

Be Thou my Vision

An inductive study of Psalms 73 through 89

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SAMPLE PAGES:

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About the Study

Be Thou My Vision is a nine-week inductive Bible study of Book Three of the Psalms (Psalms 73-89). Each unique lesson in this course directs readers to personally examine, consider and apply the Scriptures to daily life. Through a variety of Bible study methods such as cross-referencing, reasoning from the Scriptures, word studies, listing, comparing and contrasting, and more, this course allows the Scriptures themselves to speak to individual hearts. The result is a study which leads to a life-changing view of God, a powerful call to impassioned worship and godly living, and an increasing ability to wisely disciple the next generation.

Materials needed

For this study, you will need a:

Bible

Three-ring notebook

Set of colored pencils.

Some lessons require other study tools (such as a Hebrew or Greek word study reference or a commentary) in order to complete every question. If you do not have these references in your library, many are available online.

Quotations throughout the course come from the New King James Version of the Bible. Using another translation, such as the English Standard Version, New American Standard or New International Version, to answer questions should pose no problems. Paraphrases will be more difficult to use for study.

The study includes the following features:

“Laying the Foundation”

These pages set the foundation for the course as a whole. In a class setting, “Laying the Foundation” may be assigned as the first week’s homework or it may be covered as a part of the initial meeting. If you join a class late, complete “Laying the Foundation” and then jump to the lesson the class is currently completing.

Memorization activities and helps

Each week, you will memorize a verse related to the lesson’s topic. The verse appears in its entirety opposite the first page of Day One. Complete the fill-in-the-blank verse each day. Try to complete the blanks more and more by memory as each week goes on.

Topical or sectional lessons

Even though this is an in-depth study, every lesson can stand alone. This means that you are able to join a class already in session and not feel left behind; miss a class because of illness or vacation and not be pressed to complete twice as much work before being able to fully rejoin the class; and complete (or assign to class members or disciples) lessons out of sequence in order to meet pressing spiritual needs or concerns.

Shorter study options

Most lessons require approximately 20-30 minutes of study time per day. For those with a more limited study time, longer assignments often contain both boldface and non-boldface passages to consider. In these instances, completing only the boldface items will provide a good overview of essential truths.

Calls to prayer

Throughout the study, there are encouragements to respond to God's Word in a time of prayer. Often, the study suggests topics for this time, but you may choose to change or add to them. After your time of prayer, the study asks you to initial a box in order to hold you accountable not to by-pass this essential element of study—even if you are busy. You may, of course, write out your prayers if you wish.

Application questions

The most important part of any study is application and a changed life! Each lesson contains straightforward, honest, frank questions designed to, *lovingly*, cut to the heart. I pray that you will come away from every lesson with a greater passion to keep your eyes on the Lord, and to live in the light of His presence and in the power of His Word.

May the Lord bless your study!

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Sanctuary Perspective

Part One

Psalm 73

When we were just married, my husband, Hank, and I went to a furniture store to look for a living room set. It was 1977, and we decided that we really liked a sofa that had lots of bright orange and yellow flowers. Because we weren't sure what other furniture to put with it, I asked my mom to go back to the store with me the next day.

She did not like the couch we had chosen at all. Although she tried to hide her feelings, they became obvious when she started walking the aisles “just to see what else they have.” I finally asked her, “If you were picking a couch, which would you choose?”

She found one, and although I would never have chosen it myself, I really liked it. It was a dark beige and peach with a more subdued floral print. We bought it—and we loved it! When it was finally worn out, many years later, our whole family was sad to see it go.

On the other hand, in the 1980's I went shopping for a second couch for our den. This time, Mom wasn't able to come along, but I was initially happy with my choice of one with brown and beige tweed. However, I grew tired of it within a year (though we kept it for much longer!).

Perspective is a wonderful thing. With furniture, my mom has a wonderful understanding of the difference between classic design and trendy styles. She also has a good knowledge of what I will like and how my tastes will change as I grow older.

If we need wise, future-focused perspective to choose furniture, how much more do we need it in our spiritual lives! The LORD knows the future. Only by looking to Him, and seeing things through His eyes, can we be stable and satisfied as we go through our lives on earth.

*When I thought how to understand this,
It was too painful for me—
Until I went into the sanctuary of God;
Then I understood. . .*

Psalm 73:16-17

Lesson One

Day One _____
today's day/date

When I _____ how _____ understand this, It _____ too _____ for me—
Until I _____ into the _____ of God; Then I _____ . . .
Psalm _____ :16-17

There are many things in life that, from our earthbound perspective, we cannot understand. God knows this weakness, and has graciously provided help for us in His Word.

1. If you have not completed the introductory lesson (pages 11-13), do so now.
2. Read through Psalm 73 two times. For your first reading, read through silently. For your second reading, choose to either:
 read through in a different version
 or
 read through out loud.
3. Record your initial thoughts about this psalm in the box below. (*Note: This need not be long or profound!*)

Initial thoughts upon reading Psalm 73

4. In your own words, record the thoughts with which the psalmist struggled in verses 1-16. Be specific.
5. How would you describe the psalmist's "mood" in verses 1-16?

6. What made a difference in his outlook? v. 17

7. In your own words, what did he understand once he went into the sanctuary of God (once he saw things from God's perspective)? vv. 17-20

8. Can you relate to any of the thoughts, reactions or feelings expressed in this psalm? Explain.

Day Two _____
today's day/date

_____ *I thought* _____ _____ *this, It was* _____ *painful* _____ _____
_____ *went into the sanctuary* _____ _____ ; _____ _____ *understood...*
Psalm _____ :16-_____

Look again at the soul-struggle Asaph was having as he saw the wicked prosper and “get away” with ungodliness, while believers suffered. There is much to learn!

1. Begin by reading Psalm 73 again. If possible, read aloud.

2. How does the psalmist describe:

a. his own stability (or lack of stability) in verses 2 and 3?

b. the stability of the arrogant/boastful/wicked? vv. 4-5

3. Once he goes into the sanctuary of God, his perspective totally reverses. How does he now describe the position of the wicked? vv. 18-20 (*This answer may be similar to Day One, #7, but this time use the words of the psalmist.*)

4. The psalmist has an increase in strength and stability as his perspective changes. What things did he know and recall about God? vv. 23-28

5. Immediately upon seeing things from God's perspective, the psalmist says,

*“Thus my heart was grieved, And I was vexed [pierced, pricked] in my mind.
I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You.”* vv. 21-22

What do you think has grieved his heart and made him feel foolish and ignorant?

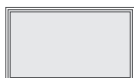
6. Look again at your list in question #4. As you meditate on God and the truths listed:

a. Which truth(s) do you think about most often? least often?

b. Underline any phrases which describe the source of the psalmist's new strength and stability.

c. Which truth is most precious to you today? Why?

As you think about God, let the Scriptures bring your heart to praise and thanksgiving. Initial the box when you are finished praying.



Day Three _____
today's day/date

When _____ to understand _____, _____ was _____ for me—
_____ I _____ the sanctuary _____ God; _____ . . .
_____ : _____-17

Living life from God's perspective is so essential for the stability of the heart! There are other passages in Scripture which also teach us this truth. Enjoy completing today's cross-references!

1. The book of Ecclesiastes records one believer's struggle to understand life "under the sun" (from a human perspective). To get an idea of the nature of his struggle, record some of the questions he asks, and the conclusions he reaches, in the following verses:

Ecclesiastes 1:2-3, 13-14

Ecclesiastes 2:12-20

Ecclesiastes 7:15-17

2. His struggle was helped each time he remembered God and attempted to think in light of truth. Record what he knew about God in the following verses:

Ecclesiastes 3:9-17

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2

Ecclesiastes 12:9-14

3. Did you find any similarities between Psalm 73 and Ecclesiastes? If so, what?

Day Four _____
today's day/date

_____ I thought _____, It was too _____ for me—
Until _____; Then I understood. . .
Psalm _____ : _____ - _____

Job was another believer who struggled with faith when life was full of suffering and seemed to make no sense. In one of Scripture's most dramatic accounts, God gave Job a different perspective. *(A note to those familiar with the account of Job: do not be tempted to short-cut your study. These are words that most of us need to hear time and time again. Humble yourself and ask God to give you new or increased understanding as you read.)*

1. Read all or parts of Job 38:1 through 40:5. In your own words, record Job's response to God in Job 40:1-5.

2. Read some or all of God's further response to Job in Job 40:6 through 41:34. Again, in your own words, record Job's response to God in Job 42:1-6.

3. Why is seeing God for who He truly is—and seeing life from God's perspective—so essential for living a life of faith that is pleasing to God?

4. Have other Scriptures or songs come to mind as you have studied? If so, record these—and then spend some time responding to the Lord's Word. Is the Spirit prompting your heart to praise? To read more Scripture? To repent of unfaithfulness (like Job)? To sing? At the end of your time of prayer, initial the box.

Day Five _____
today's day/date

_____ I _____ how _____ this, _____ painful for _____ — _____ I _____ the _____ of _____; _____ I _____ . . . _____ : _____

Return once more to Psalm 73 and skim the verses to remind yourself of what you studied in Days One and Two. After a little research (for those who have a commentary available), there are only two questions to answer . . . but they will take some thought.

1. Consult a reliable commentary for additional insight into Psalm 73. Make notes on the following page. Star the insight you find most helpful for your life today.

(Optional) Also include study on any cross-references mentioned in your commentaries or in your Bible. If a cross-reference is particularly helpful, be sure to star it and note why it was helpful.

2. Read the following Scriptures and then answer the questions that follow:

*“Go therefore and **make disciples** of all the nations. . . **teaching** them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. . .”*

*“ . . . sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,
and always **be ready to give** a defense to everyone who asks you **a reason for the hope that is in you**. . .”*

*“ . . . I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, **That I may declare** all Your works.*

Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Peter 3:15, Psalm 73:28

a. How could you use the experiences of the psalmist in Psalm 73 to encourage a believer whose faith has been weakened after years of barely making it financially while watching an ungodly sibling prosper? Record your opening sentence, along with the general direction your words would take.

b. Name at least one other current day situation to which this psalm would apply.

3. After reading Psalm 37:23-24, end with prayer. (You know what to do with the box!)

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Notes: