

Lutheran Women in Mission

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A Fresh Perspective Seeing through God's Eyes By Lauren Beale

Opening

Sing together "Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways" (LW 392; TLH 416) or "I Leave All Things to God's Direction" (LW 429; TLH 529).

What's on your mind right now? Are you really excited about this study, or are you inwardly concerned about a job responsibility, a sick child or parent, expenses vs. income, a friend's harsh comment? While these all seem important to us, what does God want you to have on your mind? Read Philippians 4:4-9.

What does God promise if you do what He says in these verses?

How might the stress-filled times in your day change if, during them, you think on "what is noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy"? Will your attitude or response or tone of voice change if your mind is "guarded" in Christ Jesus? (Discuss your responses with your group.)

God's Perspective

Life is a matter of perspective; do you follow your perspective or God's? Read the following verses. (You may wish to assign a few verses to small groups and have each group report back to the large group).

What directions and promises does God make to you in each of them?

- **Romans 8:6**
- **Isaiah 26:3**
- **Romans 12:2**
- **Psalm 56:3-4**
- **Matthew 11:28-30**
- **Jeremiah 17:7-8**
- **Proverbs 16:7**
- **Proverbs 14:26**
- **Psalm 37:19, 23-24**
- **Proverbs 14:30a**

What difference can these verses make in your life in the days to come?

God's Plans

Read **Jeremiah 29:11-14** to see what plans God has for you. What does He ask of you? What does it mean to seek Him with all of your heart? (Discuss your answers.)

When you are in the middle of a difficult situation, it can be hard to make sense of what God is doing. Yet it is when you feel most helpless that you can be extremely pliable and God can really work, or you can shut Him out and miss out on the blessings He has for you.

Others watch the way you react to challenges in life; your life is a witness to what is truly in your heart. Read **Psalms 37:3-5**. What three actions can help you view life as an adventure in walking with God?

For Personal Reflection

(Allow 10-15 minutes for participants to work through this section individually or encourage the women to do this at home during a devotional time.)

Think about today. Did your perspective on life build others up? Lead others to Christ? Or turn others away because you lived "under the circumstances" instead of letting God lead you through them?

Christ encourages us to trust the Father to do what He says He will do. How can **Matthew 6:25-27** remind you that your circumstances may be overwhelming for you but not for God?

Read **Isaiah 55:8-9**. Who knows what is best for you and for those whose lives you are going to touch?

God has plans for your life and for the lives of others. He wants you to obey and He gives you the Spirit to provide joy, peace and more as you obediently go through life here on earth.

Read **Galatians 2:20**. How does "being crucified with Christ" give you a new perspective on the way you live each day?

If I focus on myself and on what I want to happen, I must also realize that my "self" (or my flesh) is reactionary and can easily be stirred up by people, situations and circumstances. On the other hand, if I agree with Paul in Galatians 2:20, my perspective and my attitude change, and God's Spirit helps me view life through God's eyes. I don't know exactly what God's plan is, yet I simply believe that God is in charge and I don't have to be. I can trust Him. And even in the darkest times, as a Christian, I can see the Light that comes from Him.

When asked what seeing things through God's eyes meant, my 11-year-old daughter, Andrea, replied, "And it was good!" She's right! As a redeemed and forgiven child of God, you've been made clean. God sees you as forgiven-as good! He wants you to find joy in Him, to look at your life and circumstances through His eyes, from His perspective. As you trust and delight in Him and commit your way to Him, even when you are in total darkness, you can see and reflect His Light.

Take time now to pray, praising God and sharing what's on your mind with Him. Ask God to direct your mind and fill your heart with what is good, right and true. Allow Him to minister to you and help you see the world and life's circumstances through His eyes.

Group Closing

Sing "Lord of All Hopefulness" (*Hymnal Supplement '98*, #886) or, if you have musicians in your group, ask someone to sing, "Trust His Heart" by Babbie Mason available through Christian Book stores in *The Very Best of Babbie Mason* published by Word Music, Inc.

**Serve the
Lord with
Gladness!**
Psalm 100:2

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