

# still waters

## Psalm 105

home church studies  
[Worship]

1 O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. 2 Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. 3 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. 4 Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually. 5 Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered, 6 O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones. 7 He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth. 8 He is mindful of his covenant forever, of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations, 9 the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac, 10 which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, 11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance."

### Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

Prayer—the deliberate act of placing ourselves in the presence of God—is a tremendously difficult endeavor. The large number of books that tailor prayer to personality, piety, and theological framework suggests the desire people have for a felt relationship with God. There are thousands of Christians who live in the hope that there is a direct correlation between one's peace and prosperity and one's prayer life (a current incarnation of which can be seen in the bestseller *The Prayer of Jabez*). Yet there are also those of us who hesitate to ask for

anything at all, and are leery of even thanking God for the blessings of our lives, since those "blessings" can include the spoils of an unjust global order. We tend to focus on seeking the kingdom and allow our lives and labor to constitute our praying.

Relationship, it seems to me, is the purpose of all form of prayer. Even when we intercede for others, our praying for and with them deepens our solidarity with that for which we pray. "The Spirit helps us in our weakness," Paul writes, "for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words" (Romans 8:26). To be able to risk asking for what we need requires a trust that is capable of risking desire and love. This is the very trusting out of which all relationships are made possible—reaching out in hope that the sought-after will reach back. **Kari Jo Verhulst**

[The Scripture]

### Matthew 13.31-34

Another story. "God's kingdom is like a mustard seed that a farmer plants. It is quite small as seeds go, but in the course of years it grows into a huge tree, and birds build nests in it."

Another story. "God's kingdom is like yeast that a woman works into the dough for dozens of loaves of barley bread—and waits while the dough rises."

"God's kingdom is like a treasure hidden in a field for years and then accidentally found by a trespasser. The finder is ecstatic—what a find!—and proceeds to sell everything he owns to raise money and buy that field.

