

Psalm 73:13–28

- 13 Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, And washed my hands in innocence.
14 For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning.
15 If I had said, “I will speak thus,” Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of
Your children.
16 When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me—
17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end.
18 Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction.
19 Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed
with terrors.
20 As a dream when one awakes, So, Lord, when You awake, You shall despise their
image.
21 Thus my heart was grieved, And I was vexed in my mind.
22 I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You.
23 Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand.
24 You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory.
25 Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides
You.
26 My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion
forever.
27 For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those
who desert You for harlotry.
28 But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, That I
may declare all Your works.

A Love Song to God
Psalm 73:21-28

INTRO:

Psalm 73 is a song written when the Psalmist was wrestling with his own heart. In a weak moment, he spouted off to God about how the wicked seem to prosper and the righteous suffer. To keep us from being misled, the Psalmist started with his summary conclusion before talking about his errant thinking. ***“Truly God is good to Israel, to such as are pure in heart.”*** (Psalm 73:1). Although the first observations appear in conflict with this deduction, nevertheless it is true. **Verses 2 and 3** are the Psalmist’s confession of his sin. ***“But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.”*** In the verses which immediately follow, the Psalmist detailed his mistaken thinking. He lists all the detail he observed when he looked only on the wicked.

The scary inference Asaph drew is in **verses 13-15**. ***“Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence. For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning. If I had said, ‘I will speak thus,’ Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children.”*** When we arrive at **verse 21**, we find Asaph has reconsidered his first view point and now confessed to God the problem with his heart and reasserted his love for God.

I. My Mistaken Thinking (v. 21-22)

II. My Wonderful God (v. 23-27)

I. My Mistaken Thinking (v. 21-22)

Psalm 73:21-22 ***“Thus my heart was grieved, And I was vexed in my mind. I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You.”***

A. Our Psalmist repented because he had charged God with being unfair to the righteous. The Psalmist wrote:

“Thus my heart was grieved, and I was vexed in my mind.”

His heart was filled with bitterness. He was not thinking straight and his heart was pierced with hurt and wrong thoughts. His problem was he assumed the righteous always should prosper, and the wicked fail and suffer. He recognized he was doing exactly what another Psalmist instructed him not to do.

Psalm 37:1 ***“Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.”***

We are so prone to think this way. The Psalmist repeated this admonition later in **Psalm 37:7**.

“Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.”

B. In **(73:22)** Asaph described how he viewed himself now that he came to himself.

“I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You.”

In effect, when I said words like:

vs.12-14 ***“Behold, these are the ungodly, who are always at ease; they increase in riches. Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence. For all day long I have been plagued and chastened every morning”***

I was being an absolute idiot. I was as stubborn and unreasonable as a mule. Lord. I am totally responsible for my thinking, and I was completely wrong. There is great virtue in confessing our stupidity to God. One thing it does is deter us from making the same mistake again!

II. My Wonderful God (v. 23-27)

Psalm 74:23-27 *“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 earth that I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who You will destroyed all those who are unfaithful to You.”*

A. Asaph now told us about His wonderful God. After confessing his own idiocy, he focused upon God's infinite faithfulness to him in the midst of his defection. The Psalmist wrote,

v. 23 *“Nevertheless I am continually with You. You hold me by my right hand.”*

1. In effect, he wrote, *“Although I blew it, God, you are still with me!”* The LORD was near him because God held on to him and would not let him go!

2. This truth is expressed in **Psalm 37:23-24**.

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand.”

Nevertheless, I am continually with you, Lord, but that is only because of your omnipotent grasp on me. You did not let me go.

B. (v.24) Not only did the LORD hold him and would not let him go, God will never let go.

“You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me to glory.”

God will not drop him halfway to glory. He will always guide us and finally He will take us to be with Him. The word translated *“receive”* in our text, could be translated *“take.”* Asaph looked through the eyes of faith all the way to the end of the path before him. At the end of the road is the “Celestial City” where we shall ever be with the Lord.

C. Verse 25 reads,

“Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.”

What will make heaven, heaven? In his great Psalm Asaph wrote the same thought a more contemporary song writer echoed: ***“God and God alone/ will be the joy of our eternal home/ He will be our one desire/ our hearts will never tire/ of God and God alone!”*** The Psalmist did not hope to gain mansions, rewards, or crowns in eternity. All that mattered is that God would be there. No longer is he concerned about the present blessings of those who prosper. Now he desires God and God alone.

1. When we have grown in our relationship with the Lord so that the joys and blessings fade in the face of the blessing of simply being with Him, we have achieved a marvelous level in our spiritual growth. The writers of the Scripture hold this before us often as the goal that we need to shoot for!

2. Hebrews 11:6 ***“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”***

God wants us to be God-seekers. He wants us to become a people who want nothing more than to be with Him. The Psalmist exhorts us,
Psalm 105:3-4 ***“Glory in His holy name; let the heart of those who seek the LORD be glad. Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face continually.”***

D. The reality of **verse 26** must become real in our lives.
“My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

E. He sums up everything in **verse 28**.
“But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all Your works.”

The ultimate good in our lives is to draw near to God. It should be the daily goal in our lives. The real question this asks us is how active we are in doing this today.

Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus