

<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

Psalm 119 : 1-4,9-10 – God’s people

Theme: Which way are you going to go?

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

Psalm 119 is a long psalm – 176 verses in all. It comprises 22 stanzas – each one starting with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet from Alesh through to Tav – that explains its length! This week we are dealing with a very small part of the psalm, just 7 verses.

The psalmist sets out what we must do to live a good or ‘pure’ life and be blessed by God (different translations use different words). The bar is set very high! We must follow God’s rules, do no wrong, obey God’s instructions and live according to God’s word.

That is probably an impossible ideal – are we being set up to fail? Does it matter when we do, as long as we try our best?

Jesus sets the perfect example – and none of us can be as good as Jesus, right? But does that mean we shouldn’t strive to be the best we can be?

The psalmist says that, if we do these things, we will be blessed by God. What does that blessing look like? How will we know if we’ve been blessed?

The Bible can be (and often is) used to argue many different, contradictory viewpoints and sometimes it can be difficult to know what is the ‘right path’ to take – especially when, as a young person, you are beginning to explore your identity, your faith and beliefs and are more susceptible to peer and societal pressure. From where, or who, do we develop our view of right and wrong?

God doesn’t want us to feel guilty for failing, but God does want us to try to do what’s right.

This session invites us to explore how we make those choices.





Experience



Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too.

'You choose' by Pippa Goodhart and Nick Sharrat

<https://youtu.be/tUca8bkXwjl?si=XaXfH54YoXEPWafJ>

Talking together: How might we talk about the story together?

I wonder what rules you have to follow in life? Are there any you can't understand? What about the consequences? Do you think they're fair?
I wonder what God's blessing looks like?





Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond. <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>.

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Acrostic poem

The verses today come from a much longer psalm that follows Hebrew alphabet – Create/ write your own acrostic poem that is a song to God using the letters from the wo(r)-3 t80 Td[ht)7.6 (t)



Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

Psalm 119 reminds us that God gives us rules to live by. We do our best to live by them, but sometimes it is difficult, and we get it wrong. God is always waiting to forgive when we say sorry. Write a short prayer you could use each day to say sorry to God for when you have not got things quite right and asking for help to follow in God's way. Keep a record of some of the choices you have to make each day and highlight the ones where you think the choice you made was the one God would choose for you.

We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **Psalm 119** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing lorrainewebb@urc.org.uk

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Moses in the bullrushes**





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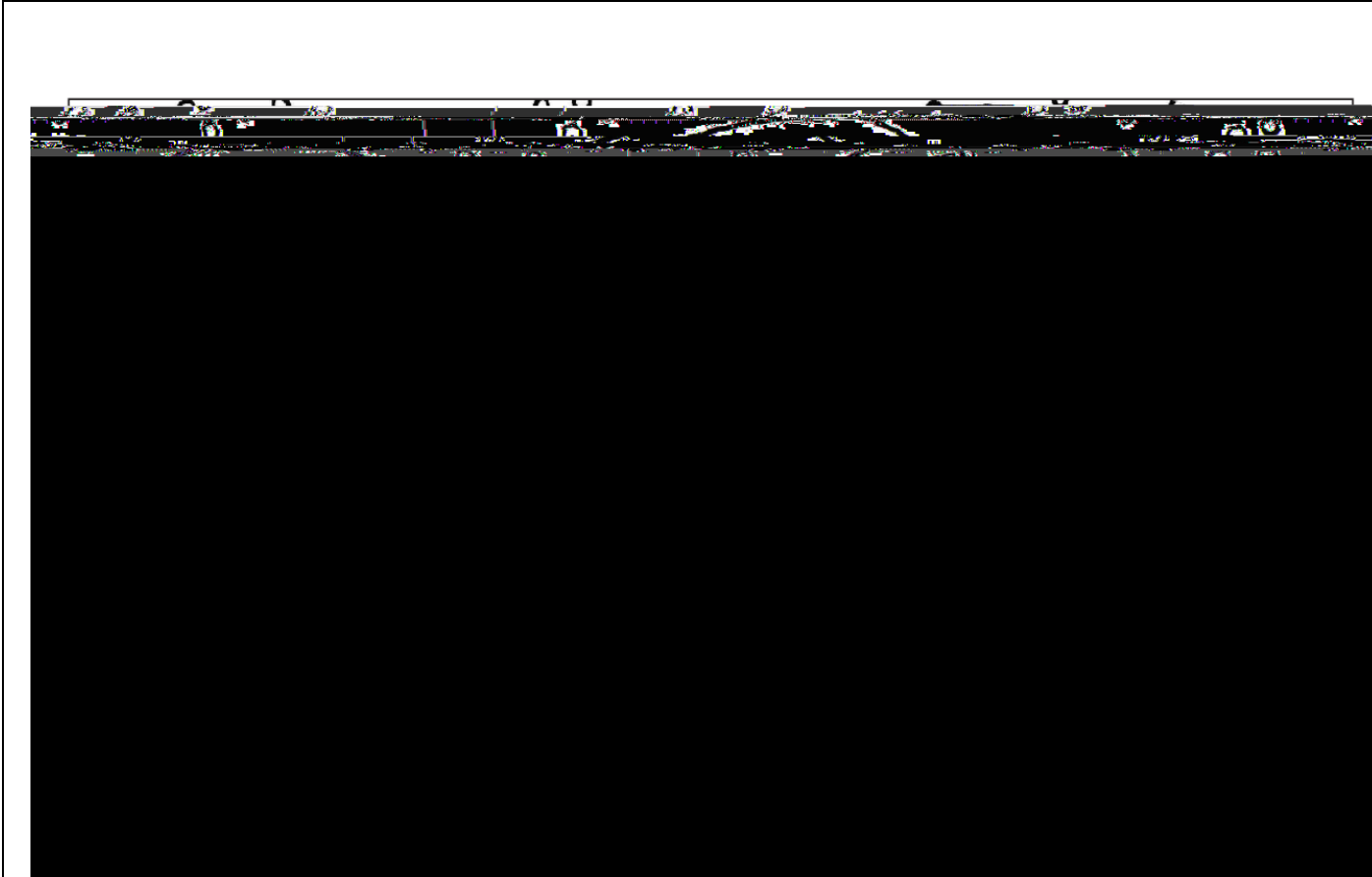




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