

Connecting with God

2024-08-11 • PASTOR MATT ROSE



Psalm 121

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

Psalm 121 begins with a physical movement: I lift up my eyes. It does not begin with cleaned-up circumstances. Pastor Matt's point is that staring at everything wrong in your life may tidy some of it, but it will not change the state underneath, because attention shapes how you live. He told on himself to prove it: he overslept that morning, walked into church in a bad posture, and had to deliberately lift his own perspective before he could preach. The move is always available. Look up at the character of God, which is most clearly visible in Jesus, and the posture shifts from there.

To get started

- What have you been staring at lately that has not gotten any better for the staring?

Looking back at the message

He described having to lift his own posture that very morning. Use his honesty to invite the room's.

- 1 Pastor Matt overslept, walked in with a negative posture, and had to shift it on purpose before preaching. When did you last shift your posture on purpose?
- 2 Pastor Matt described hiking while staring down at your own feet, cataloguing everything you wish were different, instead of looking up at the horizon. How familiar is that picture?
- 3 Pastor Matt said God may be doing miracles right in front of you while you see only what is out of place. When have you caught yourself doing exactly that? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read Psalm 121 aloud. It is eight verses and worth hearing in one breath.

- 4 Read Psalm 121:1-2. What is the very first action in the psalm, and what answer does the psalmist give to his own question?
- 5 Read the rest of the psalm and count how many times it says watch or keep. What is being promised, over and over?
- 6 Some read the mountains as danger on the road. Others read them as a picture of God's steady character. Which reading changes the psalm more for you?
- 7 Read Matthew 6:33. How does seeking first connect to lifting your eyes? OPTIONAL

Bringing it home

Posture is physical and mental. Both are usable this week.

- 8 What is one practical thing you could do tomorrow morning to shift your posture?
- 9 If you looked further ahead than tomorrow, what would you actually see?
- 10 Answer honestly: where is your help actually coming from right now?
- 11 Is there a funk you have been in long enough that it has started to feel normal? OPTIONAL

The group together

It is easier to lift someone else's eyes than your own.

- 12 Who has helped you lift your eyes when you could not do it yourself?
- 13 Who in this group might be looking down right now?
- 14 How could this group remind each other of what is ahead, not only of what is hard?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

What is the one thing you will look up at this week instead of down?

You might pray about

- For those who could not lift themselves out of a funk today
- For attention that shapes life rather than drains it
- For help that comes from the Lord rather than from ourselves