

Encouragement of God's Word

[Psalm 73](#)

"Why Do Good Things Happen to Bad People?" – June 13, 2021



Introduction

Have you ever noticed that things are not always as they seem? God, in His grace, speaks to us to change our perspectives. In Psalm 73, Israel is in captivity, yet they are praising God. Asaph, the author, is showing his honest struggle, yet with God's help He hopes in the Lord. *Sinners might enjoy earthly goods, but will ultimately experience eternal sorrow. The godly may experience earthly sorrow, but will enjoy eternal good.*

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

- I. A confident declaration. ([v. 1](#))
- II. A confusing dilemma. ([vs. 2-14](#))
- III. A corrected viewpoint. ([vs. 15-20](#))
- IV. A contented man. ([vs. 21-28](#))

Read & Discuss

- I. Read [73:1](#)

What do you believe to be true about God? Asaph, the writer of Psalm 73, declares his belief that God exists. He recognized God as not just a higher power, but the one, true God. He declares God's goodness. Has the societal unrest or health crisis over the last year affected your view of God's goodness? Why or why not? Asaph understands difficult circumstances. Yet, Asaph knew of God's goodness and of God's control. If you are struggling to believe in God right now, pray and ask for the faith that only comes from God ([James 5:13-18](#)). God is good and He has demonstrated his goodness to Asaph and most certainly to us ([Romans 5:8](#)).

- II. Read [73:2-14](#)

When was the last time you were transparent with a brother or sister in Christ of your struggles to believe that God is good? We need to be transparent with one another. We are all striving for the same goal – to make it to the end for the glory of God. Asaph experiences envy from the wicked as they seem to prosper. What does this produce in your heart when you see the wicked prosper who have no care for God? Are you left confused or even angry? Asaph looked and wanted what the wicked had. In what ways have you struggled with contentment or envy? Is your faith slipping away like the Psalmist, because of it? Yet, God graciously refocuses our reality by His people and His word as He did with Asaph.

III. Read [73:15-20](#)

We are called to be transparent, but there is also great value in silence. Sometimes our words can hinder another's faith. How can we know the difference of when to speak and when to stay silent? Well, as we know, it takes God's wisdom. A helpful question before we we post online or even debate would be to ask ourselves the why question. Why am I going to do this? Am I going to say this to vent or to let someone know how I feel in order to make myself feel better? But, if our words are intended to be gracious and to build up another's faith then let it be said! How often does your beloved church family come to mind before you speak or post something? There is often a thin line between being "real" and being reckless. We should strive to count others as more significant than ourselves, just as Christ did. What changed Asaph's envious perspective? God did and He used normal means of grace. He used the word of God and the gathering of God's people. Asaph, noticed the joy that comes from God, but he also saw the wicked ultimate end. Sometimes, what seems to be the wicked prospering is God giving the wicked up to their desires which lead them to destruction ([1 Timothy 6:9](#), [Romans 1:24-25](#)). It's the goodness of God and his sovereign will that keeps us from this same destruction. Praise Him, for this is not the end of those who place their faith and trust in Him.

IV. Read [73:21-28](#)

At first Asaph only wanted to come to God for what God could give him. Now, He wants God for God. Why do you come to God? Are you enjoying Him like we are designed to? There is no change in Asaph's circumstances, he's still struggling in captivity, but there is a change in his perspective of the great treasure he has in God alone. He sees not just the "here", but the "hereafter" and the great eternal blessing he, like us, had no business receiving on any merit of his or our own. Is there anything you are elevating above God in importance and interest? Review your priorities this week. How are you spending your time and your money? Are your priorities in line with God's word? Do you honestly believe that God is enough? Strive to live your life not looking at what's around the corner, but what's ultimately ahead – glory ([2 Corinthians 4:17](#)). Let that hope fill you with joy even as you experience affliction now. For the glory of God will be unspeakable.

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

***Next week's sermon text:** we turn to [Matthew 5:17-48](#) "You Have Heard It Said"