

THE LOOKOUT

NOVEMBER 2022

Unit: Psalms (Part 2) Theme: Godly Heart

Overview: If our hearts are rooted in God (October lessons), then they will be godly. November, like February, is a good month to think of “heart” matters. Having a thankful heart, especially during this month of Thanksgiving, helps us develop a godly heart. Students will learn that a godly heart seeks after God, humbles itself before God, strives to be strong and courageous for God, and gives thanks and praise to God.

HOW TO USE

Each week has a **lesson aim**, **lesson text**, and **supplemental text**.

WEEK OF OCTOBER 3, 2022

LESSON AIM: **Root your life in God's righteous way.**

UNIT: Psalm 133
THEME: Rooted
LESSON TEXT: Psalm 1
SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT: Psalm 112, November 2022 (11, Jan 18-19)

ROOTED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS
BY MARK GOSSET

The Holy Spirit has been at work in our hearts, leading us to the truth of God's Word. He has been at work in our hearts, leading us to the truth of God's Word. He has been at work in our hearts, leading us to the truth of God's Word. He has been at work in our hearts, leading us to the truth of God's Word.

Tabs indicate the week of each lesson.

Each week features three sections: **Study**, **Application**, and **Discovery**.

GIVING YOU A PIECE OF MY MIND
BY MARK GOSSET

THESE ARE THE DAYS OF OUR YOUTH, when we are full of life and energy. We are full of life and energy. We are full of life and energy. We are full of life and energy. We are full of life and energy.

APPLICATION

BY NEAR ODDS

1. What do you think is the most important thing you can do for God?
2. How do you think you can best serve God?
3. What do you think is the most important thing you can do for God?
4. How do you think you can best serve God?
5. What do you think is the most important thing you can do for God?
6. How do you think you can best serve God?
7. What do you think is the most important thing you can do for God?
8. How do you think you can best serve God?
9. What do you think is the most important thing you can do for God?
10. How do you think you can best serve God?

DISCOVERY

Use the **Discovery** questions to study, discuss, and apply the Scripture passages in a group or class.

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 6, 2022

**LESSON AIM: Look to the Lord
and his strength;
seek his face always.**

UNIT: Psalms (Part 2)

THEME: Godly Heart

LESSON TEXT: Psalm 63:1-8; Psalm 105:1-4

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT: Acts 13:22; Hebrews 11:6; James 4:7-10

STUDY

A HEART THAT SEEKS GOD

BY MARK SCOTT

Seeking God and his kingdom should come first in our lives (Matthew 6:33). Seeking God should be done now while he can be found (Isaiah 55:6). Seeking him should involve the whole heart (Jeremiah 29:13). And seeking God promises great reward and his presence (James 4:8; Hebrews 11:6).

The theme of seeking God unites sections of Psalms 63 and 105. In strong parallelism and with beautiful pictures, the psalmists told us where God could be found and what that would mean for the whole world.

In the Desert

Psalm 63:1

King David might have reigned over Israel for 40 years in Hebron and Jerusalem, but he spent much time in the desert. Much of his desert ministry was spent running from King Saul and other enemies. The hot Judean wilderness is filled with rocks, sand, and often a deafening silence.

David acknowledged God (*Elohim*) as his God, and that he was *earnestly* (or “early,” as some Bible versions translate it) seeking him. David described this desire for God (or this *Longing for God*, as the title of J.K. Jones’s book puts it) like being thirsty. The barrenness of his soul mirrored the barrenness of the desert. Like a desert-bound castaway searching for a mirage, David was driven to find God.

In the Sanctuary

Psalm 63:2-5

David never saw Solomon’s temple, even though he made some provisions for it. But David did have the *sanctuary* (ark of the covenant within a tent of meeting). It was God’s sacred space on earth. David could feel God’s presence there; it was a place he enjoyed spending time. He could sense God’s *power* and *glory* there.

In the *sanctuary* David could feel the love (*chesed*, loving-kindness or loyal love). He acknowledged that God’s love was better than life. This inspired David to exercise spiritual gymnastics. He would lift up his hands and lips toward the heavens. He became *satisfied* (filled to the brim) deep in his soul, as if his body had experienced the *richest of foods*.

In His Bed

Psalm 63:6-8

At day’s end, maybe after being in the desert and spending time in the sanctuary, David would retire. Similar to

many of us, however, he put his body to bed, but his mind would begin to race. It ran first to the character of God. As the *watches of the night* ticked by, David was consumed with God being his helper (*ezrah*).

His bed became a place of singing and security. He would sing of God’s protection (shadow of his wings), and he would feel—figuratively, at least—upheld by God’s *right hand*. In the verses that follow (vv. 9-11) David acknowledged that some wanted to destroy him. But he knew that if he sought God with all of his heart, God would allow himself to be found.

Among the Nations

Psalm 105:1-4

David is clearly acknowledged as author of Psalm 63. But an unknown voice sang Psalm 105. God’s faithfulness to Israel was the motivation for this psalm. The final 40 verses of this psalm (vv. 5-45) describe how God cared for Israel throughout their “salvation history.” This singer’s recounting of God’s care for his people is similar to Psalm 78.

This psalm’s verbs are especially significant (*give praise, proclaim, make known, sing, tell, glory, rejoice, look, and seek*). *Give praise* means to “give thanks” or “confess.” Making God known is not a matter of private worship; rather, it is for the *nations* (literally “peoples”). Singing and giving glory are two of the best ways to advertise for God among the nations. This is more a ministry of affirmation than of interpretation. God’s deeds are described as *wonderful acts*. No doubt these are God’s redemptive deeds done in time and space, such as the exodus.

The psalmist calls upon Israel to *glory* in God’s name. The writer has “verbed” a noun (taken a word that is typically a noun and turned it into a verb). In using *glory*, the writer means the people are to praise God for his weighty presence and his shining brilliance. Before describing the history of God’s faithfulness to Israel, the psalmist called his congregation to *look to the Lord* and *seek his face*.

We consume whatever garners our attention. Our focus drives so much of our lives. When God receives our undivided attention, the natural result is to “let our lights shine for the nations.” He is, after all, not far from us. Having determined our “appointed times in history” and our “boundaries” so we can seek him (Acts 17:26-27). ■

APPLICATION

SEEKING GOD

BY DAVID FAUST

An object's importance determines how intensely you pursue it. You might casually look for a restaurant to eat lunch, but you will search diligently for a lost pet, a misplaced diamond ring, or a missing child.

The pursuit of happiness moves us to seek comfort and convenience, treasure and pleasure, recognition and admiration. But how intense is our desire to know God?

We Seek Him

Seeking God is a *worthwhile pursuit*. What goal could be more important than to "seek the Lord while he may be found" (Isaiah 55:6)?

Seeking God ought to be a *lifelong pursuit*. David told the Lord, "I will praise you as long as I live" (Psalm 63:4).

Seeking God should be an *intentional pursuit*—a deliberate decision to "seek his face always" (Psalm 105:4).

And seeking God is a *rewarding pursuit*. "He rewards those who earnestly seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).

We seek God by looking for his fingerprints in nature. We can recognize the Creator's handiwork in a mountain's grandeur and a waterfall's roar . . . in vast outer space and a delicate butterfly's wing . . . in the birth of a baby and the microscopic marvels of DNA.

"God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse" (Romans 1:20).

We seek God by recognizing his image in others. If we believe every human being is made in the Creator's likeness, we will look for God's glory in human achievement, creativity, and personality.

We seek God by hearing his voice in Scripture and obeying his written Word, even when it says things we would rather not hear.

He Seeks Us

God himself is a seeker. He searched for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Jesus came like a shepherd searching for lost sheep. The Father seeks believers who will worship him in spirit and truth (John 4:23).

During a mission trip to Romania, my wife and I encountered dozens of Ukrainian refugees, including several young moms and children whose dads had to stay behind to protect their homeland.

We spoke with a Romanian minister named Mihai who, at considerable risk, was making regular trips into Ukraine to take food to families ravaged and separated by the war. During one of his visits, Mihai passed out candy to cheer up the children, but one sad-looking little boy shook his head and refused to accept it. Mihai tried to give him a toy, but the boy again refused and rejected any attempt to cheer him up. Mihai wasn't sure what to do, so he began to interact with the other children who were there.

Soon Mihai felt a tug on his pants. The boy looked up at him and asked, "Do you know where my father is?"

Mihai teared up. He told the boy, "I don't know where your father is. But I know where your heavenly Father is, and I'm going to talk to him about it. He is with you even if your daddy can't be right now."

The Father in heaven hasn't forsaken us. Long ago he promised the exiled Jews, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). Even before we sought the Lord, he was seeking us.

Personal Challenge: Speak with an accountability partner or members of your small group; agree to seek God intentionally over the next week. Notice any ways you encounter the Lord through reading the Bible, looking at nature, or interacting with others. Jot down any "God sightings" you observe and talk about them the next time you meet. ■

DISCOVERY

BY MICAH ODOR

1. What satisfying moment have you had recently? (It could be a personal or professional accomplishment, time with family, a sports win, or something else.) What made it so satisfying?
2. In today's Bible reading, David tells God, "I have seen you in the sanctuary." Where have you seen God at work this week?

Ask two people to read aloud **Psalm 63:1-8** one after the other, preferably from different Bible versions. Then ask the same two people to do the same with **Psalm 105:1-4**. Finally, ask a third person to paraphrase both psalms, using as much detail as possible.

3. Quickly skim Psalm 63:1-8, reading only the subjects and the verbs ("I seek," "I thirst," "I sing," "I remember," etc.). What can we tell about the author by his choice of words?
4. In Psalm 63, David compared his relationship with God to three things: water in a dry land, a fine meal, and a good night's sleep. How are David's thoughts on those three things similar or different to what you feel when you think about God?
5. Read each of the first 8 verses of Psalm 63 aloud, one verse at a time. For each verse, respond, "Is this verse already true in my life, or do I want it to be true?"
6. Psalm 105:1-4 contains four different commands of how we should interact with God. Note the progression from verse 1 to verse 4. Why do you think it starts with the most "external" actions and moves toward the most "internal"?
7. Psalm 105:2 commands us to "tell of all [God's] wonderful acts." This is a practical verse that we can obey this week. What wonderful act has God done for you, and whom will you tell about it?
8. What's one thing you know is true about God because of these psalms?
9. What's one thing you know is true about people because of these psalms?
10. Based on our study and discussion, complete the sentence: "I will . . ."

For Next Week: Read and reflect on **Psalm 8** and **Psalm 131**. You can also read next week's supplemental texts as well as the Study and Application sections as part of your personal study. ■