

Studies in Psalms by [John T Polk II](#)
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Psalm 123

4/4/13

There is uncertainty regarding the author, time, or circumstances of these Psalms, but it is apparent [Psalms 120-134](#) work together, and are called the "Songs of Degrees," and sometimes "Songs of Ascension."

Psalm 123

What Shall I Do, Lord?

Verse 1 directs our eyes;
Verse 2 directs our obedience;
Verse 3 directs our hearts;
Verse 4 directs our pleas.

Verse 1: Since "heavens" means upper expanse, whenever we need to look for God, we must "lift up our eyes." Jesus, as God, now is "dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see" ([1 Timothy 6:16](#)). Morally, to "see God" is to see the effects of His Will in the obedient heart. Jesus said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God" ([Matthew 5:8](#)). Peter taught how a heart becomes pure: "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever" ([1 Peter 1:22-23](#)). John added: "He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God" ([3 John 11](#)).

Verse 2: It is not enough just to "look" for God, but it must be with a humble heart: "as" the servant's eyes look in anticipation of what the master desires to be done; "as" the maid looks for whatever detail she may provide for her mistress's satisfaction; "so" we look toward God for instruction. Our eagerness to obey Him prompts His willingness to extend "mercy" to us! He, however, has already given all of His instruction in His Book "once for all" ([Jude 3](#)).

No one should look toward God without seeing Jesus in His Word: "Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father?' Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works" ([John 14:9-10](#)).

Verses 3-4: We keenly feel the need for God's "mercy" because we are "exceedingly filled" with "the contempt of the proud." These are the people who,

All Scriptures and comments are based on the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.



Studies in Psalms by [John T Polk II](#)
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Jesus said, "this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause'" ([John 15:25](#)). Jesus had also taught: "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also" ([John 15:20](#)).

Thought: It is pitiful to see people "look up to:" Gandhi, Marx, Einstein, Darwin, Mohammed, "the Pope," a pastor, ancestors, a teacher, philosophers, or gurus but look down on (denigrate) Jesus Christ! Truth is entirely the other way: "we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" ([1 Corinthians 1:23-25](#)). We quote the statements that have influenced us the most: Do we quote Jesus Christ above all?

~~~~~