

# Truthful Speech as Common Prayer: A Study of the Psalms

## Session 3: Wisdom for Grown Ups

### *Lesson Summary*

Everyone in their heart of hearts desires wisdom—that is, each of us wants to know how to find the “good life,” a life of flourishing and blessedness. The wisdom psalms speak to this desire, but they do so in a way that takes into consideration the realities of lived existence—especially the fact that, sometimes, the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer. In particular, **Psalms 37** provides us what might be called a “wisdom for grown ups,” a wisdom that knows how, as we said in session two, to “trust the process.” As we grow to reverence and trust in the Lord and wait for his grace and presence to show up in our lives, **Psalms 37** trains us to trust that he will bring about our flourishing in his time.

1. Read **Psalms 37**. Note the repeated words, images and themes. Which repetitions especially help you grasp the meaning of this psalm? What was one point from this teaching on **Psalms 37:1-11** that stood out to you? Explain.
2. The wisdom revealed to us in **Psalms 37** is a wisdom rooted in God’s righteousness and not our own, a wisdom best portrayed in Jesus’ willingness to disadvantage himself for the good of others (for the salvation of the world!). Where do you see the need to follow Jesus’ righteous wisdom in your own life? In the life of your family and of the Body of Christ?
3. The wisdom revealed in **Psalms 37** is also an active wisdom. It doesn’t simply trust God with an inner posture of the heart; it does good while it waits on the Lord. Is there an area in your life right now where you’re waiting for God to “show up?” How can you “do good” as you wait on him?
4. The wisdom portrayed in **Psalms 37** is a pilgrim wisdom. It trains us to be “in but not of” this world. The world we’re speaking of here is not the material world but *worldliness*—that constellation of beliefs values, and habits rooted in “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life” (1 John 2:16). How does **Psalms 37** challenge you to live in a more “pilgrim” way and resist the worldliness in your life?
5. What do you think is the greatest challenge to you living out this teaching? What is one practical step that you can take in the coming week to overcome this challenge?

(Read and pray through several *psalms of lament* for next time: Psalms 5, 6, 13, 35, 51, 86, 88, 137.) Note the *lament psalms* in this week’s daily office lectionary.