



Look Again | Andrew Matrone | 12.19.21
Weekly Study

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

What is one thing you have taken with you from our Kingdom Culture series?

SHARE

Welcome back to Group! This week, Andrew Matrone brought a timely message for us as we begin to close out 2021. He encouraged us to pause, look again at 2021 and see God's faithfulness before going full force into 2022. Andrew said that "how we perceive God directly affects the way we perceive our life." The last few years have been difficult for many of us around the world and having the perception of God through it all has affected our life in one way or another. This week Andrew reminds us that, life may not always be good, but God is.

Before we jump in, check in with each other by asking one of these questions:

Where did you see God in this week?

What is one way you were able to share in the work God is doing around you?

GROW

Read Psalm 13

Looking back, can you see yourself relating to David's words in this Scripture at any point in your life? Explain.

There is something we all can relate to with King David. He writes this Psalm as a place of transition. We see in the Psalms, David writing out of joy, sorrow, disappointment, fear, repentance, hope... Everything he experienced in his life, his perspective remained on God. As Andrew said this week, "David is the ultimate truth teller." He praises him for WHO he is and for WHAT he has done. He knows that this life is hard, but he also knows God is so very good. It is evident he holds on to this in hope. David faced his story in honesty while he clung to his faith in God. His story is something God gives us to encourage us to hold onto him and proclaim his goodness even when times seem everything but good. Remember GOD is good even when life around us is not.

Share with your group how you experienced 2021. Have you experienced more difficulties than not? More hard times than good? Or you may have experienced 2021 completely opposite having more good times than not. However, you have experienced it share of a time that you have seen God's goodness to you this last year.

MOVE

Read Psalm 13 (again)

David writes this passage in three parts: the problem, the petition and the praise. Just as Andrew did this week, we are going to take a look at these and dive a bit deeper in each part with your group.

The Problem

How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? (Psalm 13: 1-2)

David is not taking his experience and putting on the “faith face” as Andrew described it. He was looking at it face to face. David had this honesty with God that is so freeing. He was able to just “be” while wrestling through some things with God and not taking them at face value.

When adversity comes, do you tend to feel like you have to put your “faith face” on or do you find yourself wrestling with God and asking the hard questions?

As Andrew said this week, “Really hard to have hope and faith for the future when you’re not willing to be honest about the past and present.” Let that sit with you a minute as you reflect on your own life.

The Petition

Look on me and answer, Lord my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death, and my enemy will say, “I have overcome him,” and my foes will rejoice when I fall. (Psalm 13: 3-4)

As we read throughout the Psalms, we know that David is persistent with God and God is everything but offended by it. The invitation is to always “come to him” (see Matthew 11:28-30). We come to God knowing that he is the provider, and we are desperate for him.

David is acknowledging his need for eyes to see it differently so he can see things through the lens of God. Psalm 119:105 says, “your Word is a lamp unto my feet and light to my path.” God’s Word allows us to have his perspective so when adversity comes, let us turn to God and ask him the same thing David is asking, for God’s perspective.

The Praise

But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord’s praise, for he has been good to me. (Psalm 13: 5-6)

David is proclaiming God’s faithful love to him. He has not found himself paralyzed by the “hard” in his life. He is not stuck in discouragement, doubt, fear, or shame. He has looked to the Lord in honesty and faith with deep gratitude. David’s life proves that he “walked by faith and not by sight” (see 2 Corinthians 5:17).

How can you fight to see the faithfulness in your life? What will this look like for you to fight in gratitude when things seem to have fallen apart?

Let this Psalm encourage you to be honest about your “problems” with God. Enter into the invitation to go to God and “petition” in desperation while “praising” God for WHO he is and for WHAT he has done. Watch how this shifts your perspective as you enter into 2022! Remember, how you perceive God will determine how you perceive life.

This Week’s Challenge

Pause this week and get out a journal. Take an honest inventory of all you might have experienced this year, the good, bad, ugly and write them down. This may take some time, good, let it marinate! When you have written it down, take a moment to read through it.

Where have you seen God’s faithfulness in 2021? Proclaim who God is and praise him for what he has done! And take this with you as you anticipate 2022.

P R A Y

We need prayer now more than ever. Spend some time-sharing prayer requests. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking off into two separate groups (or calls if you are an online group) to share more freely.

T O G O

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28

