

GROWING UP IN GOD'S FAMILY

A Song for Adults to Sing

Psalm 26



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Out of the rich book of Psalms, we find this ancient hymn—a prayer, a passionate petition—in which David makes a series of requests and statements that reveal a level of admirable maturity. Take a few moments to read over and meditate on Psalm 26. Observe the composer's major theme as well as his unguarded admissions. See if you can discover for yourself the relevance of this melodic revelation. You may be surprised at David's ability to address subjects that are just as up to date as today's newspaper. In reality it was the Spirit of God, not David, who originally prompted these thoughts and preserved them for all generations.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Music for the Mature: A Brief Overview

God seems to have cast His vote in favor of music by making the longest of all the sixty-six books in His Word be the one dedicated to the hymns of the Hebrews, which is what the Psalter has been called for centuries.

2. Song for the Spiritually Minded: A Careful Analysis

- Be open before the Lord. (Psalm 26:2)
- On the basis of God's acceptance, continue to obey Him. (26:3)
- Refuse to spend time with the wrong associates. (26:4–5)
- Maintain a positive attitude. (26:6–7)
- Be faithful in public worship. (26:8–9)
- Patiently stand and wait for relief. (26:9–12)



Quotable

When your emotions seem out of line, turn to the Psalms for refreshment and recovery.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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3. Truth for Today: A Practical Response

Lessons from 1 Peter 2:18–20:

- The mature want to please God regardless.
- The mature model the life of Christ.
- The mature see benefit in hardship, not just pain.



A CLOSER LOOK

How to Read Biblical Poetry

The Bible contains four basic styles of *poetry*:

Brief and thematic lyrics	Pastoral love lyrics (Song of Solomon)
Descriptive and declarative praise and lament psalms (Lamentations)	Character depictions

The distinguishing element of Hebrew poetry is the use of parallelism, the statement or restatement of previous lines or thoughts. Parallelism is a stereo-metric device, meaning similar ideas are repeated sometimes in the same words and sometimes in different words, driving home important ideas and aiding readers and listeners in memory. Five types of parallelism dominate biblical poetry.

1. Synonymous parallelism says the same thing but in different words (Psalm 2:1; 3:1).
2. Antithetical parallelism affirms the truth in the first line by offering a contrast in the second line (1:6).
3. Climactic parallelism affirms the truth in the first line by exactly repeating it in the second line but adding a conclusion (29:1).
4. Synthetic parallelism affirms the truth in the first line by repeating the thought in the second line and adding a conclusion (14:2).
5. Emblematic parallelism presents a figure of speech in one line and explains it in another line (42:1; 52:4).



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LET'S LIVE IT

Has someone treated you unfairly? Are you harboring bitterness toward that person? It may be a small matter, but it's enough to make you feel disillusioned with people and the unjust world we live in.

What are some ways you can follow the steps laid out in Psalm 26? Take a few minutes to read back through David's song in Psalm 26. As you read over the psalm, make a personal prayer, inserting your name and the details of your situation. Allow the Lord to release you from the bitterness in your heart.



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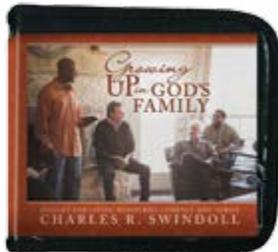
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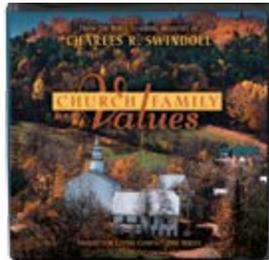
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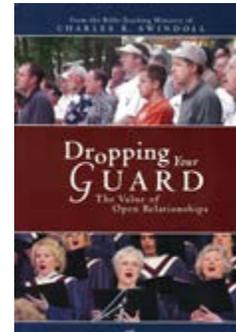
Tools for Digging Deeper



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