

Family Worship Guide – Week 37

MEMORIZE

Psalm 46:1 – God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

READ

Read Psalm 46.

Our world is full of trouble. There is trouble resulting from living in a fallen world and trouble resulting directly from the actions of fallen humans. Yet in the midst of any and all trouble we can find peace and confidence through relying on the presence of God with His people. God is in control fully and completely. His power is more than enough to address whatever trouble might befall His people. Of course, that presence isn't just for the benefit of His people, but also for the sake of all peoples who can only know peace when they know His presence personally.

Questions:

What trouble do you see in the world?

What trouble do you personally experience?

How does God's presence with His people help them endure the trouble of this world?

Bottom Line: God is our refuge.

SING

Both Scripture and experience teach us that our lives are not immune to trials, burdens, and the effects of sin. But the good news is that Christ followers have access to supernatural comfort in the loving presence of Jesus. Read Psalm 61 and consider David's prayer before the Lord. Amid the storms of life, David recognized his own weakness and cried out to God for refuge. He longed for the abiding presence of his strong Creator.

As we continue in worship, let us, like David, cry out to the Lord through the song "I Have a Shelter". This is a beautiful piece written by Bob Kauflin and Steve and Vikki Cook. Verse 3 reads:

Oh Jesus, I will hide in You
The One Who bears my burdens
With faithful hands that cannot fail
You'll bring me home to Heaven

Jesus *designed* us to depend on Him. It is only through His sustaining power that we experience steadfast joy and peace in the middle of hardship. No matter our circumstances, we can rest in the assurance that God has sovereign control over all of life. And He will ultimately deliver us from every enemy, every sin, and every sorrow. Christ is our eternal refuge.

Visit our website for a link to this song: www.brookhills.org/gathering/this_week.html.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God's word and worship Him together.

Preschool

- Before you begin, open your Bible and read Psalm 46:1 with your preschooler.
- Talk about the meaning of the word "refuge." It means shelter or protection from danger or trouble.
- Now, get an umbrella and take a walk outside under the umbrella.

- Explain to your child that the umbrella protects us from the rain or the heat of the sun. It provides “refuge from the rain and heat.” However, when you choose to step out from under the umbrella, you are no longer “protected” from the rain or heat.
- Remind your preschooler that God's protection is like the umbrella, but His protection is always there, even when we don't know it and can't see it. He is like the umbrella that protected us from the rain and heat.
- Next, tell your child that our best help and protection comes from our heavenly Father. God protects those who love and follow Him. With God protecting us, we never have to worry.
- God is so good and He will always protect you and me. He loves us so much He sent His son Jesus to rescue us. What a good and great God!
- Let's pray and thank God for being our refuge and for protecting us everyday.

Children

- Materials needed: sheet of paper, a writing utensil, and a Bible.
- Read Psalm 46:4-5. Guide children to name the different “troubles” mentioned in those verses, and list them on one side of the paper. (the earth shakes; parts of mountains slide into the sea; oceans are stormy and dangerous)
- How do you think people who experience trouble like these things feel? (scared, afraid, weak) Write these answers on top of the list of troubles.
- Read Psalm 46:4-5. Explain that these verses describe where God's presence lives with His people, and they say that there is a river that makes the city glad and that the city won't ever be moved or shaken. List these two truths on the other side of the paper.
- How do you think people feel when they experience God's presence like these two verses describe? (safe, strong) Write these answers on top of the list describing God's city.
- Looking at the paper, how is life in God's presence different than a life of trouble without Him?
- Remind children that even those who believe in God will experience difficulties, but that's why this psalm calls God our refuge and fortress.
- Read Psalm 46: 1, 7, and 11. Why do you think the psalm repeats this truth over and over? Because God wants us to remember it!
- Explain that a refuge and fortress are places where people can go to find safety and security.
- What does it mean for God to be a refuge and fortress for us? (He is our safe and secure place even when there is trouble.)
- When we rely on God, we will have the strength of His presence with us even when there is trouble around us.

Students

- This chapter in Psalms draws attention to the city of Jerusalem and how God causes her to be sturdy and unmoving due His presence. Open in prayer, asking the Lord to magnify His presence during your time together.
- Have your family read Psalm 46:1-5. John Piper noted the following parallels when discussing Psalm 46: “The word used to describe the waters ‘foam’ is actually used again, but translated ‘rage’ in verse 6. In other words, nature and nations are both raging. The word used to describe the mountains ‘tremble’ is actually used again, but translated ‘totter’ in verse 6. Both nature and nations are tottering. Therefore, whether your storm is a literal one from nature, or from terrorists from nations, or from personal circumstances, God is greater.”
- Have your family either list or simply remember times of loss, tragedy, or high anxiety. How were you able to find the strength to face that situation? Discuss.
- When was the last time you had a crisis? How did you handle it? Name one way God has been “a very present help” to you in the midst of trouble.
- Read Psalm 46:10-11. What are the benefits of being still and being reminded of the Creator in the midst of a chaotic time?
- As you close in prayer, spend some time being still and focusing on Christ. This may seem like a simple activity, but it's often rare for us to stop and think on Christ.

