

Isaiah's Reality

WEEK 1

Biblical Moment Knowing Your Calling

Please have your team split in partners and read together and answer questions at the end:

Psalm 73:23 (ESV), "Nevertheless, I am continually with You; You hold my right hand."

Everyone had gone for the day; the sanctuary was quiet. You could literally hear a pin drop. He sat on the front row of chairs staring at the stage. As he sat there, he prayed that his leadership would continue and his heart would strive every day

to be closer, in word and deed, to his Savior. His mind focused on all the events that had developed that morning. He had many thoughts reflecting on how he fell short in love to others, his family and his efforts in ministry. He thanked the Lord for the privilege to serve, even when his heart and will wasn't always right where they needed to be. As he continued in prayer, tears of joy covered his face because he knew God had erased each one of his question marks, even as he sat there in His presence.

Asaph, worship leader, singer and poet, had many questions about the prosperity of the wicked and his current disappointments in ministry. However, Psalm 73:17, (ESV), says, ***"until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end."*** When Asaph entered into God's sanctuary, he entered a place in his heart where all his questions ended because they were explained by a mighty God. The word "sanctuary" in this passage isn't a building or a place.



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God resides in our hearts as believers, charging us to stay in truth and abide in Him.

Many scriptures reference our hearts. Matthew 15:18 (NIV), says, ***"But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them."*** Also, Luke 6:45 (NIV) says, ***"A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of."*** Love these scriptures because it hits on the 'infamous heart problem.' Are we guarding what enters our minds? What our eyes see? Who and what we talk about? Be sure of this, our enemy is seeking for those to devour, distract and destroy. Be alert, and most importantly, be absorbed in the things that reflect God.

I am a thinker. I tend to analyze everything, and often go to the negative instantly. Since my mom passed, I've noticed just how frequently I see the glass half empty. I've been making more efforts to recognize and replace my thoughts and conversations and to be centered on the characteristics of Christ. For example, if an event in my life overwhelms me, I focus on a promise God completed in Scripture. It took time, but I recorded those promises I researched in God's Word in the Notes app on my iPhone. I'm now a 'frequent flyer' on this app. Slowly, I'm changing. Slowly, Christ is changing me.

Many of us live between Psalm 73:2-16. We never experience an awakening because we don't dwell in the presence of God, read His Word, live life with fellow believers, and thereby, understand who He is. When we enter His



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sanctuary, when our hearts gain an understanding of His greatness, it's there that a definitive moment marks us and creates a turning point in our lives.

Asaph goes on to say that even when he was at his worst, like a brutal beast before the Lord, God was, nevertheless, with him! Despite his inconsistencies, his questions and disrespect, his anger; God never left. Yes, God Never Left! What a beautiful picture of grace and unconditional love only God can give.

Psalm 73:23-25 also shows us a faithful God, always fulfilling His promises. I've been involved in numerous Bible studies through Bible Study Fellowship. It has revealed God's character, taught me many biblical principles, and how to apply these attributes in my life. Presently, we are studying the Promise Land. The Israelites struggled in their obedience. After time in the wilderness and a generational change, they entered the land God promised them. They saw God revealed in a promise kept after years of doubting. How interesting it would've been to be a 'fly on the wall', to have seen the reaction as they entered and witnessed this promise come to fruition! Though we forget our own answered prayers, we have detailed accounts in God's Word proving His loyalty.

As the psalm writer continues his thoughts, we see a new direction, a new heart, and a new attitude of gratefulness. This is what God does for His children. When we surrender our will to Him, openly confess in repentance and accept His guidance, ALL things become new in the eyes of a weary worshipper, even Asaph.



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Questions with Partner: What is your heart saying right now? Has there been a time where God has “marked” you by His presence or changed your outlook on something? If so, explain.