

The Book of Psalms

NOVEMBER 2009 TEACHING PLANS

EMOTIONS ARE JUST PART OF BEING HUMAN. The beauty of the Book of Psalms is that as we experience the vast multitude of emotions life throws our way, we can easily find a psalmist who's been there. We all have similar struggles, joys, and hurts — people who lived thousands of years ago and those of us who are figuring things out today. Over the next few months, as we go deeper into the Book of Psalms, we'll discuss three different states of being: praising God, seeking His help in troubled times, and discovering His plan for our lives. As you study the Psalms, it is our prayer that God would begin to reveal to you the overall message of these passages: No matter which path you choose, God is the ultimate answer to life's many questions.

WHAT'S INSIDE ... The goal of the *Collegiate* online features is to bring you a structured teaching plan with additional helps and relevant questions to equip you to lead a strong discussion-based lesson. Here's a breakdown of what's inside: *Getting Started* helps introduce the topic and get your students engaged in the lesson. *Need to Knows* highlights the main characters, historical context, and key verses of each lesson. *Explore the Bible* leads your students through the Scripture passages of the lesson, helping them understand the text, its historical and cultural context, and what it means to them today. *Apply to Life* gives you ideas for furthering the application of the Scripture, so students can take active steps to process what they're learning and how it impacts their lives. Be sure you also utilize the commentary provided (threadsmedia.com/collegiate) to help with your preparation and personal study of the lessons.

As always, we're here for you. Please send us your questions, thoughts, and suggestions. Let us know what we could do better and how these teaching plans could be even more relevant to your students and your ministry.

Lindsey Bush
editor, *Collegiate*
lindsey.bush@threadsmedia.com

© 2009 LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention

NOVEMBER 1: PSALM 102:1-28 2
MY VARIABLE LIFE ... GOD = CONSTANT

NOVEMBER 8: PSALM 1:1-6 5
DECISIONS ... DECISIONS

NOVEMBER 15: PSALM 112:1-10 8
A SELFLESS HEART

NOVEMBER 22: PSALM 116:1-19 11
BUT I WANT IT RIGHT NOW

NOVEMBER 29: PSALM 119:1-176 14
TREASURING THE WORD

THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 44 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONGS "NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS" BY DAVE HUNT, FROM THE ALBUM *LOVE ABOUNDS*, AND "ALL I CAN SAY" BY THE DAVID CROWDER BAND, FROM THE ALBUM *ALL I CAN SAY*.
- INDEX CARDS WITH JOB 1:13-22; 2:3,7-8; AND LUKE 22:39-46 WRITTEN ON THEM.
- A CURRENT NEWS STORY OF SOMEONE WHO IS EXPERIENCING A TRAGEDY. PROVIDE ENOUGH COPIES SO THAT EACH STUDENT IS GIVEN ONE OF THE SCRIPTURES OR AN ARTICLE.

NEED TO KNOWS

LESSON OVERVIEW

This session is about the psalmist's cry to God for help when he was afflicted. The emphasis is on the unchangeable nature of God. The lesson encourages young adults to view their momentary afflictions in light of the unchangeable nature of the eternal God.

FOCAL PASSAGES

PSALM 102:1-14,24-28



MY VARIABLE LIFE ... GOD = CONSTANT

GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Not My Will But Yours" by Dave Hunt playing in the background as students arrive.

Of all the psalms we've studied, the psalmist is at one of his darkest points in Psalm 102. Many Christians feel they can't really express their deep grief or sadness. Some assume God just wants us to experience "highs" all of the time, and regardless of circumstance we should be happy. But there's a big difference between happiness and the joy of the Lord. Even a joyful heart can grieve. Don't brush over the deep, raw honesty the psalmist reveals in this passage.

OPTION 1: Play "All I Can Say" from the David Crowder Band's album *All I Can Say*.

- What strikes you about the words of this song?
- Describe the prayerful lyrics.
- What might a person who is praying this prayer be experiencing?
- Have you ever felt similar to this?

OPTION 2: Give students a Scripture card or an article about someone going through a tragedy.

- What happened in the story you read?
- What do you think this person or group of people experienced?
- Describe what it would be like in that person's shoes. How might you feel?
- Have you ever felt similar to this?

DIG DEEPER

Refer to "Dig Deeper" on page 44 in the Fall issue of *Collegiate* magazine for further study ideas.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Have someone read the introduction to the lesson on page 44 of *Collegiate* magazine.

1). LIFE IS EVOLVING (PSALM 102:1-11)

READ PSALM 102:1-11.

¹LORD, hear my prayer; let my cry for help come before You. ²Do not hide Your face from me in my day of trouble. Listen closely to me; answer me quickly when I call. ³For my days vanish like smoke, and my bones burn like a furnace. ⁴My heart is afflicted, withered like grass; I even forget to eat my food. ⁵Because of the sound of my groaning, my flesh sticks to my bones. ⁶I am like a desert owl, like an owl among the ruins. ⁷I stay awake; I am like a solitary bird on a roof. ⁸My enemies taunt me all day long; they ridicule and curse me. ⁹I eat ashes like bread and mingle my drinks with tears ¹⁰because of Your indignation and wrath; for You have picked me up and thrown me aside. ¹¹My days are like a lengthening shadow, and I wither away like grass.

Have someone read “Life Is Evolving” on page 44 of *Collegiate* magazine.

The writer gives images of eating ashes and mingling drinks with tears. He feels God’s indignation against him and feels like God has thrown him aside. Most people experience moments like this when they wonder if God sees them at all.

- How does the psalmist describe his situation?
- What are his feelings about God?
- Do you hear prayers like this among Christians often?

Life is an ever changing journey. Through the college years and on into the 20s, life is particularly transitional. Many big life decisions come during the college years, and often students experience real tragedy for the first time. It’s

easy, with all of the decisions to be made, to become very focused on ourselves.

- What tragedies and difficulties have you experienced since starting college?
- What situation would lead you to pray a prayer like this?
- How do you sympathize with the psalmist?
- What are important things to take away from this prayer?

2). GOD IS TIMELESS (PSALM 102:12-14)

READ PSALM 102:12-14.

¹²But You, LORD, are enthroned forever; Your fame endures to all generations. ¹³You will arise and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to show favor to her—the appointed time has come. ¹⁴For Your servants take delight in its stones and favor its dust.

Have someone read “God Is Timeless” on page 44 of *Collegiate* magazine.

It would be easy to remain overwhelmed with the frustrations in our lives. When life is constantly changing or bringing unexpected circumstances, we can become selfish.

- What do these verses say about the nature of God?
- What would a modern-day translation of these verses sound like?
- What does it mean for God to be timeless? Why is that comforting?
- How does it change your perspective to think about God as timeless when you’re not?

We often focus on our inconstancy, but this is the time to focus on the changelessness of God. God always has

been and always will be. He is enthroned forever. When we’re thrown about by the waves of life, God can be our constant anchor.

3). REVEALING YOUR PURPOSE (PSALM 102:24-28)

READ PSALM 102:24-28.

²⁴I say: “My God, do not take me in the middle of my life! Your years continue through all generations. ²⁵Long ago You established the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. ²⁶They will perish, but You will endure; all of them will wear out like clothing. You will change them like a garment, and they will pass away. ²⁷But You are the same, and Your years will never end. ²⁸Your servants’ children will dwell securely, and their offspring will be established before You.”

Have someone read “Revealing Your Purpose” on page 44 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- READ JOB 42:1-6. What do we learn from this psalm and these verses from Job?
- Do you find the words here comforting or do they create more problems for you? Explain.
- How can you find peace in these words?

Sometimes it can seem as though we’re just putting band-aids on the real pain in our lives. The psalmist recognized his own situation, but also saw that God will always be on His throne and that His children will live securely, and that comforted him. Through our relationship with God we’re able to be a part of the larger legacy He is creating.

- How do both the psalmist and Job make the transition from questions and doubt to praise?
- How can you make that same transition in your current struggles?

THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 46 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "DECIPHERING ME" BY BROOKE FRASER, FROM THE ALBUM *ALBERTINE*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.
- PAPER AND PENS FOR STUDENTS
- AN OLD CARTOON WHERE A SMALL ANGEL OR DEVIL APPEARS TO ADVISE THE CHARACTER ON WHAT TO DO. OLD "TOM AND JERRY" CARTOONS OFTEN INCLUDE THESE ELEMENTS.
- CUPS, POTTING SOIL, GRASS SEEDS, AND WATER.

NEED TO KNOWS

LESSON OVERVIEW

This session is about the choice between two ways of life. The emphasis is on the benefits of choosing the way of righteousness. The lesson encourages young adults to choose to live in right relationship with God.

FOCAL PASSAGES

PSALM 1:1-6



DECISIONS ... DECISIONS

GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Deciphering Me" by Brooke Fraser playing in the background as students arrive.

OPTION 1: As students enter, have the following questions written on poster board around the room or on the board. Discuss their responses once everyone has had the opportunity to answer.

- What's the worst advice you've ever received?
- What are some basic choices you've made within the past week?
- What are major choices people make in life?
- What are major choices people make during college?

OPTION 2: Show the cartoon clipping.

- What's being portrayed here?
- How does this play out in real life?
- Do you wish you had a little angel or devil on your shoulder telling you what to do?
- Would you live your life any differently if you did?

Every day is filled with many choices, some major and some seemingly insignificant. However, as followers of Christ, each choice has some significance in our daily walk. Our lives are one choice after another strung together. How can we know right from wrong? How can we know the good choices from the bad?

DIG DEEPER

Refer to "Dig Deeper" on page 46 in the Fall issue of *Collegiate* magazine for related verses and further study ideas.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Have someone read the introduction to the lesson on page 46 of *Collegiate* magazine.

1). THE LIFE OF THE HALOED ANGEL (PSALM 1:1-3)

READ PSALM 1:1-3.

¹How happy is the man who does not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path of sinners, or join a group of mockers! ²Instead, his delight is in the LORD's instruction, and he meditates on it day and night. ³He is like a tree planted beside streams of water that bears its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

Have someone read “The Life of the Haloed Angel” on page 46 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- What makes you really happy in life?
- How many times have you found yourself saying that you are happy because you haven't “followed the way of the wicked”?
- Practically, how do we find our happiness there?
- What difference would that make in our actions? In our attitudes?

Joyful people find their “delight” in the law of the Lord. They “meditate on it day and night.” When we think of being happy, our minds don't always naturally go to the laws of the Lord. Think about your blessings and gifts. Following the law of the Lord is the source of all of the blessings and the guidance for our gifts.

- How are we told to encounter Scripture?
- What does that practically look like in your day-to-day life?

Meditation is beneficial for our Christian growth. It helps us focus our attention and allows us to give thought to Scripture, making personal connection with the passages we're reading. It's more than checking off a list of what Scriptures you've read. It's reading them for relevance. It's contemplating them for application. This is what gives us happiness in life.

2). THE RED-FACED DEVIL EXPOSED (PSALM 1:4-5)

READ PSALM 1:4-5.

⁴The wicked are not like this; instead, they are like chaff that the wind blows away. ⁵Therefore the wicked will not survive the judgment, and sinners will not be in the community of the righteous.

Have someone read “The Red-Faced Devil Exposed” on page 46 of *Collegiate* magazine.

A strong wind was able to destroy chaff if the chaff wasn't protected by the good wheat. In these verses, the psalmist uses the image of chaff to describe what will happen to those who don't follow the laws of God.

- What do these verses say will happen to the chaff?
- Again, translate this to day-to-day life. Who is the “chaff”? What will happen to them?
- What can we do to be sure we're not merely chaff?
- What should our response be to the chaff in our lives?

Every choice we make defines us and the path we're on. We're to trust that God knows all our hearts. We can only be responsible for our own actions.

3). IT'S YOUR CHOICE (PSALM 1:6)

READ PSALM 1:6.

⁶For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to ruin.

Have someone read “It's Your Choice” on page 47 of *Collegiate* magazine.

The act of blowing the chaff with the wind is passive. The action words are used to describe God's protection of the righteous and the relationship that is available to those who are following Him.

- Why do you think the author uses the phrase “way of the righteous” rather than just “the righteous”?
- What's the importance of recognizing the journey of righteousness?

We choose righteousness every day. It's not summed up in our salvation experience, but in the choices we make as we walk daily with God.

- What does it mean for you to know that God's watching over and protecting you?
- How can you continue making choices that lead in the paths of righteousness?
- Are there voices in your life that you need to eliminate in order to meditate on God's laws day and night and to continue choosing the path of righteousness?
- Are their voices or habits you need to add?

THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 48 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "MORE LIKE YOU" BY BRANDON SCOTT SMITH, FROM THE ALBUM *MODERN DAY PRODIGAL*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.
- STORIES FROM THE WEB SITE *IJM.ORG* ABOUT INJUSTICES THAT EXIST IN THE WORLD, OR STORIES STUDENTS BROUGHT WITH THEM.
- INVITE SOMEONE FROM A LOCAL ORGANIZATION THAT SERVES THE POOR OR UNDERPRIVILEGED.
- IDEAS OF OTHER NEEDS IN YOUR COMMUNITY OR THE WORLD THAT YOUR GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS CAN COMMIT TO HELP.

NEED TO KNOWS

LESSON OVERVIEW

This session is about the characteristics of a God-fearing person. The emphasis is on the characteristics of a God-centered life. The lesson encourages young adults to demonstrate characteristics of godliness.

FOCAL PASSAGES

PSALM 112:1-10



A SELFLESS HEART

GETTING STARTED

Have the song "More Like You" by Brandon Scott Smith playing in the background as students arrive.

OPTION 1: Share stories from *ijm.org* about injustices that exist in the world and what's being done to help these people.

- What were you thinking as you read/heard these stories?
- Is it surprising that this is going on in the world?
- How is your heart stirred as you hear these stories?

OPTION 2: Have volunteers from a local organization that serves the poor and underprivileged come share with your group about the needs they see in your community. Ask them to share what they're doing to meet these needs. Ask them to share how people and groups can volunteer.

- What were you thinking as you read/heard these stories?
- How do you feel knowing the stories of people with this level of need exist in your community/around the world?
- How is your heart stirred as you hear these stories?

It's easy for us to be insulated in the church, most concerned with activities that benefit ourselves, rather than others. Psalm 112 is not just about relationship with God, but about how His people treat each other.

DIG DEEPER

Refer to "Dig Deeper" on page 48 in the Fall issue of *Collegiate* magazine for further study ideas.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Have someone read the introduction to the lesson on page 48 of *Collegiate* magazine.

1). A DIFFERENT DISPOSITION (PSALM 112:1)

READ PSALM 112:1.

¹Hallelujah! Happy is the man who fears the LORD, taking great delight in His commandments.

Have someone read “A Different Disposition” on page 48 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- What’s the writer’s attitude as this psalm begins?

The energy of this psalm is immediately felt as the writer proclaims, “Hallelujah!” The writer is experiencing excitement and joy.

- How would you define a righteous person?

A righteous person chooses excitement, joy, and delight within a clear understanding of the power of God and the importance of the guidance He gives us through His Word.

- What does it mean to take delight in God’s commands?
- Do you take delight in God’s commands?

2). A HEART FOR OTHERS (PSALM 112:2-5)

READ PSALM 112:2-5.

²His descendants will be powerful in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. ³Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever. ⁴Light shines in the darkness for the upright. He is gracious, compassionate, and righteous. ⁵Good will come to a man who lends generously and conducts his business fairly.

Have someone read “A Heart for Others” on page 48 of *Collegiate* magazine.

Make a list of the descriptions that are given about the outward activities and attitudes of the righteous. (*Give specific examples of each. Use examples from the daily lives of students.*)

- Which of these is the most difficult for you?
- Which of these is the easiest for you?
- Which do Christians usually avoid?
- What do you see as the greatest needs in the world?
- What would our world look like if more of us were compassionate, gracious, and lived our lives with integrity?

The world is waiting to see Christians conduct all areas of our lives with a world-altering integrity.

3). AN INNER STRENGTH (PSALM 112:6-10)

READ PSALM 112:6-10.

⁶He will never be shaken. The righteous will be remembered forever. ⁷He will not fear bad news; his heart is confident, trusting in the LORD. ⁸His heart is assured; he will not fear. In the end he will look in triumph on his foes. ⁹He distributes freely to the poor; his righteousness endures forever. His horn will be exalted in honor. ¹⁰The wicked man will see it and be angry; he will gnash his teeth in despair. The desire of the wicked will come to nothing.

Have someone read “An Inner Strength” on page 48 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- What are the inward attitudes and worries that usually consume our minds?

It’s so easy to become self-absorbed. So many thoughts are about personal stresses or worries that we don’t see the needs of other people in the world. Our inward attitudes have to be changed in order to see the needs of the world.

Make a list of the descriptions that are given about the inward attitudes of the righteous. Give specific examples of each. Use examples from the day-to-day lives of students.

- Which of these is the most difficult for you?
- Which of these is the easiest for you?
- Which do Christians usually avoid?
- What do you do with verse 10?
- Can you see yourself in verse 10?

It’s easy to point a finger at others and say that God will vindicate the righteous. How often though, as Christians, do we waste energy looking around at what others have? How often are we gnashing our teeth?

- Looking back over the entire passage, why is it important to have the right inward and outward actions and attitudes?
- What’s the reward?

THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 50 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "HE IS EXALTED" BY SHANE & SHANE, FROM THE ALBUM *CLEAN*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.
- INFORMATION ABOUT THE FIRST THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION
- THE CLIP FROM "CHARLIE BROWN THANKSGIVING" WHERE THE GROUP ARRIVES AT DINNER TO FIND IT'S NOTHING LIKE THEY EXPECTED, BUT LEARN TO BE THANKFUL ANYWAY.
- ELEMENTS FOR COMMUNION AND A MINISTER TO SERVE THEM, IF YOU CHOOSE OPTION 2 IN "APPLY TO LIFE."

NEED TO KNOWS

LESSON OVERVIEW

This session is about giving thanks to God for His grace and goodness. The emphasis is on God's people expressing their thankfulness to God. The lesson encourages young adults to express their thankfulness to God.

FOCAL PASSAGES

PSALM 116:1-19



BUT I WANT IT RIGHT NOW

GETTING STARTED

Have the song "He Is Exalted" by Shane & Shane playing in the background as students arrive.

On October 3, 1789, George Washington issued the first presidential proclamation calling the nation to set aside a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to God, "who is the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be. That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks ..."

OPTION 1:

Discuss the first Thanksgiving.

- What was the first Thanksgiving like?
- What did they have to be thankful for?
- How different are our celebrations today?

OPTION 2:

Show the clip from *A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving*.

- Have you ever expected one thing in life but gotten another?
- How did that make you feel about God?
- How are we like the characters in this video?

Thanksgiving kicks off a season of indulgence for us, but the first Thanksgiving guests were glad to have food at all. Even during difficult economic times, we've lost sight of what it really means to be thankful. It's easier to focus on what we don't have than remember to be thankful for what we do have and to respond in thankfulness.

DIG DEEPER

Refer to "Dig Deeper" on page 50 in the Fall issue of *Collegiate* magazine for more stats, related quotes, and further study ideas.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Have someone read the introduction to the lesson on page 50 of *Collegiate* magazine.

1). I DON'T WANNA GROW UP (PSALM 116:1-8)

READ PSALM 116:1-8.

¹I love the LORD because He has heard my appeal for mercy. ²Because He has turned His ear to me, I will call out to Him as long as I live. ³The ropes of death were wrapped around me, and the torments of Sheol overcame me; I encountered trouble and sorrow. ⁴Then I called on the name of the LORD: "LORD, save me!" ⁵The LORD is gracious and righteous; our God is compassionate. ⁶The LORD guards the inexperienced; I was helpless, and He saved me. ⁷Return to your rest, my soul, for the LORD has been good to you. ⁸For You, LORD, rescued me from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

Have someone read "I Don't Wanna Grow Up" on page 50 of *Collegiate* magazine.

The psalmist has literally been rescued from death by God.

- What can "the ropes of death" sometimes look like in our daily lives?
- What are the difficulties of life as a college student?
- What difficulties come with growing into adulthood?

"Return to your rest, my soul, for the LORD has been good to you." Read this line again and breathe deeply. When we know that God will provide and rescue us from whatever we face, we're able to rest in Him.

- What do you feel or think when you hear verse 7?
- Why is rest for our souls so important today?
- How can we allow our souls to return to rest?

2). IN GOOD TIMES AND IN BAD (PSALM 116:9-11)

READ PSALM 116:9-11.

⁹I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living. ¹⁰I believed, even when I said, "I am severely afflicted." ¹¹In my alarm I said, "Everyone is a liar."

Have someone read "In Good Times and in Bad" on page 50 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- What does it mean to walk with God in the land of the living?
- How would you describe the psalmist's emotions in these verses?
- Rewrite these verses with today's language and situations.

It's easy to walk with God and rest in Him when life seems to be going well. But we should believe in God and walk with Him at all times, not just when we feel like we're getting the blessings we deserve.

3). CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE (PSALM 116:12-19)

READ PSALM 116:12-19.

¹²How can I repay the LORD all the good He has done for me? ¹³I will take the cup of salvation and worship the LORD. ¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all His people. ¹⁵The death of His faithful ones is valuable in the LORD'S sight. ¹⁶LORD, I am indeed Your servant; I am Your servant, the son of Your female servant. You have loosened my bonds. ¹⁷I will offer You a sacrifice of thanksgiving and will worship the LORD. ¹⁸I will fulfill my vows to the LORD, in the very presence of all His people, ¹⁹in the courts of the LORD'S house—within you, Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

Have someone read "Credit Where Credit Is Due" on page 50 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- List all the actions that the psalmist does or promises in these verses.
- Make these into modern actions or promises using more current language to describe what they could look like today.

Like we discussed earlier, it's very common today for a prosperity gospel to be presented. If we're faithful to obey God, then He'll bless us with earthly things. This is *not* the message of Scripture.

- What does God call us to find our value in?
- Do you see a prosperity gospel being taught in these verses?
- How do you see this type of message being preached and lived out in our culture?
- What is the danger of this type of message?
- What do you think the author means in verse 15?
- How does that impact the way you live out your faith?

The truth is that we can't begin to repay God or understand His love for us. God doesn't always show His love by showering His blessings on us. Even so, we're to live thankful, faithful lives. We're to be rooted in the rest we find with God, knowing that He'll continue to be faithful.

Have students take a moment to think through their last year. What are some things for which they can be thankful? What has God done in their lives? Share that with one another.

- What would your life be without the presence of God in it?
- Looking back over your year, what do you have to be thankful for besides material possessions?

THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 52 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "FEAR AND FAITH" BY MICHAEL OLSON, FROM THE ALBUM *WHERE FEAR AND FAITH COLLIDE*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.
- SCRIPTURE VERSES TO DO A BIBLE DRILL WITH THE STUDENTS
- HISTORY OF THE BIBLE FROM WIKIPEDIA.ORG OR ANOTHER TRUSTWORTHY SOURCE.
- THE STORY OF WILLIAM TYNDALE OR ANOTHER PERSON WHO LOST HIS OR HER LIFE FOR THE SAKE OF THE BIBLE.
- SCRIPTURE VERSES THAT ARE PROMISES OR COMMANDS FOR STUDENTS TO EXCHANGE FOR MEMORIZATION.

NEED TO KNOWS

LESSON OVERVIEW

This session is about God's Word. The lesson encourages treasuring, studying, and obeying God's Word.

FOCAL PASSAGES

PSALM 119:1-16



TREASURING THE WORD

GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Fear and Faith" by Michael Olson playing in the background as students arrive.

OPTION 1: Do a Bible drill with your students. Often done in children's ministries, this drill has value in your college class because we often don't emphasize that level of Bible knowledge once students leave the children's ministry.

- How did it feel looking through the Bible that quickly?
- What did you learn about your knowledge of the books of the Bible?
- Where does studying your Bible rate on your to do list?

OPTION 2: Share the history of how we came to have the Bible we have today.

- What does it mean for you to know the history of the Bible's origination?
- Do we give our Bible enough importance in our lives?
- What would it be like to not have your own copy of the Bible?

OPTION 3: Share the story of William Tyndale or another person who lost his or her life for the sake of Scripture.

- What does it mean to know that people lost their lives because they were so passionate about people the Bible in their language?

- What would it be like to live in a culture today where the Bible is still not translated into your native language?
- With this knowledge, does your attitude about the Bible change?

Christians regard the Bible with great seriousness. However, by and large, we don't study it seriously. We've become a nation, and a denomination, of people who know little of what the Bible actually says. Research studies have confirmed this trend. Because the Bible is the inspired and authoritative Word of God, we must do more than revere it; we must treasure it, study it, and live by it.

DIG DEEPER

Refer to "Dig Deeper" on page 52 in the Fall issue of *Collegiate* magazine for a related quote.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Have someone read “A Matter of the Heart” on page 52 of *Collegiate* magazine.

1). A MATTER OF THE HEART (PSALM 119:1-8)

READ PSALM 119:1-8.

¹How happy are those whose way is blameless, who live according to the law of the LORD! ²Happy are those who keep His decrees and seek Him with all their heart. ³They do nothing wrong; they follow His ways. ⁴You have commanded that Your precepts be diligently kept. ⁵If only my ways were committed to keeping Your statutes! ⁶Then I would not be ashamed when I think about all Your commands. ⁷I will praise You with a sincere heart when I learn Your righteous judgments. ⁸I will keep Your statutes; never abandon me.

Have someone read the introduction to the lesson on page 52 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- What are the things that are important to you?
- How can you seek God with your whole heart?
- In verse 3, is the psalmist saying it's possible to be perfect?

Those who are living according to God's Word are blessed. We can trust the God who created us to know what's best for us. We are still going to be in relationship with people. We won't spend all of our time reading our Bibles. However, our hearts should desire to do everything as if we're doing it for God. Every relationship should be based on the love of God.

2). CONSIDER THE COST (PSALM 119:9-11)

READ PSALM 119:9-11.

⁹How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping Your word. ¹⁰I have sought You with all my heart; don't let me wander from Your commands. ¹¹I have treasured Your word in my heart so that I may not sin against You.

Have someone read “Consider the Cost” on page 52 of *Collegiate* magazine.

We so easily forget all that people went through for us to have copies of the Bible so readily available. We've lost sight of the treasure it is.

- Verse 11 is a very common verse, but what does it mean?
- How do we practically treasure His Word in our hearts?
- Is it just about memorization?
- Is the psalmist saying that it's possible to not sin?

The psalmist isn't saying that it's possible to not sin against God, but rather that being faithful and removing the sin from our lives should be our goal. We should always be striving to be more like God wants us to be. We shouldn't justify our actions and behavior by believing that “we're only human.”

3). FOLLOWING THE LEADER (PSALM 119:12-16)

READ PSALM 119:12-16.

¹²LORD, may You be praised; teach me Your statutes. ¹³With my lips I proclaim all the judgments from Your mouth. ¹⁴I rejoice in the way revealed by Your decrees as much as in all riches. ¹⁵I will meditate on Your precepts and think about Your ways. ¹⁶I will delight in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

Have someone read “Following the Leader” on page 53 of *Collegiate* magazine.

The psalmist says that he'll proclaim the judgments and rejoice in the ways revealed by God's Word. In fact, he even writes that he'll rejoice in that as much as riches.

- What's our typical response when we hear about a command that God is calling us to obey?
- How is it possible to practically respond with praise and delight?

If we really treasure the gift of Scripture, we'll read and follow what it says, and we'll realize that God's guidance and presence in our lives is greater than any material blessing we can be given. We're to go out with praise and delight, acting on the words God has given us. His guidance is a gift, worthy of our praise.

