

Series: A Summer in the Psalms

C. R. 6-26-22

“Temporary Prosperity or Lasting Rewards”

Text: Psalm 73

Intro: I have always had a deep love for this Psalm. I think it is because in my mind, I have pictured the life of a preacher who has sat down and penned his resignation. He has looked carefully at life, and decided it is just not right. It isn't fair.

Thankfully this Psalm doesn't end with Asaph quitting. That is the good part of it. He had to see life as God wants us to see it, and hopefully today we can do just that.

1) His Lack of Confidence. (v.2-3) (v.13)

- a. This psalm begins with Asaph letting God have it with his feelings about the way life works.
- b. How can the ungodly be so prosperous. It shouldn't work that way.
- c. Note how he had spent some time observing the situation.
- d. It was bothering him so bad, that he admits that his feet had almost slipped.
- e. "It shows that having doubts like Asaph's is not incompatible with responsible Christian living. It may have been true, as he says, that his feet 'had almost slipped.' But they had not actually slipped, or at least they had not slipped so far as to make him forget his responsibilities as a leader of God's people." **(Boice)**
- f. Read Illustration “Startling Facts”
- g. He even makes the confession that he “was envious of the boastful”.
- h. Asaph saw the same troubling evidence that many see everyday in their own life. Many people cannot deny that God is good to them; but it also seems that God is good - perhaps too good - to the boastful and the wicked. It is then easy to envy the wicked and their prosperity. **(Guzik)**

- i. The faith in which he had been reared and to which he clung made his difficulties in this respect only the greater. He had been taught that the good always prosper and that the wicked always go to the wall." **(Chappell)**
- j. "It is a pitiful thing that an heir of heaven should have to confess 'I was envious,' but worse still that he should have to put it, 'I was envious at the foolish.'" **(Spurgeon)**

2) His Look for A Solution (v 16-21)

- a. Asaph did something very wise. He took his concern into the sanctuary. Meaning the holy place, or consecrated place.
- b. It is clear here that he then see things more clearly.
- c. By hearing the word of God in the sanctuary, he understood that there was a truth that went beyond what he saw and experienced in everyday life.
- d. This is one of God's great purposes in establishing a place where His people come to meet with Him. It is never to imply that there is only one or only a few places where man can meet with God, or that they must be ornate or glorious buildings. It is to emphasize that it is good to have a place separate from other places where we focus on a heavenly, eternal perspective. **(Guzik)**
- e. It is in church that he sees that the wicked are not prosperous they are doomed.
- f. This is not a happy thought but a humbling one.
- g. Again, For the saved you are as close to hell right now as you will ever be. The same could be said of Heaven for the lost.
- h. While it may seem that the ungodly are prospering, they are one heartbeat away from hell.
- i. It was in the sanctuary that Asaph saw eternity.

3) His Love for the Savior (v. 22-28)

- a. We see a man that is now convicted of his thoughts and feelings that he had been having. (His pity party).
- b. Whom have in heaven but you. There is none like you Lord.
- c. He knows that the here and now is not the promised land. The best is yet to come.

- d. "Verse 25 is a particularly fine expression and has been a blessing to many over the ages. Charles Wesley (1707-1788), the great Methodist hymn writer, was thinking about it on his deathbed and actually composed a hymn based on it as his final testimony. Calling his wife to him, he dictated:" (Boice)
- "In age and feebleness extreme,
What shall a sinful worm redeem?
Jesus, my only hope thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart;
O, could I catch a smile from thee, And drop into
eternity."
- e. Asaph has had a complete turnaround at church. He has drawn near to God, and God has drawn near to him.
- f. This world seems to make no sense, but this world is not my home.
- g. It will all be better when we see your face Lord.