



Poetry As Prayer

Writing our own psalms is about learning to express our emotions in an unedited way, It's about giving voice to our joy *and* our pain. Writing haiku teaches us to focus us on a single moment, awakening us to the wonder of creation all around us.

WRITE A PSALM

If you are unsure about poetry, perhaps the book of Psalms is a struggle for you. If poetry resonates with you, maybe it's your favorite book. Different psalms were written for different reasons, but essentially, they are songs of prayer—*very, very honest prayer*.

We invite you to write a psalm today. If you don't know where to begin, title it with the date. Then write a letter to the Lord. Say whatever you need to say, however you need to say it. Tuck it away for a few weeks. When you pull it back out:

1. Read aloud what you've written. Where you pause for a breath, add a forward slash to indicate a line break.
2. Write your new prayer including the line breaks.
3. Read it again and consider each word carefully. Is there anything your tongue trips over, anything you'd like to express differently, anything you haven't said?

PSALM 28

all that I have, piles of nothing
 all that I am, dust
 all that I need, You
 as You I magnify
 and You I glorify
 You will satisfy
 all that I am

(Karin Fendick, *From Ashes to GLory: A Psalm A Day*)

Visit chronic-joy.org for more resources.



WRITE A HAIKU

HOW MUCH CAN YOU SAY IN SEVENTEEN SYLLABLES?

Haiku helps us focus on a single moment, discovering the presence of beauty wherever we are. It's structure teaches us to identify emotion and write about it honestly.

"Haiku can be 'the perfect creative sandbox.'" (Daryl Chen)

If you prefer structure, there is no better place to begin than with haiku (which can become prayers too).

Haiku is bite-sized—three lines with 17 total syllables:

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

Line 3: 5 syllables

Three haiku guidelines:

1. Focus on a single thought or image
2. Include something from nature
3. Lean toward gratitude, courage, or hope



For one month, write one haiku a day from a prayerful perspective.

A FEW HAIKU TO GET YOU STARTED

WHOLEHEARTED

Life feels heavy and
 I am too light for it all.
 Walk on anyway.

(Megan Willome)

UNTITLED

Once dead in my sins –
 Jesus was crucified – dead
 Life! Now I'm redeemed!

(Pastor Eric Hullstrom)

A WORLD OF DEW

A world of dew,
 And within every dewdrop
 A world of struggle.

(Kobayashi Issa - 1763-1827)

FROM ISAIAH 8

Distressed and hungry,
 Whispering and muttering:
 They produce no light.

(Mark Adams)

"To my surprise, writing haiku brought me back to something I hadn't felt for a long time — the sheer, elemental joy of playing with words." (Zezan Tam)

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