

# Your Focus Sets Your Direction

## Psalm 122-123

August 2, 2020

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The Way Up

### Think About It!

What did we learn?

### Talk About It!

What does it mean?

### Do It!

What are we going to do?

### Think About It!

If you don't know your destination, it doesn't matter what kinds of directions you're using. But when you have a specific outcome in mind, you'll follow whatever steps — no matter how specific they are — to get there. Our focus always determines what direction we take...so if we could just get our focus right, we'd know the right steps to take through life too. In this weekend's message, we'll zero in on what the BEST focus is, in any given situation.

[LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

### Talk About It!

#### 1. Be excited to be the church

- **Psalm 122**
- **Parent Notes**
  - **What kind of life do you want to live when you grow up?** We all have different things that we want for our lives, but most of them don't just happen by accident. We move toward whatever we focus on. Whatever we think about today builds us into the person we're growing up to be. In these psalms, God gives us some good things to focus on.
  - **Is there a place where you and your family like to have fun? (Maybe a special restaurant or a hike or the beach!) Why do you like going there?** God wants to have fun with you too! He wants to have a special place where He can spend time with us. When these psalms were written, that special place was the city of Jerusalem. Today, God lives in our hearts and we can spend all of our time with him!

- **Why do you think “The Church” is called the Family of God?** When you’re a family, you spend time together. Because God is our Heavenly Father, all of His children are our spiritual brothers and sisters. When we spend time with our spiritual family, we learn more about who God is and who he wants us to be.

## 2. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem

- **Psalm 122**
- **Parent Notes**
  - **Do you pray for the people who are special to you?** In the Bible, we learn that God chose the Jewish people. They were special to him through all of history. They’re still special to him today! When we become closer to God, we start to care about the people who are special to him.
  - **How can we pray for God’s chosen people?** We pray for the things and the people we care about. God cares about what happens to his chosen people and to the city of Jerusalem. As a family, think of some creative ways to pray for God’s chosen people!
  - **Are there any friendships in your life where you need to pray for peace?** Sometimes, we don’t have peace with our friends or our family. We sometimes argue or have a bad day. In those times, we can go to God and pray for peace, not just in our relationships, but in the world. God wants us to be at peace with him and with each other.

## 3. The way up is to look up

- **Psalm 123**
- **Parent Notes**
  - **Think about a time when you wanted to do something by yourself, but you had to ask for help. What happened? How did that feel?** It feels good to do something all by yourself! But it’s important to remember that we can’t do anything without God’s help. He gives us every breath that we breathe. The more we ask him for help, the more he can do in our lives.
  - **Why is it hard to ask for help sometimes?** It can be hard to admit when we need help with something, but when we humble ourselves, we’re following the example of Jesus. He humbled himself entirely to become weak, and we can humble ourselves and ask him for help, trusting that God will supply our lack.
  - **Where do you need God’s help right now?** The person writing this psalm cried out to God for help and mercy because he was facing circumstances beyond his ability. He knew he needed God to look on him and help him. Only God can meet

us in our deepest need. He might use other humans to help us along the way, but it is God and God alone who can look on us and help us in any situation.

**Optional Follow-up Questions:**

- What makes you say that?
- How do you feel about that?
- How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?