

Study Series: The God Who Is There

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Lesson Title: “The God Who Is Unfathomably Wise” (pp. 78-91)

Session 6

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The main point of this lesson is: God is wise beyond all human capacity to understand or replicate.

Focus on this goal: To help adults establish their lives on God’s unfathomable wisdom rather than their own limited understanding

Key Bible Passage: Psalms 1; 51; Ecclesiastes 12:1,13-14

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Request adults identify different genres of music and literature. Write responses on the board. Ask volunteers to share which genres they prefer and why.

State: We discovered in Session 1 that the sixty-six books of the Bible are different genres. Some of us might prefer the historical narratives, others the prophecies, some the epistles, and others poetry. All are valuable because they all reveal something about the God who is there. Today’s session takes a brief excursion into the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament that reveals the God who is unfathomably wise.

Step 2. Songs and Wisdom

Guide adults through a brief survey of the book of Psalms, using the second paragraph of Day One (p. 78). Invite someone to read the Day One paragraph (p. 79) beginning with “Elderly Christians . . . .” Ask adults why they agree or disagree with those statements.

Invite responses to Day One, activity 2 (p. 79). Acknowledge some statements in Psalms, such as “God, knock the teeth out of their mouths” (Ps. 58:6) can be puzzling, but we must remember the psalms are poetry that use imagery and strong language as literary devices.

Ask: Even if you’re not big on poetry, what is the value of the psalms to you? Declare: The psalms reveal the wisdom of God who is there. It’s wise to lament, to express our anger and confusion to our God who can handle our emotions. It’s wise to plead with God for protection and provision and to praise Him for His goodness. Songs help us do that.

Step 3. Psalm 1, Part 1

Explain Psalm 1 describes true wisdom. Request a volunteer read Psalm 1. Ask if adults are familiar with the Eat This, Not That!© books. State Psalm 1:1-3 is more of a Do This, Not That! list.

Guide the group to identify and describe what righteous people do not do. Then identify and elaborate on what righteous people do. Ask: Why is it wise to do this and not that?

Note that Paul states in prose form what Psalm 1:1-3 says poetically. Discuss Day Two, activity 1 (p. 81).

Ask: What images or people come to mind when you consider the metaphor of the tree from Psalm 1:3 and Jeremiah 17:8?

Step 4. Psalm 1, Part 2

Guide the group to compare the two metaphors of the tree (Ps. 1:3) and the chaff (v. 4) and consider the value and the point of these images. Ask: Why might it seem initially attractive to live in the way of the wicked? Why is that way simply not wise? Use the Day Three remarks (p. 83) to explain why Psalm 1 is often called a wisdom psalm.

Explore how Jesus taught using the basic wisdom polarity of only two ways. Lead a discussion with: Why would the author call wisdom literature scary? Why is wisdom literature valuable? How does it fall short?

Invite a volunteer to read the last full paragraph of Day Three (p. 84). Discuss Day Three, activity 2 (p. 84).

Step 5. Psalm 51

State the second psalm we will examine was written after David chose not to take the wise way. Briefly summarize the context of Psalm 51.

Discuss Day Four, activity 1 (p. 85). Analyze how David could say that he had sinned against God alone. Ask: Why do you think David wrote this prayer of repentance in the form of a song?

Invite a volunteer to read Psalm 51:6-17. Determine what God desired and what David desired. Evaluate how David finally took the wise way.

Step 6. Wisdom Literature

Explain wisdom literature in the Bible is found in Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and portions of Esther, Psalms, Song of Songs, and Daniel.1 Day Five provides a brief look at Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

Ask: What comes to mind when you think of the book of Proverbs? What makes it different from a collection of short witty sayings, like Benjamin Franklin’s proverbs inPoor Richard’s Almanack?

Note how the book of Proverbs often forces readers to choose between two ways. Discuss Day Five, activity 1 (p. 87).

Invite a volunteer to read Ecclesiastes 1:1-11. Ask: Do you think Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, needs some wisdom? Explain your reasoning.

Use remarks in Day Five (p. 88) to summarize all the ways Solomon sought satisfaction and why they all fell short. Discuss Day Five, activity 2 (p. 88).

Read and discuss the Day Five Note (p. 88).

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Ask a volunteer to read the last paragraph of Day Five (p. 88). Read Proverbs 3:5-7.

Ask: What have you gained from today’s study that gives you specific ways to establish your life on God’s unfathomable wisdom rather than your own limited understanding?

Close in prayer.

1.”Wisdom Literature,” Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003) 1677.

