**1. Motivate**

What kinds of things distract you when you read or study?

* TV in the next room
* someone carrying on a phone conversation nearby
* music with words/lyrics

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View it at <https://tinyurl.com/ytc3ax6k> If you have no wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/39fpzbh9>

* noisy kids
* too hot/cold
* something going on at work
* a problem with the car/lawn mower/swimming pool/etc.
* a problem with a neighbor
* worry about your teenager
* problems with your kids’ school or teacher
* a health situation where you are in ongoing physical pain

**2. Transition**

These same things can distract us when we read God’s Word or worship together as a congregation.

* God wants us to come to Him with a heart fully focused on Him alone.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Humble and Trusting

Listen for a comparison

Psalm 40:1-5 (NIV) I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. 2 He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. 3 He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD. 4 Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods. 5 Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.

The psalmist found himself in a bad situation.

* Speaks of a slimy pit, mud and mire
* Something he was worried about
* Needed encouragement, assurance

List the words and phrases which describe where he turned and found relief and hope.

* went to God, waited patiently for God to hear his cry
* God lifted him out of the problem, placed him on firm footing
* God gave him a song in his heart … he could sing a joyful song of worship
* singing joyfully in worship is a way of exercising faith

The psalmist says he “waited patiently”. Why is that a hard thing to do?

* the problem persists
* you still are hurting
* the people causing the problem won’t quit
* you can wait, but it’s not easy to be patient
* you feel like being patient is just having to continually put up with the problem … on and on

Consider the mention of God lifting David from a "pit of destruction" and "miry bog" (v.2). What modern situations might these metaphors represent?

* financial ruin – bad investment, storm, fire, war destruction
* sudden, tragic loss of a loved one – or lingering, declining health of a family member
* burdened with being the care giver
* a devastating health diagnosis
* abandonment by a spouse
* a child or grandchild who is far from the Lord

According to this psalm, what is the source of a blessed life, even when bogged down in a pit of destruction?

* trusting the Lord
* instead of trusting other people who proudly claim to have life under control
* instead of trusting false Gods, idols … anything that we might go to instead of God
* God does wonders, more marvelous than we might think up ourselves

Note: These suggestions area easy to contribute, sitting in a Bible Study class … harder to actually apply when lying sleepless in the night.

What benefit to others was the psalmist’s testimony concerning the goodness of the Lord?

* his hymn of praise was a testimony
* people saw that he could praise God in the midst of his problem
* even though he had a problem, he could trust God and be thanking Him for His provision

Remember …

* No situation is beyond the ability of the Lord.
* Trust the Lord no matter how dreadful things may seem.
* Our praise of the Lord can be our witness to others of His greatness.
* God’s goodness, His works toward us, His plans for us are wonderful beyond measure

3.2 Worship and Willing Obedience

Listen for what God really prefers.

Psalm 40:6-8 (NIV) Sacrifice and offering you did not desire—but my ears you have opened— burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require.7 Then I said, “Here I am, I have come— it is written about me in the scroll. 8 I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.”

On the surface, what seems unusual about the claims of the psalmist in verse 6?

* God didn’t really want the sacrifices and offerings the law required
* He was not impressed by those burnt offerings and sin offerings that had been given
* if God required them, why didn’t he appreciate them?

What is the meaning of the imagery of having his ears opened?

* got the attention of the psalmist – like when you finally become aware that someone is talking to you
* (“my wife says I don’t listen to her … or something like that”)
* finally God got his full attention
* true that so often God is in competition with a lot of other things in our lives
* we need to allow God to take out our earplugs

What is the meaning of the reference to the book or scroll in verse 7? What did the psalmist mean in saying “it is written of me”?

* says it is written about him
* maybe he senses that God had a record about him
* more likely has to do with how God’s Word so often speaks specifically to us
* the verse that jumps out and slaps us in the face or stabs us in the heart
* God speaks to him, and he sees it, realizes it, confesses that it is true and applies to him
* “It is Truth for me … I believe it” – same thing we experience starting with our salvation

The psalmist declares that obeying God’s law is more than a ritual. How would you describe someone who delights in doing God's will?

* in close contact with God, daily communication
* realizing that obedience is a *good* thing, a rewarding experience
* reading scripture is not a boring task … you are looking for what God might be saying to you
* you realize that what God calls you to be doing is more rewarding than anything the world might offer
* involved in ministry
* willing to do even menial tasks for the Body of Christ, the Church

3.3 Worship Unashamedly

Listen for determination.

Psalm 40:9-11 (NIV) I proclaim righteousness in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, as you know, O LORD. 10 I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly. 11 Do not withhold your mercy from me, O LORD; may your love and your truth always protect me.

The psalmist was confident he had been faithfully and openly …

* Proclaiming God’s righteousness/justice
* Speaking of God’s faithfulness and salvation
* Revealing God’s love and Truth

What additional appeal did the psalmist make of the Lord?

* don’t withhold your mercy – your forgiveness that he didn’t (and we don’t) deserve
* may your love and truth always protect me

These verses add to our understanding of worship. What does the psalmist proclaim *about* God?

* righteousness/justice
* faithfulness
* salvation
* love
* truth
* mercy

*How* does he proclaim?

* out loud, for all to hear
* publicly

What does he *petition* God for

* request for mercy
* protection based on God’s attributes

How can Sunday worship prepare you for obedient service during the rest of the week?

* we praise the Lord together
* we study God’s Truth (for which the psalmist prayed)
* we declare God’s worth (worth-ship)
* these are a all a declaration of our faith in Who God is and what He can and wills to do
* in all of these we are reminded of God’s power, authority, and love
* going through the week we are assured of His ability and desire to protect and provide
* we know we can depend on Him

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

The Starting Place.

* Reflect on David’s testimony in Psalm 40:1-2.
* What’s your story? Describe your life before you met Christ.
* Reflect on how you discovered your need for Him.

The Growing Place.

* God puts a song in the mouths of those He delivers. What’s your song?
* Can people “hear” the song of praise in your life?
* Be intentional this week in having personal worship.
* Also, be sure to participate in corporate worship.

The Sowing Place.

* Make a list of the major priorities in your life. Where does worship rate on the list?
* How does your use of time, resources, and energy demonstrate the value of worship in your life?
* What changes are needed for you to become a true worshiper, whose heart is fully focused on God?

Word Search

So you say you’re distracted … Humph! … Focus on this. Find the words! We’re going easy on you this time, all are left to right, top to bottom or diagonal … nothing backwards. If someone asks, there is help for those who wimp out. Go to <https://tinyurl.com/39fpzbh9> And for the diehard crossword fans, there’s one there, also. Don’t forget your book reports. Humph!