

MEDAL OF HONOR

The Medal of Honor recognizes any military service member who “distinguishes himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty.” Receiving the Medal of Honor follows a careful investigation and indisputable evidence that a nominee had earned it.

All recommendations require thorough reports. A nominee’s actions must be supported by at least 2 sworn eyewitness statements (and all other compelling evidence), then approved all the way up the military command structure. Only then does the U.S. Congress analyze and vote on it. If approved, the President, as the Commander-in-Chief, presents it on behalf of Congress. To date, only 3,530 such medals have been issued, many received by family members because the recognized dedication resulted in the “ultimate sacrifice.”

Just as these heroic human acts receive intense scrutiny requiring unquestionable evidence, so too do God’s works. As we examine God’s works, it should result in our awe and wonder. We should recognize and honor, not only of God’s power, but how he exercises his power toward those he loves—even to the point of sacrifice.

You may be the only Bible some people ever read.

PSALM 111

Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation. ²Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them. ³Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever. ⁴He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and merciful. ⁵He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever. ⁶He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations. ⁷The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy; ⁸they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness. ⁹He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name! ¹⁰The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

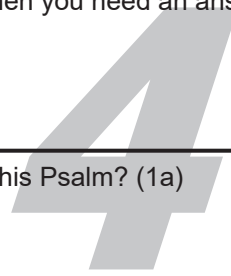
As Jesus entered into Jerusalem in the Triumphal Entry, the Pharisees rebuked Jesus as his disciples cried out. Jesus responded, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”

Scan the QR code to hear the song *So Will I*. This song reminds us that all of Creation was made to worship and proclaim the greatness of God. If we fail to cry out in worship, the stars and the earth will not. As we consider God’s works, let’s worship Him.



DISCUSSION

Where do you normally turn when you need an answer to a big life question?



ICEBREAKER

1. What one command opens this Psalm? (1a)

OBSERVATION

2. What does the Lord cause *in* his people, and what does he do *for* his people? (4a & 5b)

3. What relationship with God is the focus of verse 10 and what does it lead to? (10)

4. In what different ways can we remember his works? (4a)

INTERPRETATION

5. How does the "fear of the Lord" lead to "wisdom" and "understanding"?

6. What does it look like in your own life to practice "remembering" and "fearing" the Lord?

APPLICATION

Is the Lord's name "holy and awesome" in your life? God said in *Malachi*, "For my name will be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts." Talk to your Coach today!

STUDY NOTES

RECOGNIZING TRUE POWER

John Dickson's book *Humilitas* recounts an amazing true story. "Three young men hopped on a bus in Detroit in the 1930s and tried to pick a fight with a lone man sitting at the back of the vehicle. They insulted him. He didn't respond. They turned up the heat of the insults. He said nothing. Eventually, the stranger stood up.

He was bigger than they had estimated from his seated position—much bigger. He reached into his pocket, handed them his business card and walked off the bus and then on his way. As the bus drove on the young men gathered around the card to read the words: *Joe Louis. Boxer.* They had just tried to pick a fight with the man who would be Heavyweight Boxing Champion of the World from 1937 to 1949, the number one boxer of all time, according to the International Boxing Research Organization (second on the list is Muhammad Ali).

Here is a man of immense power and skill, capable of defending his honor with a single, devastating blow. Yet, he chooses to forgo his status and hold his power for others — in this case, for some very fortunate young men..."

Can you imagine looking at that business card as Joe Louis won the Heavyweight Boxing Championship? I wonder if they looked at it again each of the 26 times Louis successfully defended his title—a record that still stands today. They challenged the greatest boxer of all time to a fist fight. They stood before greatness and mocked it. Not until Joe Louis handed them his "written word" did they recognize what they were facing.

GOD'S WORKS ARE GREAT AND MAJESTIC

As we discussed last Week, we can know *about* God through *Creation*, but we can *know him* through his *revelation*—his written Word. When we see the greatness of God, like the unknown psalmist, we cry out, "**Praise the Lord!**"

We don't know the circumstances of the psalmist. We don't know about his family situation, if his crops came in, or if he just lost his starting position in whatever team sport they were playing 3,000 years ago. Our praise isn't limited to circumstances. It's based in who God is, his attributes and character. No matter how we feel inside, our hearts must yield to the majesty of God. Either from an overflow of gratitude or a conscious bowing of our will, we must declare, "***I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.***"

When we truly see God at work, we too describe them as **great** and **full of splendor**. However, we cannot see God sufficiently outside of a relationship with him. Verse 4 starts to get very personal. The psalmist writes, "**He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered.**" "Remembering" is a very important theme in Scripture. It's something God commanded many times in Israel's history. Also, it's the key to repentance for those whose sin has broken their fellowship with God. Not only must **those who fear him** remember all that he has done, but God **remembers his covenant forever**. It's his **forever** covenant through which **he sent redemption to his people**. God never forgot his promise, but metaphorically, as his people "remember" him in repentance, God "remembers" them in restoration.

CALL OUT TO GOD BECAUSE OF HIS WORKS

Remembering all that God has done, the psalmist declares, "**Holy and awesome is his name!**" The words "holy" and "awesome" have lost a lot of their power. We might call new shoes "awesome." Your coach might call crap "holy" when someone does something stupid (although he might not say "crap"). We've lost the basic definitions. "Holy" means "set apart." "Awesome" means something that causes a great deal of "awe." There is only one reaction when you stand before someone completely holy and truly awesome—fear.

People often describe **the fear of the Lord** as "honor" or "reverence," and while we should honor and revere the Lord, "fear" means fear. Going back to the Joe Louis story, should those boys have honored and revered Joe Louis? Sure. But more than that, they should have feared the greatest boxer of all time that could have possibly (if not likely) killed them with a single punch. When such destructive force is at play, **the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding.**

We must remember God's majesty and might every day. In Christ, we need not be fearful of God's wrath, but we should maintain a healthy fear of his true power (Matthew 10:28). The problem is when we forget to remember—it doesn't take long before our sin and pride take over.

We must remember what God has done in us, but we must also allow him to work through us. God's work in you should be worthy of other's attention and study. "You may be the only Bible some people will ever read." Let them see his **wondrous works** in you!