

PURPOSE ABANDONED

THE POINT

God created us with purpose, but our sin keeps us from living out that purpose.

Psalms 8:1-6 (CSB)

¹ LORD, our Lord, how magnificent is your name throughout the earth! You have covered the heavens with your majesty. ² From the mouths of infants and nursing babies, you have established a stronghold on account of your adversaries in order to silence the enemy and the avenger. ³ When I observe your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you set in place, ⁴ what is a human being that you remember him, a son of man that you look after him? ⁵ You made him little less than God and crowned him with glory and honor. ⁶ You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet:

Psalms 14:1-7

¹ The fool says in his heart, "There's no God." They are corrupt; they do vile deeds. There is no one who does good. ² The LORD looks down from heaven on the human race to see if there is one who is wise, one who seeks God. ³ All have turned away; all alike have become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one. ⁴ Will evildoers never understand? They consume my people as they consume bread; they do not call on the LORD. ⁵ Then they will be filled with dread, for God is with those who are righteous. ⁶ You sinners frustrate the plans of the oppressed, but the LORD is his refuge. ⁷ Oh, that Israel's deliverance would come from Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

Psalms 8:1-6 (KJV)

¹ O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. ² Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. ³ When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; ⁴ What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? ⁵ For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. ⁶ Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

Psalms 14:1-7

¹ The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. ² The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. ³ They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. ⁴ Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD. ⁵ There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous. ⁶ Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD is his refuge. ⁷ Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

TEACHING PLAN

GET INTO THE STUDY

OPENING QUESTION: When you were growing up, what were some things you wanted to do in life or something you wanted to be?

- As you think about those things, what would you say kept you from realizing them?
- What keeps you from realizing them now? Have you abandoned them?
- Just like there were some things that kept you from doing things you wanted to do or becoming someone that you wanted to be, when we sin against God it keeps us from living out the purpose that He has for us.

OPTIONAL IDEA: See page 16 for a creative way to introduce the session.

STUDY THE BIBLE

PSALM 8:1-6

We were created to bring God praise and glory.

Lord, Your name is magnificent.

- Ask: When you look at the night sky and the creation around you, how often does it cause you to reflect on the majesty of God?
- Allow time for discussion, then using information from the paragraph that begins “David engaged,” compare and contrast the difference between simply gazing at them and seeing the Creator behind them.
- What did David mean when he asked the question in verse four: “What is man, that thou art mindful of him?/What is a human being that you remember him?”
- Using information from the paragraphs that begin “Another question” through “What is man/What is a human being,” help the group understand where David was coming from.

- Explore what it means to be crowned with glory and honor using information from the paragraph that begins “David continued.”
- Ask: When you read this Psalm of David, what would you say your purpose is?
- Read Psalm 8:1-6 again and spend some time discussing our purpose.
- Say: Even in the vast universe, God cares for humankind, for we are His valuable creation.

PSALM 14:1-3

We have turned away from God and His purpose for us.

There is no one who is good.

- Ask: How would you describe a fool?
- Using information from the two paragraphs that begin “The psalm begins” through “The psalmist,” lead the group in a conversation on the psalmist’s definition of the term.
- Use the paragraph that begins “None of this” to point out what God looks for in humanity. Stress the meaning of the words “gone aside/turned away” and “filthy/corrupt” to help the group further understand what God sees in humanity.
- Say: As you reflect on your own life compared to the rest of the world, can you relate to the feelings of this psalmist who was feeling like they were the only one that hadn’t turned their back on God? Why or why not? Spend some time with the group in discussion of this thought.
- Emphasize that no matter our words, our actions speak the truth about the place of God in our lives.

PSALM 14:4-7

When we turn to God as our refuge, He restores us.

The Lord will deliver His people.

notes

- Using information from the paragraph that begins “The foolish ones” to compare and contrast the differences between those who have no relationship with God and those that do.
- Explain the definitions of the words “dread/fear,” “righteous,” and “refuge.”
- Ask: What benefits does God give to the righteous? Spend some time in discussion.
- Explain that those who live in rejection and rebellion against God should fear Him.
- Ask: Is Israel the only one that will see God’s salvation? Allow time for discussion, then using information from the paragraph that begins “The psalm concludes,” explain that the salvation referred to here is only possible because of the presence and activity of God Himself.
- Point out that those who live in right relationship to God are assured His protection and care.
- Invite volunteers to recall and share about the day that they came to the Lord and the joy and celebration they experienced as a result.

DIG DEEPER: Review and share the teaching idea on the next page to aid in your discussion.

LIVE IT OUT

In what ways can we make sure to fulfill our purpose to bring God praise and glory?

- We can give praise and glory when we look at creation every day and reflect on the majesty of God.
- We can spend time each day turning our hearts and lives toward God instead of turning away from Him.
- We can spend time confessing our sins to God knowing that when we do, He will restore us.

OPTIONAL IDEA

Prior to your group time, secure a way to watch a video or play a recording. Download the video by “Shane and Shane—Psalm 8” (BibleStudiesforLife.com/AdultExtra) or a recording of the song. Gather writing utensils as well as small notepads or sticky notes for each group member.

Distribute the paper or notepads and a writing utensil. Tell the group that you are going to play for them a video or song about Psalm 8. Encourage them to sit quietly and reflect on the words as they listen.

When the song is finished, invite volunteers to create a personal psalm of their own, reflecting on the majesty and glory of God that they have seen during this past week. Allow several minutes and then invite volunteers to share what they wrote.

Ask: Did you find it easy or hard to write that personal psalm? Why or why not?

Allow for a time of discussion. Share with the group that we must be looking for the majesty and glory of God every day.

Invite the group to use their notepads or sticky notes to create a new psalm of reflection every morning during the coming week. When they have finished each day, instruct them to put their note in a place that they will see it at least a few times during the day. Encourage them to read it aloud and then spend a few moments in prayer giving glory and honor to God for the majesty they have seen.

Prior to dismissing your group, read Psalm 8:1-6 again and then close in prayer.



DIG DEEPER

Psalm 8 is a majestic psalm. It is, in a way, the crescendo to the opening seven chapters where David prays to be delivered from his enemies. Now his attention turns from his pitiful circumstances to the greatness of God. The psalm opens and closes with the same words, which is a literary device called *inclusio*. To bookend a passage was to indicate that the whole psalm is about the majesty of God.

In fact, sometimes our English translations don't adequately portray what is being written. It seems odd to read the opening line where the word “Lord” is used twice.

In Hebrew, however, two different words are used. In the first instance, the word is *Yahweh*, the covenant name for God. Most English Bibles use this

translation. It is the second “Lord” that is different. It is the Hebrew *adonai* which also means “lord” but more in the sense of ruler or king.

So, the psalmist is actually declaring, “O Yahweh and King, how majestic is Your name in all the earth.”

Verse 1 uses another literary device to further illustrate God's overall majesty. By mentioning both earth and the heavens, the psalmist is employing *merism*. Through stating that God is Lord of both heaven and earth, the implication is that it includes everything in between as well.

In other words, God's majesty permeates all of His creation. God reveals Himself as majestic in everything around us and makes His glory known.