

A Wearisome Task

Psalm 73

8-4-24

I. THE DILEMMA

Psalm 73:1-2 - "Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped."

Our ability to live in the goodness of God is hindered in at least three different ways:

1. **Our practice**
2. **Our pursuits**
3. **Our perspective**

II. THE ADMISSION

Psalm 73:3 - "For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked."

Envy – the painful feeling of wanting what someone else has.

III. THE FRUSTRATION

Psalm 73:4-15 - "For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek. ⁵ They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind. ⁶ Therefore pride is their necklace; violence covers them as a garment. ⁷ Their eyes swell out through fatness; their hearts overflow with follies. ⁸ They scoff and speak with malice; loftily they threaten oppression. ⁹ They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue struts through the earth. ¹⁰ Therefore his people turn back to them, and find no fault in them. ¹¹ And they say, 'How can God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?' ¹² Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches. ¹³ All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence. ¹⁴ For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning. ¹⁵ If I had said, 'I will speak thus,' I would have betrayed the generation of your children."

Four observations that caused frustration for Asaph that we need to be aware of for ourselves:

1. **Lack of struggle**
2. **Excess possessions**
3. **Antagonism toward God**
4. **Misplaced purpose**

IV. THE ADJUSTMENT

Psalm 73:16-17 - "But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end."

Two options available when processing what we see in the world around us:

1. **We can try to make sense of it on our own.**
2. **We can take our concerns to God.**

V. THE FOCUS

Psalm 73 23-26 – “Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. ²⁴ You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. ²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

Two questions we need to ask ourselves on a daily basis:

- 1. Am I continually walking with God?**
- 2. Is there something on earth that I desire more than an experiential relationship with God?**

Three promises to hold onto when we are losing focus:

- 1. God holds my right hand**
- 2. God guides me with his counsel**
- 3. God will receive me to glory**

VI. THE CONCLUSION

Psalm 73:27-28 – “For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.”

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did you think of the passage this week? What stood out to you and challenged your thinking?
2. In what ways does your instability manifest most often when trusting God in difficult times?
3. Do you personally struggle with envy? In what ways does the “prosperity” of the world affect you the most?
4. In your own experience, what has been helpful for you when you are struggling with feeling connected with God? How?
5. What are some things, good or bad, that keep you from desiring God more than anything else? Explain?
6. When is the last time you told someone about the good things God has, is and will do for you?