

37.2 THE FATE OF THE WICKED: Psalm 37:9-40

INTRODUCTION/CON(TEXT).

Psalm 37 is about what to do when the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper.

There are **positive** directions in Psalm 37:1-8. We can summarize the positives like this: *The righteous must trust in the Lord and do good.*

But there are also **negative** directions in Psalm 37:1-8. We can summarize the negatives like this: *Do not envy nor imitate nor fret about the wicked.*

Now as we move on to verses 9-40, there are four major headings under which we can file all the truths therein.

OUTLINE.

- I. The Actions of the Wicked (4).
- II. The Fate of the Wicked (7).
- III. Truths to Sustain the Righteous (16).
- IV. Directions for the Righteous (2).

We are only going to have time for the first two today—*the Actions of the Wicked and the Fate of the Wicked*. Lord willing, next Sunday we will examine the Truths to Sustain the Righteous and further Directions for the Righteous.

As we examine the actions and fate of the wicked, this is the doctrine which naturally arises from Psalm 37:

DOCTRINE. The wicked will be altogether destroyed, therefore the righteous must not *envy* nor *imitate* nor *fret about* them.

When the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper, REMEMBER

I. THE ACTIONS OF THE WICKED.

I) The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at them (Psalm 37:12).

Psalm 37:12

"The wicked plots against the righteous
and gnashes his teeth at him,"

Christians, you do not need to be paranoid, but you do need to be prepared.

II) The wicked plan to attack the innocent and especially those who cannot defend themselves (Psalm 37:14).

Psalm 37:14

"The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows
to bring down the poor and needy,
to slay those whose way is upright;"

*The wicked are **cowards** who draw their sword and bend their bows against those who cannot defend themselves.*

Men, this is why you and your sons need to be masters in doing what is required in the 6th commandment. As the someone younger than me would say, "You need to be 6th commandment maxing."

Q. 74. What is required in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment requires all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life and the life of others. (Eph. 5:29,30; Ps. 82:3,4; Prov. 24:11,12; Act 16:28)

I) You need to be skilled in hand to hand combat, so you can protect the poor and needy from the wicked who draw their sword against them.

II) You need to be skilled in with firearms, so you can protect the poor and needy from the wicked who bend their bows against them.

III) You need to be fit and strong so you do not faint in the day of adversity, so you can protect the poor and needy from the wicked who want to slay them.

The wicked are cowards who draw their sword and bend their bows against those who cannot defend themselves (Psalm 37:14). What are you going to be prepared to do about it, Christian men?

III) The wicked borrows money but will not pay it back (Psalm 37:21).

Psalm 37:21

"The wicked borrows but does not pay back,
but the righteous is generous and gives;"

- **Romans 13:7** "Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed."

IV) The wicked eye the righteous, seeking how to destroy them (Psalm 37:32).

Psalm 37:32

"The wicked watches for the righteous
and seeks to put him to death."

- Like Saul eyed David.
 - Like Jeroboam eyed the ten tribes that went to worship in Jerusalem.
 - Like the Jews eyed Jesus.

When the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper, REMEMBER

II. THE FATE OF THE WICKED.

I) Evildoers shall be cut off from the visible church and the land of the living (Psalm 37:9a).

Psalm 37:9a

"For the evildoers shall be cut off,"

- I) From the visible church.
- II) From the land of the living.

II) The wicked's time is running and it will soon run out (Psalm 37:10).

Psalm 37:10

"In just a little while, the wicked will be no more;
though you look carefully at his place, he will not be there."

- Like an hourglass the sand is slipping away. When the sand reaches the bottom the wicked will stand before Christ and give an account for their sins.

III) The wicked are laughed at and mocked by the Lord (Psalm 37:13).

Psalm 37:13

"but the LORD laughs at the wicked,
for he sees that his day is coming."

– **Psalm 2:1-6**

- "1 Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
- 2 The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying,
- 3 'Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us.'
- 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord holds them in derision.
- 5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
- 6 'As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill.'"

Three truths to note:

- I) Jesus wins,
- II) the wicked lose, and

III) the righteous win with Jesus.

The only way to be the righteous is to turn from your sin and both trust in Christ for salvation and submit to Him as your King.

Jesus wins, the wicked lose, and the righteous win with Christ. Act accordingly.

– **Psalm 2:12**

"Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him."

IV) The actions of the wicked against the righteous will end up bringing the wicked harm and not the righteous (Psalm 37:15).

Psalm 37:15

"their sword shall enter their own heart,
and their bows shall be broken."

V) The wicked will perish like a grass burned up by a wildfire (Psalm 37:20).

Psalm 37:20

"But the wicked will perish;
the enemies of the LORD are like the glory of the pastures;
they vanish—like smoke they vanish away."

Except it is not a wildfire; it is a prescribed burn. The Lord has set a day that all the wicked will be consigned to a prescribed burn, and like smoke they will vanish away.

Yet here is the good news for all sinners who will repent and believe the gospel!

John 3:16-17, 36 16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. . . . 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

VI) Though the wicked may be in great power now, but they will not be for long (Psalm 37:35-36).

Psalm 37:35-36

"35 I have seen a wicked, ruthless man,
spreading himself like a green laurel tree.
36 But he passed away, and behold, he was no more;
though I sought him, he could not be found."

VII) The wicked will be altogether destroyed and totally cut off from all that is good (Psalm 37:38).

Psalm 37:38

"But transgressors shall be altogether destroyed;
the future of the wicked shall be cut off."

– **Psalm 7:12**

"If a man does not repent, God will whet his sword; he has bent and readied his bow."

– **JONATHAN EDWARDS:**

"The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood."

— **Jonathan Edwards, Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God**

CONCLUSION: Three Exhortations.

I) SINNERS, turn from your sin and both trust in and submit to Christ Jesus alone.

- **Romans 1:16** "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes..."
- **Romans 5:6-8** "For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ... But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
- **1 John 4:9-10** "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."
- **1 Peter 2:24** "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed."
- **Hebrews 9:28** "So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."
- **Become a Christian today. God has promised forgiveness to your repentance, but He has not promised tomorrow to your negligence.**

II) CHRISTIANS, do not imitate the wicked; do not fret about them; do not envy them.

III) CHRISTIANS, praise God that He took you, who were once His wicked enemy, and transformed you by His grace to be His righteous child.

- **Romans 5:6-8** “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ... But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

USES

- ☐ *USE FOR INSTRUCTION / DOCTRINE*
- ☐ *USE FOR COMFORT / CONSOLATION*
- ☐ *USE FOR WARNING / AWAKENING*
- ☐ *USE FOR EXAMINATION / TRIAL*
- ☐ *USE FOR REPROOF / REBUKE*
- ☐ *USE FOR CLARIFICATION / ILLUMINATION*
- ☐ *USE FOR ENCOURAGEMENT / INSPIRATION*
- ☐ *USE FOR EXHORTATION / DIRECTION*

HELPS FOR PSALM 37

- **37:4, Psalm** - John Howe - On Delighting in God—Part I: The Meaning of the Precept. - The Works of John Howe, Soli Deo Gloria (3 vols.) - vol. 1. pg. 474
 - **37:4, Psalm** - John Howe - On Delighting in God—Part II: The Practice or Exercise of Delight in God - The Works of John Howe, Soli Deo Gloria (3

vols.) - vol. 1. pg. 565

— **Baggett, Brett. A Scripture Index of Puritan Sermons: Along with some Scottish Covenanters, American Puritans, and a few of their Spiritual Descendants (1558-1770) (p. 90). Kindle Edition.**

- **37:4, Psalm** - Charnock, Stephen, "A Discourse of Delight in Prayer," *Works* v.370-379. - <https://www.thespiritlife.net/facets/exchanged/57-exchanged/exchanged-publications/5046-a-discourse-of-delight-in-prayer-by-stephen-charnock>
 - **37:4, Psalm** - Spurgeon, C.H., "Sunshine in the Heart," #454, *MTP* 8.325-336. - <https://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/sunshine-in-the-heart>
 - **37:7, Psalm** - Spurgeon, C.H., "Rest in the Lord," #1333, *MTP* 23.25-36. - <https://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/rest-in-the-lord>
 - **37:37, Psalm** - Watson, Thomas, "The Upright Man's Character," *The Sermons of Thomas Watson*, pp. 325-348.
 - **37:39, Psalm** - Spurgeon, C.H., "A Testimony to Free and Sovereign Grace," #1953, *MTP* 33.157-168.
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OVERVIEWS OF PSALM 37

— **MATTHEW HENRY:**

"This psalm is a sermon, and an excellent useful sermon it is, calculated not (as most of the psalms) for our devotion, but for our conversation; there is nothing in it of prayer or praise, but it is all instruction; it is "*Maschil – a teaching psalm*;" it is an exposition of some of the hardest chapters in the book of Providence, the advancement of the wicked and the disgrace of the righteous, a solution of the difficulties that arise thereupon, and an exhortation to conduct ourselves as becomes us under such dark dispensations."

— **Henry, Matthew. Unabridged Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible (best navigation) . OSNOVA. Kindle Edition.**

— **CALVIN:**

"Although the people of God are afflicted for a time, yet the issue of their afflictions shall be such, that they have every reason to be contented with their lot. Now all this depends upon the providence of God; for unless we are persuaded that the world is governed by him in righteousness and truth, our minds will soon stagger, and at length entirely fail us."

— **Calvin, John. Calvin On The Bible: John Calvin's Bible Commentary (p. 2991). Kindle Edition.**

— **POOLE:**

"The design of this Psalm is to defend the providence of God, and to satisfy the minds of men in that great question, concerning the seeming inequality of God's dispensations, in afflicting good men, and giving prosperity to the worst of men; and to instruct God's people how to demean themselves in their present condition, and what supports and comforts they have in it. The psalmist persuades to patience and confidence in God, Psalms 37:1-8; and showeth the different state of the godly and wicked in all their dealings, Psalms 37:9-40."

— **Poole, Matthew. English Annotations on the Holy Bible . E4 Group. Kindle Edition.**

– **TRAPP:**

"He wrote this thirty-seventh psalm for the good of God's people; lest they, being scandalized in like manner, and stumbling at the same stone that he had done, should want direction, and so fall into inconvenience, temptation, and a snare." — **Trapp, John. John Trapp's Complete Bible Commentary (p. 6491). Kindle Edition.**

– **GILL:**

"This psalm. . .describes the different states of good and bad men; and is full of exhortations, instructions, and advice to the people of God; intermixed with various encouraging promises." — **Gill, John. Gill's Bible Commentary . OSNOVA. Kindle Edition.**

– **SPURGEON:**

"SUBJECT. The great riddle of the prosperity of the wicked and the affliction of the righteous, which has perplexed so many, is here dealt with in the light of the future; and fretfulness and repining are most impressively forbidden. It is a Psalm in which the Lord hushes most sweetly the too common repinings of his people, and calms their minds as to his present dealings with his own chosen flock, and the wolves by whom they are surrounded. It contains eight great precepts, is twice illustrated by autobiographical statements, and abounds in remarkable contrasts. . . . The Psalm can scarcely be divided into considerable sections. It resembles a chapter of the book of Proverbs, most of the verses being complete in themselves."

— **Spurgeon, Charles. The Treasury of David: The Complete Seven Volumes (p. 1163). Kindle Edition.**

WILLIAM S. PLUMER'S DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL REMARKS

16. The portion of God's people is an inheritance, verses 9, 11, 22, 27, 29, 34. Their great interests shall never be disturbed, verse 18. Because they are sons, they are heirs. Because they are heirs of God, their inheritance shall be everlasting.

17. The plots and rage of the wicked are sure signs that their cause is bad, and must come to nought under the government of a just God, verses 12, 14, 32. God has set his face against all wicked devices.

18. Consequently, everything which the wicked do, does and must turn against them, verse 15. The nature of all sin is to recoil on its author.

19. The overthrow of the wicked must be inconceivably dreadful, else inspiration would not use such alarming language respecting it, verse 13. Can a more fearful representation be made than that the infinitely loving Jehovah shall laugh at the miseries of his guilty foes? O sinner! Stop and think! Stop and think!

20. That which conclusively determines the character and destiny of the righteous is their pious walk, their holy living, their upright conversation, verse 14. Nothing can set aside the evidence of a holy life. It is better than a revelation from heaven.

21. Dickson: "When the wicked are most near to do a mischief, then is a mischief most near unto them; their sword shall enter into their own heart," verse 15.

22. Let the humble pious be content, verse 16. If they have not much, they have more than they deserve; they have as much as infinite love sees best for them; they have no account to give of what never was under their control; and they have God's blessing on what is theirs.

23. However for a time the wicked may seem to wax strong, yet their helplessness, when God forsakes them or fights against them, is utter. More pitiable objects have never been. Their arms are broken, verse 17.

24. The successes and conquests of God's people depend upon the nature and will of God; and so they cannot fail, verses 17, 24. There is an adequate cause for all the good that happens to the righteous.

25. God's approval and blessing will make any life happy and any course desirable, verse 18. Wonderfully does he order, choose, arrange and moderate our trials; and deliver us from them. Most seasonably and tenderly does he reveal our mercies to us.

26. Rightly considered the peace and happiness of God's people in times of trial, when all others are overpowered, show the unspeakable excellence of their principles, and give us good ground of confidence in their final and eternal triumph, verse 19.

27. It is as certain as God's Word can make it that, sore as are the afflictions of the saints, yet the great harvest of misery is among sinners, verse 20.

28. The pious and benevolent affections of the righteous have room for exercise even here, verse 21. Hereafter they shall have enlargement: for all that is truly good in man's estate will grow better.

29. Dickson: "The blessing of God on the godly maketh the odds between them and the wicked, for it is to them as good as the inheritance of the whole earth; but God's curse rooteth the wicked man out of the earth," verse 22.

30. The kind providence of God over the righteous is to them ample protection against all that could do them real harm, verse 23. The arrangements which God makes, will all come out right in the end.

31. The reverses of the saints are temporary, verse 24.

32. Let old people make it their business to tell what they have seen of God's wonders in providence and in grace, verse 25. They cannot be better employed than in thus commending the loving-kindness of the Lord to the rising generation.

33. Good men are never hard-hearted and cruel, verse 26. Whatever they may have been before conversion, the grace of God makes the lion the fit companion of the lamb, and the bear of the calf. Saul of Tarsus, renewed, was as tender as a nurse.

34. One of the best inheritances parents can lay up for their children is in deeds of alms and of liberality, verse 26. Horne: "So far is charity from impoverishing, that what is given away, like vapours emitted by the earth, returns in showers of blessings into the bosom of the person who gave it; and his offspring is not the worse, but infinitely the better for it."

35. A broad and enduring foundation of quietness and assurance is laid, for all right-minded persons, in the spotless and infinitely excellent character of God, verse 28. All hopes based on anything contrary to this must fail us at last.

36. Dickson: "The Lord may well exercise his children with trouble, yet he will not withdraw himself from them in trouble, but will stay with them and bear them company, and save them to the uttermost," verse 28.

37. If men have not the due fear of God, yet they might reasonably be restrained from many courses of wickedness by remembering the sad effects of transgression upon their posterity, verse 28.

38. No staid behaviour, no secret emotions, no sanctimoniousness of character can prove any man to be a child of God, if his speech is loose, foolish, vain, slanderous or wicked, verse 30. See Matthew 12:37.

39. True religion has its seat in the heart. Genuine purity is internal, verse 31.

40. True religion is steadfast, verse 31. The fickle and unstable have no part in the inheritance of the saints.

41. Whenever men find themselves resorting to sly and cunning behaviour, they may rest assured that they are already in the territory of the wicked one, verse 32.

42. It is certain that the final judgment is approaching, verse 33. It is as certain that all the redeemed will be well pleased with the awards of the last day.

43. The path of duty, however steep and thorny, always terminates in the land of peace and blessedness, verse 34.

44. Death and what is beyond it, will show who is wise and who is a fool, verses 37, 38.

45. It is for a rejoicing to the righteous that their salvation and all that leads to it, and all the steps and parts of it are of the Lord, verse 39. The debt, the infinite debt of love they owe is to him, whom they shall ever love to adore.

46. Dickson: "So long as God is pleased to let righteous men's trouble continue, he will now and then comfort them, and enable them to bear their trouble when comfort is suspended."

47. Scott: "It is of vast importance to understand the present and future condition of the righteous and the wicked, that we may know what to choose and to expect."

48. Luther: "O shame on our faithlessness, mistrust, and vile unbelief, that we do not believe such rich, powerful, consolatory declarations of God, and take up so readily with little grounds of offence, whenever we but hear the wicked speeches of the ungodly. Help, O God, that we may once attain to the right faith. Amen."

— **Plumer, William Swan. Studies in the Book of Psalms (pp. 813-816).**

STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Opening / Context

1. According to the sermon, what is the central problem Psalm 37 addresses? How have you personally experienced or observed the tension of the righteous suffering while the wicked prosper?
2. The preacher summarizes the first eight verses with two positive commands and three negative ones. What are they? How does the rest of the psalm (verses 9–40) support those commands?

The Actions of the Wicked

1. List the four actions of the wicked highlighted in the sermon (from verses 12, 14, 21, and 32). Which of these do you see most clearly in the world around you today?
2. Verse 12 says the wicked “plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them.” How does the preacher apply 1 Peter 4 to this verse? What is the difference between being paranoid and being prepared?
3. In verse 14 the wicked target the poor, needy, and those whose way is upright. Why does the preacher call the wicked “cowards”? What practical applications does he draw for Christian men regarding the sixth commandment?
4. Discuss the phrase “sixth-commandment maxing.” What does it mean to be skilled in defending the vulnerable (hand-to-hand, firearms, physical fitness, etc.)? How can a church cultivate a culture in which the wicked would think twice before attacking the defenseless among us?
5. Verse 21 contrasts the wicked who borrow and do not repay with the righteous who are generous and give. How does Romans 13:7 reinforce this truth? In what subtle ways might Christians be tempted to imitate the wicked in financial matters?
6. Verse 32 says the wicked “watch for the righteous and seek to put him to death.” The preacher points to examples such as the reaction to Charlie Kirk’s death and confrontations over abortion. How should believers respond when hatred of the righteous becomes open and vocal?

The Fate of the Wicked

1. The sermon identifies seven truths about the destiny of the wicked. Summarize each one in your own words (verses 9, 10, 13, 15, 20, 35–36, 38).

2. "In just a little while the wicked will be no more" (v. 10). How is this both a comfort to the righteous and a warning/call to the unconverted?
3. The Lord "laughs at the wicked" (v. 13; cf. Psalm 2). What does this reveal about God's sovereignty? How should this truth free Christians from fretting?
4. "Their sword shall enter their own heart, and their bows shall be broken" (v. 15). How does God turn the schemes of the wicked against themselves, both in this life and ultimately?
5. The wicked "perish" and "vanish like smoke" (v. 20). How does the preacher connect this language to John 3:16 and 3:36? What is the difference between the first death and the second death?
6. David describes a prosperous wicked man as a flourishing green tree that suddenly disappears (vv. 35–36). Why is outward success in this life a poor indicator of a person's true standing before God?
7. "Transgressors shall be altogether destroyed; the future of the wicked shall be cut off" (v. 38). How does this final statement reinforce the sermon's main doctrine: "The wicked will be altogether destroyed. Therefore the righteous must not envy nor imitate nor fret about them"?

Gospel Application & Personal Response

1. The preacher repeatedly invites unbelievers to "become a Christian right now." What specific steps does he outline (repentance, faith, baptism, joining a local church)? If you are not yet in Christ, what is holding you back from responding today?
2. For believers: The actions and fate of the wicked "was every one of you... your fate at one time." How should this reality produce deep gratitude and humility rather than pride?
3. In what specific situations are you most tempted to envy, imitate, or fret about the wicked? How do the truths of Psalm 37 serve as an antidote?
4. The sermon ends with a call to praise God for delivering us from the fate we deserved. Take time to thank God aloud for the propitiation of Christ (1 John 4:9–10; 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 9:28).

For Further Study / Group Challenge

1. Read the entire Psalm 37 this week, marking every reference to the actions or destiny of the wicked and every promise given to the righteous. Come prepared next time to share one verse that particularly encouraged or convicted you.
2. As a group or family, identify one practical way you can better protect the vulnerable in your church or community this month (in light of the sixth-commandment application).

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Psalm 37 is about what to do when the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper. As you look out in the world, as you have done many times, I am sure, and I have done as well, and you see those who do not love Jesus, do not want to submit to Jesus, but things are going really well for them. They are prospering. And then you look at the righteous, those who are in Christ, and you see them suffering. What do we do about that? That is what this psalm is about. It is not a psalm explicitly of praise or adoration. It is a psalm of instruction. There are directions in this psalm of what you should explicitly do, what you should not do. And then there are many things, especially as we come to verses 9 through 40 and many things that God through David is just saying, think about these things. Remember these truths. When the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper, consider these things.

So, there are positive directions in the first eight verses of this psalm that we looked at last day. There are positive directions. You should do these things. And we can summarize the positives like this. *When the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper, the righteous must trust in the Lord and do good.* That is how you can summarize the positives. Trust in the Lord and his providence and do good. Do the good works that God has prepared beforehand that you should walk in. That is what you should be devoted to. But there are also negative directions in verses 1-8 of Psalm 37. Do not do this. And we can summarize the negatives like this: *Do not envy the wicked. Do not imitate the wicked and do not fret about the wicked.* Do not freak out and worry about the wicked. So do not envy them. Do not imitate them and do not fret about their prosperity.

But now as we move on to verses 9 through 40, there are four major headings under which we can file all of these truths. There are only two directions, two like commands, do this or do not do this in the rest of the psalm. Most of the directions of what you should actually do or not do are in verses 1-8. And then verses 9-40, it does have two little directions towards the end, but most of the truths contained in verses 9-40 are saying they are calling you to remember or consider these things. So, we can categorize the rest of these verses in the psalm. And remember, the whole thing is what do we do? How do we respond when the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper? We can summarize those these by four major headings. David in this psalm details the actions of the wicked and he is saying consider the actions of the wicked. Then we can categorize another group of them by the fate or the destiny of the wicked. David saying consider what is going to happen to the wicked. Then actually the largest part that we can categorize is these truths that are meant to sustain the righteous even in the midst of their suffering while the wicked prosper. And then there are two more directions for the righteous. So, as we get to the large chunk of this psalm after the positive and negative directions at the beginning in verses 1-8, verses 9-40, we have got

the actions of the wicked, the fate of the wicked, truths to sustain the righteous, and then two short directions for the righteous. Now, we are only going to have time for the first two today. The actions of the wicked and the fate of the wicked. And Lord willing, next Sunday we will examine the truths to sustain the righteous and the further directions for the righteous. And the reason we are not going to have time to get to all of them today is well, as you can just see in your Bible, it is there are a lot of verses to cover. We are not going to have time to do all of that. There are four actions of the wicked that David details here. Then there are seven truths concerning the fate or the outcome, the destiny of the wicked. And then next Lord's Day, we will look at these 16 truths that David communicates here that are meant to sustain us even as we suffer and the wicked prosper in this life. And then two directions. So we will just cover the actions of the wicked, four of them. And the fate of the wicked, seven truths there today. And then next week, the 16 truths to sustain the righteous and two directions for the righteous.

As we examine today the actions and fate of the wicked, this is the doctrine which naturally arises from Psalm 37: ***The wicked will be altogether destroyed, therefore the righteous must not envy nor imitate nor fret about them.*** Remember, that is the whole point of the psalm. He gives us these directions at the beginning. Do not envy them. Do not imitate them. And do not freak out about them. And so all of the rest of these truths that are communicated in the psalm are like reasons. Like do not envy them because this is what they do. You want to envy someone like that. Do not envy them because this is their fate. You really want to be jealous of these things that are going to happen to these people. You definitely do not want to imitate them because look at what they do. That is what the wicked do. You do not want to imitate them because their actions lead to this fate and destiny. You definitely do not need to freak out about them because their own swords will enter their chests. So the wicked will be altogether destroyed. Therefore, the righteous must not envy nor imitate nor fret about them. Now let us cover these two main headings under which we can consider all these truths.

First consider with me **the actions of the wicked**. David details at least four of these and we need to remember the whole context of the psalm that the whole point is when the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper remember the actions of the wicked and that will be a great antidote that you will not want to imitate them. You are not going to envy them and you are not going to freak out about them. So, the actions of the wicked. Remember these.

First, look with me at verse 12. I know we are really examining verses 9 through 40 and just gleaning little things from it all, but we are going to hop around just a little bit because I want to highlight for you these different categories that David deals with. So, the actions of the wicked. The first one to note is in verse 12 of Psalm 37. He says, "The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at them." ***The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at them.*** You

need to know these truths, especially the truth in verse 12, not so that you would be paranoid. The wicked hate you. You need to know that the wicked plot against you Christians. They want you to fall. They want you to suffer. They want you to disobey Christ. They want you to abandon Christ. They want you to bring shame upon Christ and your family and yourself and your church. They plot against you. They gnash their teeth at you. And there are two responses that you could take to that. You could be paranoid or you could take it as you should take it and simply be prepared. Verse 12 is to prepare you to know that people who are outside of Christ and reject Christ and do not love Christ, they are not just indifferent toward you. They plot against you. They gnash their teeth at you. Peter says in 1 Peter 4 that simply when Christians refrain from indulging in a flood of debauchery, meaning drunkenness, lust of the flesh, just living with your God as your belly, whatever your sinful appetites are, you are indulging them. When you simply refrain from that, they malign you for it. They attack you for it. You do not even have to say what you are doing is wrong. It is sinful. You need to repent. You need to submit to Christ. You do not even have to say that. It is when you do not go along with their flood of debauchery. They will malign you for it. And they will especially malign you when you not only refrain from that, but you speak up and say, "Hey, this is sin against God who created you. And you need to turn from this and trust in Jesus to forgive you and submit to Christ because he is the king." They will definitely malign you when you speak up, but they will malign you even if you live a really quiet life and you do not ever say anything to anyone else. If you just do not go along with the flow of the world that loves and celebrates sin, they will malign you for it. They plot against the righteous and they gnash their teeth at them is what he says in verse 12. So there is the first action of the wicked that he details. Do not imitate them. You want to be envious of people like that who gnash their teeth at others simply because they are laboring by God's grace to do what is right and what would glorify God and what would love their neighbor. You want to envy or imitate or freak out about those who are plotting against the righteous. You do not need to be paranoid about it, but you do need to be prepared.

Look next in verse 14 at the second action that he draws our attention to. The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows to bring down the poor and needy to slay those whose way is upright. The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows to bring down the poor and needy to slay those whose way is upright. What is the truth communicated by these words? It is simply this: ***The wicked plan to attack the innocent and especially those who cannot defend themselves.*** The wicked plan to attack the innocent and especially those who cannot defend themselves. They draw the sword. We understand that. They bend their bow. We understand that easy enough. But why does he say to bring down the poor and needy, the helpless, the defenseless, those who cannot defend themselves? That is especially what the wicked love to do. The wicked do not love to come to the strong and those who are able to defend themselves and try to attack them. They are cowards. The wicked are cowards and they look for easy targets. They want to

bring down the poor and needy to slay those whose way is upright. So hear me, especially you men. The wicked are cowards who draw their sword and bend their bows against those who cannot defend themselves.

Men, this is why you and your sons need to be masters in doing what is required in the sixth commandment. What is required in the sixth commandment? The sixth commandment requires all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life and the life of others. This is what the wicked want to do. They are cowards. And so they are going to go after those who cannot defend themselves. So what are you going to do about it, oh Christian man? Are you going to be able to defend the innocent? Are you going to be able to defend the weak and the vulnerable? If you are not going to do it, who is going to do it? You need to be skilled. Skilled in defending not only yourself. That is what is required in the sixth commandment. All lawful endeavors to preserve your own life and the life of others. Therefore, you need to be skilled, practically speaking, in hand-to-hand combat so you can protect the poor and the needy from the wicked who draw their sword against them. You need to be skilled with firearms so you can protect the poor and the needy from the wicked who bend their bows against them. In this day, what does hand-to-hand combat in David's day? What does hand-to-hand combat look like? Sword. What is longer distance combat look like in David's day? A bow and arrow.

Practical application for us is you need to be skilled in protecting those and realize the wicked love to prey on the innocent. And who is supposed to defend the innocent? It is us, especially us men. So you men, you need to be, as someone younger than me would say, you need to be sixth commandment maxing. You need to learn how to obey the sixth commandment and what is required in that. You men should be extremely dangerous. You should be dangerous and terrifying to evildoers. So that the wicked to anyone that is around us, the wicked would look at us and say, "I am not going to that church. I am not going to try to attack Ekklesia Muscogee. They have got a lot of strong, capable men who will defend the innocent. And they have got a lot of defenseless people there, but there are just as many men ready to take me out if I try to do that." That is what that is the kind of man that you need to be. Husbands, your wives, in the grand scheme of things, are defenseless. I do not care how much your wife has trained in hand-to-hand combat or any of that. If a grown man wants to overpower her, it is going to happen. But your wife, when she is with you or around you, should feel as safe as she can possibly be because her husband takes it serious his duty to protect her and to protect your children. Your children are defenseless. They are defenseless against the grown man against the wicked who love as cowards do to bring down the poor and the needy. But your children need to feel as safe as possible when they are around you because you have taken your duty seriously.

God has made you to be strong, to be a protector, to be a provider, and that you are not going to allow any harm so far as it depends on you to come to those in your charge. You need to be fit and strong so that you do not faint in the day of adversity. So you can protect the poor and needy from the wicked who want to slay them. The wicked are cowards who draw their sword and bend their bows

against those who cannot defend themselves. And so I just simply ask you, especially you men, what are you going to do about it to be prepared? You do not need to be paranoid, but you need to be prepared. These are the actions of the wicked. Do not imitate them, but be prepared against them. The wicked plan to attack the innocent and especially those who cannot defend themselves. Do not imitate them. Do not envy them. And because that you trust the Lord and you are prepared to act, you are not going to freak out about them either.

Look thirdly at verse 21. Skip down seven verses and notice the third thing that he highlights concerning the actions of the wicked. You may have noticed as we go through this whole psalm and what many commentators have noted throughout the centuries that this psalm reads almost more like a chapter in the book of Proverbs. That there are, as I have shown you, there are categories you can separate a lot of these verses into, but it is kind of like the Proverbs to where each verse can sort of stand on its own. And it is different than most psalms. Most psalms have this big flow that they are all weaved together. This one is more like, what do we do when the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper? Well, here is a bunch of almost proverbs things to consider. So that is why it kind of jumps around and it goes back and forth between truths that will help you, the fate of the wicked, the actions of the wicked. And that is why we are jumping around to help us better glean through seeing them through these different categories. He says in verse 21, "The wicked borrows but does not pay back, but the righteous is generous and gives." There is the contrast there. The righteous is generous and gives, but the wicked borrows, but does not pay it back. It is talking about taking out a loan simply and you do not pay it back. Look at me. Look at what God says in verse 21 of Psalm 37. You borrow money from someone and you do not pay it back. That is what the wicked do. That is what the wicked do. That is not what the righteous do. The righteous is generous and gives. And what is implied of course in the first half of the verse is if the righteous takes out a loan, they pay it back. We owe what we owe to people and we pay all what is owed to them. Romans 13:7. Pay to all what is owed to them. Even if you were a fool and entered in on a debt with an interest rate you should not have or whatever it may be, you enter into that, you pay it back. That is what the righteous do. But the wicked are the opposite. The wicked borrows from someone and tries to figure out how not to pay it back. And God is dishonored by that. And his law is violated. Pay to all what is owed to them. To taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. Romans 13:7. ***The wicked borrows money but will not pay it back.***

Then look fourthly, go down to verse 32 and another verse highlighting the actions of the wicked. He says, "The wicked watches for the righteous and seeks to put him to death." The wicked watches for the righteous and seeks to put him to death. So ***the wicked eye the righteous seeking how to destroy them.*** Again, not to be paranoid, but to be prepared. The wicked hate the righteous and want

them to fall and would celebrate it if you died. As was evidenced even last year. I guess it was last year when Charlie Kirk is shot in the neck in front of thousands of people and there were thousands and thousands of wicked people celebrating that he was killed. The wicked want you dead. They may not admit it. Not all of them. Some of them would, but they feel it in their heart. All you have to do is like confront evils in our culture and those thoughts that the wicked eye the righteous and want to put them to death, want them to die, want them to be destroyed. All you have to do is like confront evils in the culture. And as soon as you do that, that truth that is in the heart of the wicked will just really easily come out.

If you do not believe that, go to the Abolitionists Rising YouTube page and just watch a few of their short videos on their YouTube, like 60-second videos. It will not take you long to find some time where our friend Russell is standing on a street corner. He has got a image that is trying to confront the evil of abortion. He is trying to talk to people about abortion. It will not take you many videos to find someone who says, "I wish you were aborted." Just because he is standing out there saying like, "Hey, we should not murder babies." And it should be illegal to murder babies. And people come up and say, "I wish you were aborted. I wish you were dead." It is like that is in the heart of many people. And sometimes all it takes is to confront some kind of evil that they love and that truth will even come out of their mouths. But just because it does not come out of their mouths does not mean it is not in their hearts.

The wicked watches for the righteous, eyeing them, paying attention to them, and seeking to put them to death. Just like Saul eyed David when David was in Saul's service, threw a spear at him twice. Like Jeroboam eyed the 10 tribes that went to worship in Jerusalem. And especially like the Jews eyed Jesus and continually sought to put him to death. There are the actions of the wicked. You have any reason to envy them? Any reason to imitate them? Any reason to freak out about them? No. So when the righteous are suffering and the wicked are prospering, remember those things. Remember the actions of the wicked. That is what David is doing in Psalm 37.

But then he turns to **the fate of the wicked**. He actually highlights it first, but it is sprinkled out there. We looked at the actions first. Now, let us consider the fate, the destiny, the outcome, the end of the wicked. And this is admittedly very brutal. It is extremely brutal. There is no happy end for the wicked who refuse to submit to Christ alone as king. People in our day or for the last hundred or so years have called these kind of things like it is a hellfire and brimstone type sermon. And it is sad because it is just no, this is just what God says. They try to present it in a negative light and certain pastors or preachers are highlighted. It is like they preach like a hellfire and brimstones. Like, sounds like they probably just preach what God says and give warnings and tell people to turn from sin to flee to Christ because look what God says he is going to do to you if you reject Christ and will not submit to him as your savior and king. But God in his providence knows when the wicked are prospering and we are suffering, we need to remember these

truths. We need to remember these truths. And a byproduct of remembering these truths as Christians is that unbelievers would also hear these truths and say, "How can I escape? How can I escape God's wrath and curse due to me for sin? How can I be saved?" So, that is my hope in that. That we would remember the fate of the wicked so we would not envy them, would not freak out about them, definitely would not imitate them, and so that those who are still outside of Christ would say, "I must have Jesus as my savior." Because this sounds terrible. And this is what God says he is going to do to me if I remain on my own in my sins without Jesus as my savior.

First of all, look at verse nine. First half of verse nine he says for the evildoers shall be cut off. Evildoers shall be cut off. This language of cut off has to do first and foremost with cut off from the visible church. Cut off from the fellowship and community of God's people, which is a little piece of heaven on earth. Those other people who have been saved by God's grace and empowered by the spirit. Those people who love one another and care for one another like the world can never do. They will be cut off from that. They will not have the fellowship, the kindness, the care of the righteous. They will eventually be cut off even from the visible church. Sometimes in this life through church discipline, sometimes it will just wait until the next life. But it also implies not just being cut off from the covenant community, God's people who love and care for one another and help one another, but also it implies being cut off from the land of the living, cut off from life. ***Evildoers shall be cut off from the visible church and the land of the living.***

Second, look at verse 10. Here is the fate of the wicked. Remember these things when the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper. ***The wicked's time is running and will soon run out.*** That is what he is getting at. The wicked's time is running and will soon run out. Verse 10. In just a little while, the wicked will be no more. In just a little while, the wicked will be no more. Though you look carefully at his place, he will not be there. Means you go to his house, his prosperous house, his big house, how well he has provided for, and you go try to find him, he will not be there. And everything that he had and all of the ways he prospered in this life, if he has not Christ as his savior and king, he will be no more. And you will not find him there amidst all his former prosperity. In just a little while, look at that again. In just a little while, the wicked will be no more. This is both a comfort to the righteous because the wicked hate them, want to slay them, plot against them. Hey, just a little while and the wicked will be no more. This is also a warning and a call for awakening to the wicked. You have got just a little while.

Look at me. Every unbeliever has an hourglass that is running. And when that sand spills out, it is over. And they will stand before the Lord Jesus Christ and give an account for their sins. Every one of you will die. And every one of you on your own without the aid of any pastor, any mother, any father, any friend, any brother, any sister, you will stand by yourself in front of the Lord Jesus Christ who created you, who upheld you every single day of your life, who wrote his law on your heart

so that you knew what was right and wrong. This Christ who created you, sustained you, gave you his law, offered himself to you as a savior, you will stand before him and give an account for what you did. You will either have him and his righteousness because in this life you turned from your sin and trusted in him alone for salvation. Or you will have your sin and your unrighteousness on yourself and he will judge you. In just a little while, everyone you have ever met will stand before the judgment seat of the Lord Jesus Christ, including you. And I just simply ask you to consider how is that going to go for you?

How is that going to go for your family? How is that going to go for your friends, for your neighbors, for other people in your city, in your state, in this nation, in this world? Have you done what you can do to make sure that you have reached those people with the good news of what Christ has done to deliver sinners like us from God's wrath and curse? Have you heard this message of the gospel, but you think, "It is not a little while, but I have got a long while. I have got time to deal with the Lord Jesus Christ. I have got time to make up my mind." Psalm 37:10 in just a little while. And none of you, none of us know the day or the hour. But are you ready to stand before Christ and give an account? Are you going to be able to stand there and say, "In and of myself, I have got nothing to offer you, but I trusted in you and what you have done to save me from my sin. I have got your righteousness, Christ. I have got your forgiveness because you died in my place, and I trusted in you alone for salvation as you were offered to me in the gospel." In just a little time, the wicked will be no more. Though you look carefully at his place, he will not be there. This is a great comfort to the righteous and a great warning and a call for awakening to the wicked. Do not delay. You are not promised tomorrow. Become a Christian right now. Forsake your sin and trust in Christ alone for salvation right now. Come and talk to someone as soon as our benediction happens. Say, "I need Christ. I need to be saved." Deal with Christ today. Tomorrow is the devil's day. Today is the day of salvation. Do not delay. In just a little while, the wicked will be no more.

Look thirdly, at the third truth concerning the fate of the wicked in verse 13. Verse 13. But the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that his day is coming. The Lord laughs at the wicked. This is the Lord. You need to know if you are an unbeliever and you are continually rejecting Christ. "I do not want Jesus." "I do not want to be a Christian." "I do not want to submit to Christ." If that is you, then the Lord looks at you and mocks you, laughs at you because you somehow think you can contend with God. He mocks you. "He sees that his day is coming." That means he sees that there will be a time very soon in just a little while that you will die and you will stand before him in judgment. Though the wicked go on in their wicked schemes, the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that his day is coming. ***The wicked are laughed at and mocked by the Lord.*** So Christians, you do not need to freak out about the wicked. The Lord laughs at them. He mocks them. They can harm you in this life, but not ultimately. All of the harm that they can do to you in this life is simply going to be used by God to sanctify you, to better prepare you for glory.

And so the Lord laughs at them.

Psalms 2 1-6 says, "Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, 'Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.'" Verse four, he who sits in the heavens, what? Laughs. He holds them in derision. That means he mocks them. He holds them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury, saying, "As for me, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill." It is meaning when the wicked conspire together against the Lord and against his Christ, against his people, saying, "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us. We do not want to submit to God. We do not want to do what God tells us to do." God laughs at them and says, "Jesus is king. I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill." That is the Lord Jesus Christ. The wicked are laughed at and mocked by the Lord. So, Christians, you do not need to freak out about them. The Lord laughs at their schemes against the righteous and against his glory.

Here are three truths that everyone needs to make note of. *Three very simple truths: Jesus wins, the wicked lose, and we who belong to Christ get to win with him.* It is not that the wicked lose and the righteous win. No, it is Jesus wins and no one can contend with him. We do not live in a dualistic universe where it is like Jesus and Satan and who is going to win. No, it is Jesus overall. And as Luther said, the devil is Christ's devil. Like he is no competition. The wicked are no competition for the Lord. That is why he laughs at them. He mocks them in their wickedness. Jesus wins, the wicked lose, and the righteous win with Jesus. And by the righteous, I mean those who turn from their sin and submit to Christ alone, who trust in Christ alone, not because they are more righteous than others in and of themselves, but because of God's grace, we have been counted righteous with the righteousness of Christ, forgiven of our sins through the death of Christ and empowered to actually walk out a real righteousness by the Holy Spirit through the power of Christ's resurrection. Jesus wins, the wicked lose, the righteous win with Jesus. Accordingly, you cannot change those truths. Those truths are as firm as can be. Jesus wins. You want to win, you have got to be with Jesus. The wicked lose. You want to lose, stay on your own in your sins, and you will lose. Act accordingly. Psalm 2:12 says, "Kiss the Son." It is talking about embracing Jesus. Kiss the Son lest he be angry and you perish in the way for his wrath is quickly kindled. But blessed are all who take refuge in him. Take refuge in the Son. Kiss the Son in repentance. Kiss the Son in faith. Kiss the Son in obedience. It is this imagery for bending down before a king, kissing his hand in repentance, grabbing his feet in faith, and kissing his feet in obedience. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. The wicked are laughed at and mocked by the Lord. That is their fate.

Look fourthly, go down to verse 15. The fourth truth concerning the fate of the wicked. He says, "Their sword rather shall enter their own heart and their bows

shall be broken." So the sword that they draw to attack the righteous, to attack the defenseless, the weak, the vulnerable, ultimately that sword and what they try to do with it will be like entering their own heart. And the bow that they bend at the righteous, the Lord is going to snap it. It will be broken. The sword shall enter their own heart. This means ***the actions of the wicked against the righteous will end up bringing the wicked harm and not the righteous***. The actions of the wicked against the righteous will end up bringing the wicked harm. Their sword shall enter their own heart and it will not end up ultimately hurting the righteous because even the harm they do in this life will just further serve to their condemnation and death and it will serve to the saints sanctification and preparation for glory. So there is their fate. No matter what they do, their sword shall enter their own heart and their bows shall be broken.

Fifth, the fifth truth concerning the fate of the wicked is in verse 20. Look at verse 20 in Psalm 37. But the wicked will perish. The wicked will perish. The enemies of the Lord are like the glory of the pastures. They vanish like smoke. They vanish away. The wicked will perish. Now, this word that is translated perish here and the same word, same type of word that is translated perish in John 3:16 does not just mean die. It means the first death and the second death. It is talking about hell and judgment under God's wrath that we all deserve for our sin. It is worse than just they are going to die and go to the afterlife. It is they are going to die and die forever. The wicked will perish. The enemies of the Lord are like the glory of the pastures. Like a big huge field full of grass and flowers. They vanish like smoke. They vanish away. What is the truth that he is getting at? He uses this metaphor, the glory of the pastures just burnt up and all of a sudden it is smoke. We could say that ***the wicked will perish like grass burned up in a wildfire***. Look how glorious the field was, but a fire roars through there and it is done. It is up like smoke.

But the reality is it is not a wildfire that will burn the wicked. It is a prescribed burn. And the Lord is the one who sets it. The Lord has set a day that all the wicked will be consigned to a prescribed burn and like smoke they will vanish away. The wicked will perish. Yet, here is the good news for all sinners who will repent and believe the gospel. "God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." Verse 36 in John 3. "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life. Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." There it is. "The wicked will perish." "But God so loved the world that he gave his only son so that whoever believes in him would not perish but receive eternal life." Whoever believes in the son, meaning, comes to the son through repentance of sin and faith in the son. Whoever trusts in Christ alone for salvation has eternal life. But whoever does not obey the son, the wrath of God remains on him. He will not see life. So turn to Christ Jesus, sinner. Become a Christian today. You will be received by Christ. You will not be forgiven except you

come to Christ. You come to him and he will receive you. The wicked will perish like grass burned up in a wildfire.

Sixth, look at verses 35 and 36. Skip down a little bit and see the sixth truth concerning the fate of the wicked. He says in verse 35 and 36, I have seen a wicked, ruthless man spreading himself like a green laurel tree, but he passed away. And behold, he was no more. Though I sought him, he could not be found. The image that is put forward here by David in verse 35 is a massive beautiful tree that has huge branches and a magnificent canopy. It is like I have seen a wicked ruthless man who because of his outward prosperity though he is wicked he is a magnificent spectacle of human prosperity. Everything seems to be going well for him. But then he says, "But he died. He passed away. And behold, he was no more. Though I sought him, he could not be found." The point is, it does not matter how great in power or great in magnificence the wicked are, they are going to die. They are going to be judged and they are going to hell. That is their end. No matter how great things are for them in this life, if they do not have God's mercy in Christ Jesus, it is the same fate as even the poorest, weakest beggar who is a sinner. The point is, ***though the wicked may be great in power now, they will not be for long.*** I have seen a wicked, ruthless man. He was spreading himself like a green laurel tree, but he passed away. And behold, he was no more. Though I sought him, he could not be found.

Now look at the seventh truth concerning the fate of the wicked in verse 38. But transgressors shall be altogether destroyed. The future of the wicked shall be cut off. But transgressors means sinners, the wicked, those who refuse to come to Christ for salvation. Transgressors shall be altogether destroyed. The future of the wicked shall be cut off. The truth is ***the wicked will be altogether destroyed and totally cut off from all that is good.*** Totally cut off from all that is good. There is the fate of the wicked. A sobering fate for those outside of Christ. Psalm 7:12 says, "If a man does not repent, God will sharpen his sword, and he has bent and readied his bow."

Jonathan Edwards, preaching one of the most famous sermons that has ever been preached on this continent, said, "The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart and strains the bow. And it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God and that of an angry God without any promise or obligation at all that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood." And Edwards is right. This is the fate of the wicked.

And so in **conclusion**, let me just give you three things.

First, sinners, you who are not yet united to Christ through faith and submitting to him as king, ***turn from your sin and both trust in and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ.*** It is as simple as that. You turn from sin. That is what repentance is. And

you trust in Christ alone for salvation. You need to be baptized in water, showing that your faith is in Christ and you are laboring to submit to Christ. You need to join a local church and walk with Christ's people all the days of your life for your good, for others gladness, and ultimately for God's glory.

Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes." We are not ashamed of the gospel. We are telling you this is your fate. It is what Psalm 37 says. This is the path that you are on. But by God's mercy, you can get off that path and get on the path with Christ. Repent and believe the gospel. It is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.

Hear this good news in Romans 5 6-8. While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. God shows his love for us and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

In 1 John 4:9 and 10, in this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only son into the world so that we, that means we who believe in him, might live through him. And this is love, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. It means God sent his son. God the Father sent God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He became a man, and ultimately went to the cross and suffered under the wrath and judgment of God that is due to you for your wickedness. That is what propitiation means. Suffer under God's wrath so that it turns wrath and judgment into favor and love because God's wrath is satisfied on your behalf. That is what you so desperately need.

1 Peter 2:24, he himself, Jesus, bore our sins in his body on the tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

Hebrews 9:28. So Christ having been offered once on the cross to bear the sins of many will appear a second time not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. You do not have to remain the wicked. That does not have to be your identity. You can turn from sin and trust in Christ for salvation and he will save you. Do not delay. Yet a little while and the wicked will be no more.

The second thing I would say to you in conclusion is this. And the next two are just for Christians. ***Christians, do not imitate the wicked. Do not freak out about them or worry about them.*** Look at their fate. Look at God laughing at them. You are going to be okay. If God is laughing at their plots and schemes against you, you are going to be all right. He will sovereignly uphold you with his righteous right hand. ***And for the love of God, do not envy them.*** Even when they are prospering and spreading themselves like a great laurel tree, like David says, do not envy them, no matter how great their prosperity is in this life. Because remember their fate. You want nothing to do with that. Do not imitate them. Do not freak out about them. And do not envy them.

And lastly, Christians, all of these truths about the actions and the fate of the wicked, that was every one of you. That was your fate at one time. So you who trust in Christ with a simple faith, you who are true believers, ***praise God that he***

took you by his grace, who were once his wicked enemy and transformed you into now his righteous child. So that this terrible fate that is owed to all of us for our sin that God took all of that weight of our wicked fate and placed it on his son on the cross so that him dying in our place and arising we would be free from it and be accepted by God in his righteousness. Praise God. Look at the fate of the wicked and say that is what I deserve. Thanks be to God. While we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. He shows his love for us. And that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Christ died for us. Christ died for us. Let us praise him.

"Our father in heaven, we thank you for your word. We ask you to sober us by Psalm 37, the actions and the fate of the wicked. We ask you to save those to regenerate those who are not yet trusting in Christ alone for salvation and submitting to him as king. Make Christians today by your great mercy. Cause them to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We ask you to help us as believers to never imitate nor freak out about nor envy the wicked as we consider their actions and their fate. And enable us by your spirit to have a true spirit of thankfulness for what you have delivered us from by your mercy. Help us to live in light of your grace that you have shown to us and the love that you have given us and sending your son to die even while we were still weak, while we were ungodly. We ask you to make us more like Jesus. We ask for those who are sick that you would heal them. Those who are suffering that you would comfort them. Those who are straying from you that you would break them and grant them repentance. And those who are striving forward that you would strengthen them and give them an increase of faith. We ask you to continue to purify this local church, to purify all of your local churches, to purify your universal church at large, and make us a people who love you and glorify you. We ask you to receive all of these offerings of praise. Receive these songs, our prayers, the Lord's supper, our offerings. Everything that we do, we ask you to receive them for Christ's sake. It is in his name we pray. Amen."