

S T U D Y G U I D E

**A LOOK AT
Life
FROM A
Deerstand**

Steve Chapman



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS
EUGENE, OREGON

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Wasn't It Smart of God to...

With God on a Deer Hunt

A LOOK AT LIFE FROM A DEER STAND STUDY GUIDE

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Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97402

www.harvesthousepublishers.com

ISBN 978-0-7369-4560-8 (pbk.)

ISBN 978-0-7369-4562-2 (eBook)

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Printed in the United States of America

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 / BP-CD / 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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More Than Hunting Critters

Our purpose for going to the woods and fields is to participate in the challenge of the “fair chase.” But another great result of being out in God’s creation is finding spiritual insights that will make our walk with Christ more invigorating. I pray this study will help you enjoy hunting even more and encourage your walk on God’s trail.

What You’ll Need

Packing for this adventure is pretty straightforward:

- *A Look at Life from a Deer Stand* book
- *A Look at Life from a Deer Stand Study Guide*
- a Bible
- a pen or pencil

Session Format

Designed for individual or group use, hopefully this study will generate some interesting things to consider and some lively conversations with friends or a Bible-study group. If in a group setting, there may be times when the discussion takes off on a rabbit trail. This can be a good thing! If it seems worthwhile, go ahead and follow it. You can return to the main trail anytime.

What to Expect

Each session includes five sections designed to bring more depth to your life as a follower of Christ, a man, a husband, a dad, and a friend.

► SCOUTING

First we'll check out the trail by talking to God, asking for His direction and wisdom. Then we'll look at our map, the Bible, and discover our compass heading so we'll know where we're hunting.

► THE HUNT

This is the adventure that illustrates the truths we're looking for. God said, "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

► TRAIL MARKERS

Trail markers are questions centered around the insights and ideas in the hunt and how they relate to our lives in and out of the woods.

► TROPHY OF TRUTH

We'll explore the wisdom we find along the hunting trail and the wonderful truths that provide bridges between hunting and our walk with Christ.

► FIELD DRESSING

This closing section gives you the chance to note what stood out for you during the study. You'll also ask God to help you implement the truths you've learned.

Now, let's go hunting!

First Hunt

Scouting

Let's open our time together by talking to God. Read this prayer aloud:

Father, thank You for loving us so much that You invite us to be Your children through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Guide us during our time together, and speak to us through Your Word. Help us remember Your boundless love for us. We ask for Your strength and grace to help us return to the simplicity and purity of loving You. In Christ's precious name we pray. Amen.

► **Compass heading:** "Remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first" (Revelation 2:5).

The Hunt

Read chapter 1 in *A Look at Life from a Deer Stand*. "First Hunt" details my favorite outdoor memory. This set me on the path I hope to travel as long as I'm able to get around. I'm sure you'll be able to relate!

Trail Markers

1. Who took you on your first hunt or excursion into the woods, and what were you pursuing?
2. What memory stands out the most about that time?

Trophy of Truth

I've come to deeply appreciate the parallels between the physical and spiritual life of a hunter. Most often these comparisons are discovered while reading the Bible, and they are inspiring and challenging. For example, in his letter to the church at Corinth, the apostle Paul wrote, "I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3).

Most of us cherish the memory our first hunts. For some of us, it represents a time when life was a lot less complicated. The sounds, smells, tastes, and adventure of hunting were fresh and exciting. We didn't have a host of worries to distract us. But then job responsibilities, financial concerns, and preparing for the future caught our attention. We lost the thrill we knew on that first pursuit. Oh how easy it is to get caught up in the cares of this life. But it's not too late to recapture what we've been missing!

Trail Markers

1. When was the last time you enjoyed a special time with your spouse or someone important to you? What did you do?

2. Who will you call this week to get together with? What will you do to connect?

Trophy of Truth

For some of us, it's been a long time since we've communed with our heavenly Father like we did when we first gave our lives to Him. For others, it's been a while since we've sensed the inner thrill that came when we first accepted God's invitation to become one of His children through His Son Jesus Christ. Maybe the concerns of life have overshadowed the peace we felt when we initially became aware that our sins were forgiven. Could it be that we've misplaced the memory of how eagerly we embraced all He accomplished for us through the cross and resurrection?

Trail Markers

1. Under what circumstances did you respond to the gospel?
2. Who was most influential in leading you to Christ?
3. In what ways did becoming a Christian change your life?

Trophy of Truth

In the second chapter of the Revelation of John, the church at Ephesus was commended by the Lord. He recognized and complimented them on their hard work, perseverance, and unwillingness to tolerate evil men and false apostles. But then Jesus informed

them that He had one thing against them: They had left their “first love,” the kind of love for Him that denies self and thinks only of the other person.

Do you remember the last time you dated someone? Do you recall how attentive you were? No doubt there were phone calls, visits, cards, flowers, candy, washing her car, talking to her until all hours. Why? Because your chief concern was her. That’s the kind of “other centered” love God desires from us.

But what often happens when you marry? Because you’re human, you stray from maintaining that all-out devotion. Do you think your wife notices? Sure she does. And do you think God notices when your fervor fades? Surely He must. Thankfully, He provides a remedy through a threefold admonition: “Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first” (Revelation 2:5).

Trail Markers

1. “*Remember* from where you have fallen.” Write down one thing that was especially exciting when you first accepted Christ.
2. “*Repent.*” Write down one thing that caused your excitement for Christ to fade.
3. Why not pray right now about what has distracted you from the Lord?

God, I repent for allowing things to pull me away from fully following and loving You. Thank You for Your forgiveness. Help me keep You first in my life. In Christ's name I pray. Amen.

4. “Do the deeds you did at first.” Write down two things you’ll do this week to reveal your gratitude for God’s love.

Field Dressing

1. What insights, encouragements, or challenges did you glean from this chapter?
2. Let’s close our time by reading this prayer out loud:

Father in heaven, thank You for the gift of Your mercy that is new every morning. Give us the daily freshness of Your presence in our lives so that our “first love” fervor for knowing You will always fill our hearts. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.