

Direction and Destination

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Preacher: Pastor Bart Leger

[0 : 0 0] Good morning again. Welcome to Faith as we are looking in 73rd Psalm. You may take the Bible this morning and open them up with me to Psalm 73.

We're going to be in verses 22 through 26 this morning. And looking at the beginning of Book 3 of Psalms.

Psalms is divided into five different books. They each have a beginning and an end. And as we have been studying Psalms, we looked at the beginning of Psalm 73 last Sunday night.

Where Asaph, who was the writer of this Psalm, was looking at those who were around him who were basically getting away with murder. They were wicked, they were evil, and they seemed to be prospering.

And Asaph was wondering, God, where are you? I mean, what's the point of living a good life if these people are getting away with murder and nothing is happening to them?

[1 : 0 5] And they seemed to be prospering. So Asaph, before God, is saying, God, what's the point of being righteous? What's the point of following you if I can be doing what they're doing and seemingly be getting off scot-free?

But we're going to see that that's not where Asaph ends. Asaph continues, just as most of the Psalms go, and has an encounter with God.

Here's the thing. We really all must deal with a couple of important questions in our lives. What am I going to do with my life, number one, and where will I go after this life is passed?

Every single human being has those two questions to ask in life. Now, they may not ask them. We may not ask them specifically.

But think about it. We have to ask the question, what will I do with my life? Will I use it for good? Will I use it for others? Will I use it for a productive citizen? Or will I use it to just do whatever I want to do and do whatever I think or I feel will make me happy?

[2 : 1 8] And then what happens after all of this? Well, the psalmist has found the answers to these questions. And he would realize that God guide him through this life.

And that through the end of his life, if he was living a good, righteous life, then his life would end with glory. And he would be right with God.

So, how can we have that psalmist's same assurance? How can we have the same assurance that the psalmist had here? Well, let's look at Psalm 73 and verses 22 through 26.

And I remember, as we look at this, this is the continuation of where Asaph began and said, I'm looking around me. The evil are prospering.

They're getting away with all of these wicked things. So, what's the point of me being, what is the point of me holding back and being righteous and being disciplined in my life if they're doing this and seemingly having fun and getting away with it?

- [3 : 31] Well, what happens, what we see is the psalmist goes to the sanctuary. The psalmist goes to worship God. And when he does that, he realizes in verse 17, Oh, wait a minute. Now I get it. He sees God. He worships God. And he realizes, Okay, now I see things from a different perspective.
- I know that one day they're going to see justice. I know one day that you are going to destroy them if they choose not to change. And so in verse 17, his whole demeanor, his whole perspective changes and says, Oh, yep, it's right to do right.
- And it's good to follow you, God, because I don't want to get what they're going to get one day. But in verse 20, excuse me, verse 22, here he is being real before God.
- He says in verse 22, I was foolish and ignorant. I was like a beast before you.
- [4 : 45] Nevertheless, I am continually with you. You hold me by my right hand. You will guide me with your counsel and afterward receive me to glory.
- Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is none upon the earth that I desire beside you. My flesh and my heart fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portions forever.
- So this is what the psalmist finds. What he finds is that in this life we need to come face to face with our own faults.
- We must come face to face with Mark. And so that's what the psalmist did. He has been complaining to God. He has been going to God and saying, God, what's the news?
- And he's been bellyaching. And he realizes, oh, wait a minute. I shouldn't be like that before God because he comes to worship him. He gets a different perspective. And so he says, God, I was foolish.
- [5 : 56] I was brutish. Which is one of the ways that we can interpret these words from the Hebrew. So he says, I was foolish.
- I was brutish. As a matter of fact, I was like a dumb animal before you. I was like an animal. I was like a beast before you because this is what I was doing.
- So he says, let's all realize that we have faults, we sin, and often we sin against God. Verse 22, I was foolish and ignorant.
- I was like a beast before you. So what was the psalmist doing prior to his encounter with God in the sanctuary? Think about it. Where was his focus?
- His focus was on others. He had foolishly focused on the faults of others. Now is that not the way we are? We'll look at it, we'll say, oh, look at what so-and-so is doing.
- [6 : 58] Look at what so-and-so is doing. And we focus on everybody else's problems. We focus on what other people are doing rather than being honest with ourselves and honest before God and say, okay, God, I'm wrong.
- So he was focusing on the faults of others. And what he did in verses 1-12 of the 73rd Psalm, and how many of us have not done this before, he was envious of their prosperity.
- He was envious of the good that they had. Have you ever said, oh God, I want that car. I want that house.
- I want a watch like that. Oh, I want whatever. And we envy other people and what is seemingly their prosperity.
- And we envy them. And then Asaph would say, God, look at all the good stuff they had. But then, look how they're living. I can't, I can't figure this out.
- [8 : 07] Because God, shouldn't you be doing something? And so, he was envious of their prosperity, verses 1-12. And he was grieving over his misfortune, his pain, and their supposed blessings.

But that's where he was having his little pity party. He was looking at other people, figuring out that they seem to have it all, and they're just bad people. I'm good people, but yet, I don't seem to have what they have.

Then, he encounters God in the sanctuary. He worships God, and he gets a different perspective. Finally, he faces his own sins.

We see that in verses 16 through verse 22. Verse 16 said, When I thought how to understand this, it was too painful for me until I went, verse 17, into the sanctuary of God.

Then, I understood what was going to happen to them. Surely, verse 18, you set them in slippery places. You cast them down. To destruction.

[9 : 16] Verse 19, Oh, how they are brought to dissolution as an unholy, just like that. You're going to bring them to ruin. They're utterly consumed with terrors as a dream and one waste.

So, Lord, when you awake, you shall despise their image. You will, you will, they want to be able to look you in the face. You will, you will hate the way they look because of their evil who weeps.

And so, Asaph is saying, God, I finally get it. I finally get it. One day, they'll pay. One day. And sometimes, we have difficulty with what some people seem to get away with.

It seems that people are proud of what they're doing. As a matter of fact, if you look in the beginning of the, this, this Psalm 73, it says, Violent is like a, is like, is like a new suit to them.

They wear pride around their neck like a necklace and are proud of it. Oh, look, look at my pride. And they wear their violence just like a, like a, like a new designer, a new designer dress or a new, a new designer clothes.

[10 : 33] And, oh, and so they're proud of their evil doing. And, Asaph says, oh, now I understand. One day, one day they'll pay.

Maybe not in this life. But one day, they will pay. You see, in verse 16, when I thought how to understand this, it was too painful for me.

And we just, we just read these, these verses here. He went to the sanctuary and he looked to God. He saw what God was going to do.

So, in looking to God, we see our need of Him. When we come face to face with Him, when do we have an encounter with God in the time? Just the way Isaiah had Isaiah chapter 6, he goes, oh, it's me, I'm undone.

Look at, look at how horrible I am. I'm all out of sorts because, God, you're so holy and I'm so evil and I'm so wicked. And so, Isaiah had this experience when he encountered God.

[11 : 41] Every one of us, the Bible says, we have all sinned. We see that in Romans 3, 23. We have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Every single one of us has sinned. So, when we look at somebody else and we say, oh, look at how bad they are. Do we not realize that we also, before we came to know Jesus Christ as our Savior, that we were an enemy of God as well?

And even after we come to know Jesus, even after we're followers of Jesus, we still sin. We're simply sinners saved by the grace of God. And so, think about, think about what Asaph was jealous of.

What good is prosperity when we're perishing? Think about it. You were on your deathbed. I'm going to just put it in this perspective.

You're on your deathbed. You've got a few days left. who cares how much you have. You're going to die soon.

[12 : 57] Who cares how much is in your bank account? Over and over and over again when we hear people say it, near their deathbed, they may have been the most successful, they may have been one of the richest people on the planet, most of that, whether they're followers of Jesus or not, they may not even believe in God, say, I wish I would have it.

You've spent more time with them and done something different with their life that was important for them. Many, very few of them will say, well, I wish I would have had more stuff.

I wish I would have put more money in the bank. I wish I would have had more stocks. I wish I would have had a better investment portfolio. So, when we're perishing, it doesn't matter how much it seems that we're prospering.

Faith in our sin produces repentance and produces faith. Imagine again when the psalmist shows how faith and grace prevail.

Here he is at the beginning of the psalm, longing or grieving or whatever term you like for use, envious, jealous over what others were getting, their prosperity, even though they were bad people.

[14 : 24] He comes before God in verse 17 and says, okay, God, I'll get it. They're going to have an end and it's not going to be free. And I know that following you is worth it.

Grace and faith prevail. So, first of all, we need to come face to face with our own sin. That all falls. And then secondly, we must be grateful for God's guidance.

We see that in verses 23 through 24. Asaph realized that God was leading him by the hand, was guiding him. Verse 23, nevertheless, I am continually with you.

You hold me by my right hand. You will guide me with your counsel. and afterward receive me to glory.

The presence of God is greater than the pleasures of this world. is what Asaph was realizing. The presence of God is better than the pleasures of this world.

[15 : 27] He says, yeah, they've got all this stuff. Yes, they seem to be prosperous. They have the nice jobs. They drive the nice chariots. they live in nice homes. Yes, they have everything that anybody would ever want, but I've got you.

All this other stuff fails in comparison. He says, I've got you. You're continually holding my right hand, and you're guiding me with your counsel.

Think about this. Ever felt lonely? Those who follow Christ, those who are in God's bandage, don't have the right hand. This Holy Spirit presence is always with us.

He is always with us. He says, I'll continually live with you. You hold me by your right hand. We can live constantly in the knowledge of God's presence, no matter where we are.

No matter whether we are in a cave, no matter where we are, we are in God's presence, because the Spirit lives within us, and we are His.

[16 : 40] And Jesus is with us all the time. Verse 20, Matthew 28, teaching them, this is what Jesus was saying to His followers, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you and lo, what does He say?

And listen, I'm with you always, even until this world ends. I am with you. Even at the end of this episode, I'm with you.

We will never be blessed. We will never be forsaken. We see that in Hebrews 13, verse number five.

He says, let your conduct be without covetousness, be content with such things as you act. That's difficult. It's difficult for most people.

be content with such things as you act. For He Himself has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Why do you think the right of Hebrews put this in there?

[17 : 41] The way He did. And be content with what you have because I will never leave you nor forsake you. What do many people do? We look to possessions to provide security.

We look to possessions to provide something, meaning. We look to possessions to replace that hole in our heart that is meant to be filled by God.

So He says, be content with what you have because I will always be with you. I will never leave you and I will never forsake you. God's guidance is given to those who trust in Him.

He says, you will guide me, Asaph says, with your counsel. So the guidance of God determines the direction of our lives.

God's guidance determines our direction. So we think about we've got a decision to make. We've got to determine it.

[18 : 42] What am I going to do with my life? Which direction am I going to go? What am I going to do? Well, how am I going to do this direction? There are certain things that He tells us, how should I treat this person? God gives guidance.

God gives the direction for all through His Holy Spirit. He will guide us and direct very often through wise counsel from someone else. They will say, that's probably not the best thing to do.

This would be a better course of action for you. So God uses the Bible, this word, God uses the Holy Spirit to guidance, and God uses other people to guidance as well.

So He says, you guide me with your counsel. The guidance of God will determine the direction of our lives. And then thirdly, we see in verses 24 and 25 that I think in order for us to truly get it, we have to understand that with God, if we're a follower of Jesus Christ, we have everything we need.

We must grasp the guarantee of glory. We see that in verses 24 and 25. He says, you will guide me with your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

[19 : 59] Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is none on earth that I desire besides you. So what the psalmist is saying, so what Asaph is saying, he says, afterward receive me to glory.

What we need to understand is that with God, we have everything that we need. Another way for us to see this is this could also be translated and afterward receive me with glory.

It's very possible and very likely that the psalmist was looking for God's deliverance in his lifetime. Very seldom in the Old Testament did people think about glory with God in heaven.

Most of the time it was God's glory with glory here on earth. And so most likely this is what Asaph is saying. One day you're going to receive me with glory.

I will receive your glory. I will receive glory for living a life as righteous. But we know in the New Testament that those who follow Jesus have what to look forward to.

[21 : 20] Eternal glory with God in heaven. So we know that heaven is sure when we know Jesus as our Savior. And we know that the best is yet to come.

So what difference does it make? What does somebody else ask? What difference does it make if our next door neighbor is the richest person in the earth? Because one day he'll die and he'll take number with him.

One day we'll die and we'll live with God's death. If we believe what God's word says. And so our reward we may receive some of our reward on earth.

I think that's very good about it. From our family, our relationships, from the people that we lead to Christ, we receive a lot of validation and reward here on earth for what we do for him.

Sometimes more, sometimes less, sometimes we see very little on this earth, but one day the Bible says we will be received up in glory and we will ever be rewarded.

[22 : 37] that's where we will know what it's like to have everything. Because to be with God is everything.

So the psalmist is saying, I know that I will receive glory. Spurgeon says, afterward, and afterward receive me to glory or with glory.

Spurgeon says, afterward, blessed word, we can cheerfully put up with the present when we foresee the future and know that it is right.

Think about it. It doesn't matter what we're going through on earth. If we know that what we can expect later is better, then we can make it a good matter. If we know that no matter what I put up with here, there's nothing in comparison with the glory that waits, and we can put up a lot of stuff here.

So, afterward, that blessed word, after this light, we have so much to look forward to. And, in conclusion, we can experience God's direction every single day.

[23 : 49] Are you with God's word? Are you taking time to read his word and get his direction? And then, the second thing is, we can be sure.

of heaven, since Jesus is the way. Are we trusting in Christ as our Savior? They said, realize, no, it doesn't really matter what's happening or not happening to the bad people.

What matters is, I'm following you, and living a life like you know, if one day you said you'll receive me in glory, then it will be worth it all.

So, are we this morning facing our sin, facing our faults, like the psalmist says, I was foolish, I was brutish, I was like an animal, I was like a beast to you, God, with the way that I was treating you.

So, are we facing our faults, are we facing our sin? And then secondly, if you're next step is to be grateful for God's guidance, be grateful for God's guidance, realize that without the guidance of God, where would we be?

[25 : 10] Probably where we don't want to be. And maybe third of your next step this morning, as you're saying, if you don't know where you're next. Let's pray.

Lord, this morning, we know that you are the God of the universe. Father, this morning, we know that you are a good God.

We know that you are a just God. And even though it seems that we could prosper without justice on earth, Father, we know that one day you will need out justice.

Father, we thank you that we belong to you. We are saved. You will receive our school of glory one day, and it will be worth of all.

Father, we thank you. We praise you. For it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.