

Mental



✔ Prepare in Advance

Facilitator: In advance of the session:

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the *Bible Background Video* ready to view.

✔ Introduce

You probably know today's psalm better than you realize! Have someone read all of Psalm 118 out loud (or take turns reading). As you read, make note of the phrases that you are familiar with. What songs, hymns or choruses have been inspired by this Psalm? Next, show the *Bible Background Video*.

✔ Celebrating God's Saving Help

This psalm was not a "random act of praise" – it was inspired by certain events. Although we don't know the exact events, what do we know about them from the psalm itself? Specifically see verses 5-14.

- What did God do for the psalmist? How else might the psalmist have interpreted these events? Why was it important to recognize that God, specifically, had acted?
- What things did the psalmist learn about God through this experience, and how does he affirm those things through the words of this song?
- How has this event shaped and changed the faith of the psalmist?
- Note that the psalmist intends to publicly worship God (verses 19-20 refer to specific worship places). Because the writer is likely a king, this would be a very public event. Why is this kind of worship – public affirmation and thanksgiving – so important to our spiritual lives?

✔ I Will Not Die...

Nikki's video brings out an often overlooked part of this psalm in verse 17.

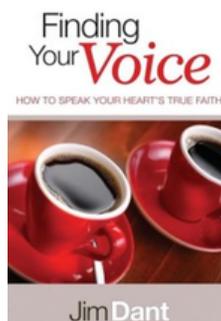
- In the psalmist's context, what did this mean? How would he live and not die, in a very literal sense?
- This verse has obvious ties to the resurrection – even though the psalmist didn't know it at the time. What does this verse, in its context (verses 15-21) say about our eventual resurrection?
- But the verse also speaks to our current situation – we may be "alive" in a physical sense, but how are

we "living life to the full" as Jesus promised (John 10:10)?

- The simple verse holds a two-point lesson for us – what does it mean that God has saved us, and what should be our response?
- In what ways can our recognition and proclamation of God's salvation, lead to a life more full and abundant in faith?

Close with prayer.

By Jon Parks



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