, 37, 14, 112, 133, 131

Psalms of **Disorientation**

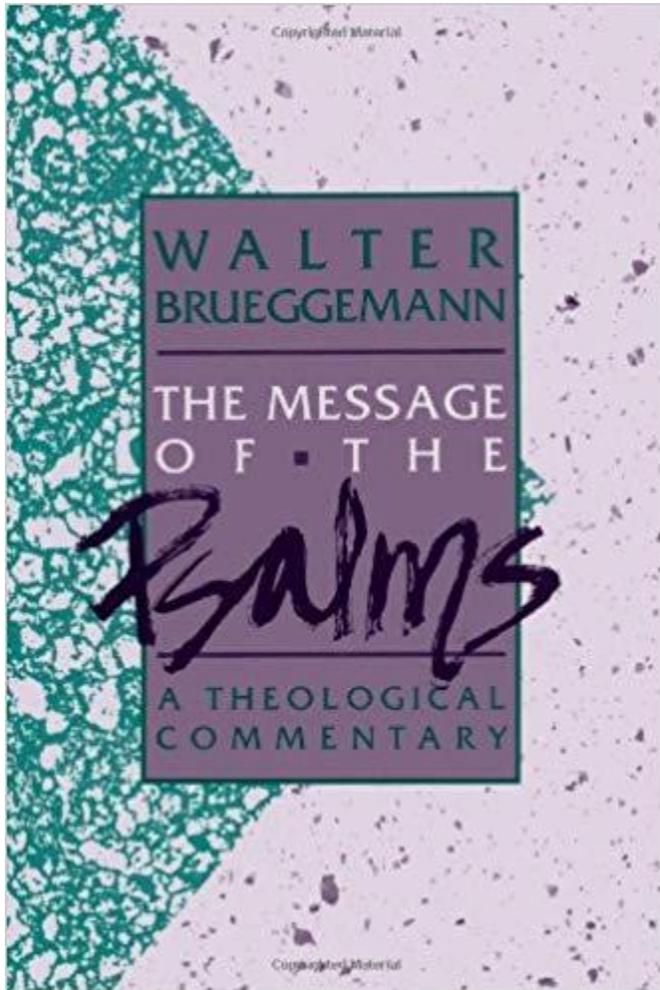
- Takes you through a journey of processing brokenness, heartache, injustice, disequilibrium
- Shows how God's people navigate through disorienting circumstances in light of God's character and larger purposes



“It is a curious fact that the church has, by and large, continued to sing songs of orientation in a world increasingly experienced as disoriented.” (p51)



“At least it is clear that a church that goes on singing ‘happy songs’ in the face of raw reality is doing something very different from what the Bible itself does.” (p52)



“I think that serious religious use of the lament psalms has been minimal because we have believed that faith does not mean to acknowledge and embrace negativity. We have thought that acknowledgment of negativity was somehow an act of unfaith, as though the very speech about it conceded too much about God’s ‘loss of control’” (p52)

Psalm 13

For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

1 How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever?

How long will You hide Your face from me?

2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul,

Having sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

3 Consider *and* answer me, O LORD my God;

Enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the *sleep of* death,

4 And my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
And my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.

5 But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness;
My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.

6 I will sing to the LORD,
Because He has dealt bountifully with me.

Other examples: Psalm 86, 35, 74, 79, 137, 88, 109, 50, 81, 32, 51, 143, 130,
49, 90, 73

Psalms of **New Orientation**

- Fresh experiences of God's goodness and power emerging out of disequilibrium
- Expressions of thanks for God's intervention that makes new life possible

Psalm 23

A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD is my shepherd,

I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside quiet waters.

3 He restores my soul;

He guides me in the paths of righteousness

For His name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You have anointed my head with oil;
My cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Other examples: 30, 40, 138, 34, 65, 66, 124, 114, 29, 96, 93, 97, 98, 99,
47, 27, 91, 135, 103, 113, 146, 147, 148, 100, 149

Carol and Me

Psalm 131 – Song of Trust / Orientation

Psalm 112 – Wisdom Psalm / Orientation



My awesome wife's reflection

Psalm 131 - my all time favorite :)

- ¹ My heart is not proud, LORD,
my eyes are not haughty;
I do not concern myself with great matters
or things too wonderful for me.
- ² But I have calmed and quieted myself,
I am like a weaned child with its mother;
like a weaned child I am content.
- ³ Israel, put your hope in the LORD
both now and forevermore.

My awesome wife's reflection

I memorized this short psalm of David as a baby believer in my teens. It has always spoken to me about an ideal faith that I would like to aspire to. As a young woman, this psalm helped me to put a difficult childhood into perspective. As a mother, I gained even more insight into the wisdom David shared as I watched the development of my own infants and the comfort that they received simply by my presence. As my life grew ever more complex this psalm encouraged me to trust the Lord to be about His business, regardless of my circumstances. During the last 4 years, as I have been mostly homebound, this psalm has been a constant reminder to me to be content.

My awesome wife's reflection

'My heart is not proud, Lord, my eyes are not haughty' - it isn't important for me to know 'why'. While not irrelevant, my life is only a tiny piece of the immense puzzle God has been building over centuries of time. It would be extremely arrogant for me to assume that I should know what God is doing/planning in my life when He has the entire universe under His command.

My awesome wife's reflection

'I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me' - Worrying about the 'why' in life only leads to discontent and unhappiness. God is in control of everything, working all things out for His ultimate plan to restore our fallen world. I trust that He knows what He's doing. That's enough for me..

My awesome wife's reflection

'But I have calmed and quieted myself. I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content' - Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we cannot see. I cannot see the Lord working in my life right now, but I am certain that He is. I hope desperately to be useful to Him in some way and I am sure that I am exactly where I should be. God could heal me, or allow me to be healed, if He wanted to. The fact that He hasn't yet leads me to the conclusion that I am right where I belong. I find tremendous comfort in the truth that my life will always be in God's hands. Nothing bad can ever happen to me, because, ultimately God is in control of all things and God is always good.

My awesome wife's reflection

'Israel, put your hope in the Lord, both now and forevermore' - I entrusted my life to the Lord when I was 17 years old. I have never regretted that decision. God has been faithful and good to me throughout my entire life and I so look forward to spending eternity with Him.

My awesome wife's reflection

Psalm 131 speaks so much to me. It tells me that God is God and I am not. That He is mighty and wise beyond my comprehension. That's it's okay to be small and insignificant. That true faith is not ignorance, or a blind hope, but a confident assurance that the Lord of the universe is working out His plan and that I can trust Him to do His job. And that true faith leads to contentment in life. If I am not content with where the Lord has me, I need to examine where my heart is and what I am believing in.

Psalm 112 (NASB95)

¹Praise the LORD!

How blessed is the man who fears the LORD,
Who greatly delights in His commandments.

²His descendants will be mighty on earth;
The generation of the upright will be blessed.

³Wealth and riches are in his house,
And his righteousness endures forever.

⁴Light arises in the darkness for the upright;
He is gracious and compassionate and righteous.

⁵It is well with the man who is gracious and lends;
He will maintain his cause in judgment.

The righteous will be remembered forever.

⁷He will not fear evil tidings;

His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

⁸His heart is upheld, he will not fear,

Until he looks with satisfaction on his adversaries.

⁹He has given freely to the poor,

His righteousness endures forever;

His horn will be exalted in honor.

¹⁰The wicked will see it and be vexed,

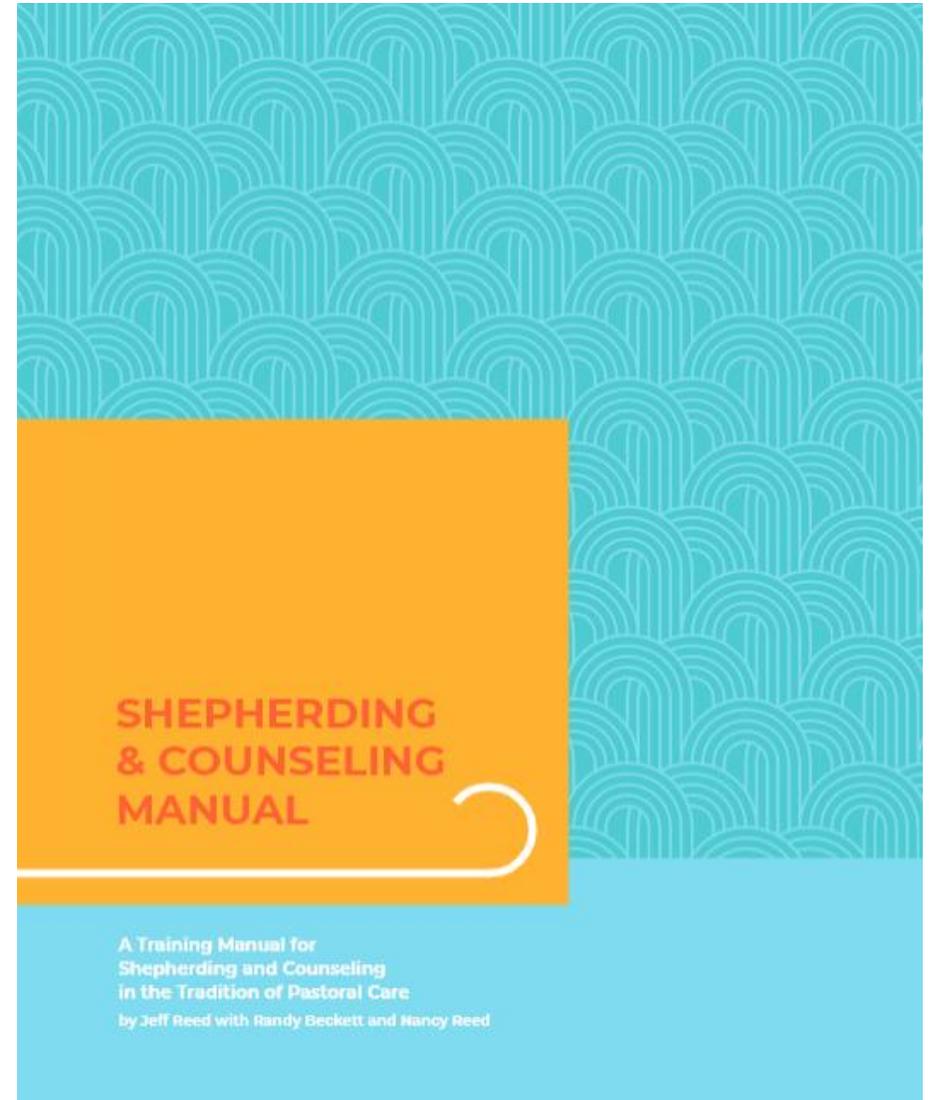
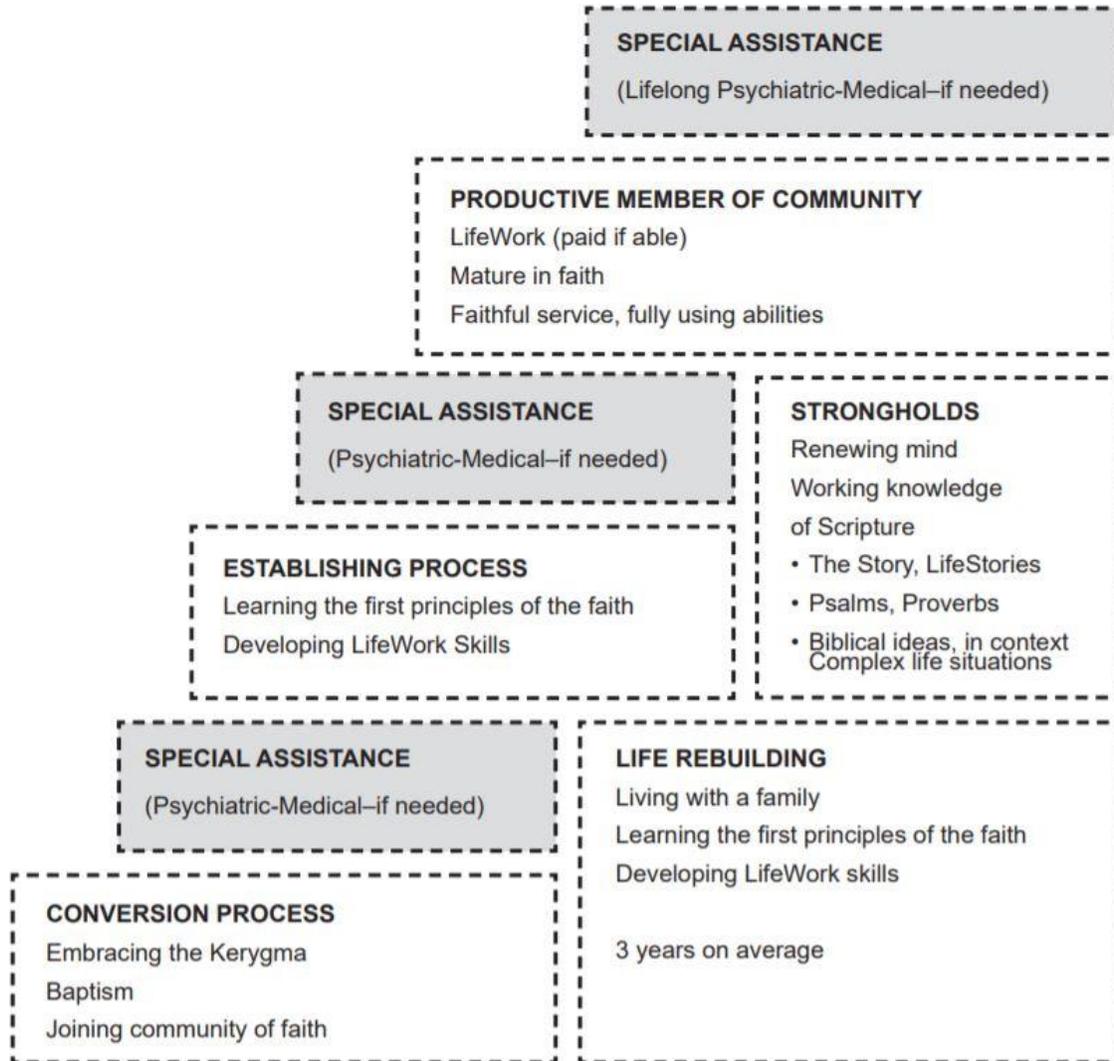
He will gnash his teeth and melt away;

The desire of the wicked will perish.

My Journal – June 2017

I've been impacted afresh by the perspective and movement of thought found in Ps 111, 112, and 113. In Psalm 111 you are in the assembly together (vs 1), remembering the works of the Lord, his covenant promises, and his faithfulness to carry out those promises. The psalm places you within the sweep of God's saving plan. And the focus is not just "you" as an individual but you as a people called out and set apart among the nations. Psalm 112 looks at the man and his family who grasp this larger reality, who finds delight in it, who live and prioritize in light of it. Such a person is blessed by the Lord, his children are fruitful, and even in dark times he is secure and without fear. Ps 113 then lifts you in response to praise the Lord who is above all and who deserves our all.

PASTORAL CARE TAXONOMY



Master a tool kit

1. Read several a day (5 per day to finish in a month)
2. Identify 10-20 that you want to be able to use because...
 - It contains worldview building blocks needed to stay oriented throughout life
 - It models well how to re-orient oneself during difficult times
 - It models confession of sin and restoration with the living God
 - It models thanks for God's faithfulness
3. Make sure the 10-20 cover the range of Psalm types

How many Psalms can you use right now to orient yourself or to help someone else?

Psalm 1 – Torah / Wisdom (orientation)

Psalm 2 – Royal

Psalm 13 – Individual Lament (disorientation)

Psalm 19 – Hymn

Psalm 23 – Song of Trust (new orientation)

Psalm 51 – Individual Lament / Penitential (disorientation)

Psalm 90 – Community Lament (disorientation)

Psalm 111 – Wisdom (orientation)

Psalm 112 – Hymn (orientation)

Psalm 119 – Torah / Wisdom (orientation)

A Baker's Dozen to Start

Psalm 1 – Torah / Wisdom (orientation)

Psalm 2 – Royal

Psalm 13 – Individual Lament (disorientation)

Psalm 19 – Hymn

Psalm 32 – Song of Thanksgiving / Penitential (disorientation)

Psalm 42 – Individual Lament (disorientation)

Psalm 51 – Individual Lament / Penitential (disorientation)

Psalm 71 – Individual Lament (disorientation)

Psalm 90 – Community Lament (disorientation)

Psalm 112 – Hymn (orientation)

Psalm 113 – Hymn (new orientation)

Psalm 119 – Torah / Wisdom (orientation)

Psalm 128 – Wisdom Psalm (orientation)

Master a tool kit

4. Work on 1 Psalm each week. Identify the author's main idea, his subordinate ideas, and his flow of thought. Write this down and don't lose it. This a body of work that you can tap into as needed.
5. Memorize portions of the Psalm you are working on.
6. Teach the Psalm in a few situations – with your family, with your home church, with a mentee

Use the Psalms in your home church

Sing them

Read them publicly

Invite reflections and sharing on the Psalms

Use them to address both individual and collective shepherding matters

Psalm 112 (NASB95)

¹Praise the LORD!

How blessed is the man who fears the LORD,
Who greatly delights in His commandments.