

Songs from a Broken Heart
Do You Ever Doubt God's Goodness? Part 1
Psalm 73

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, July 9, 2017

In **Psalm 73**, Asaph prays his feelings out loud and processes them in the presence of God. This psalm boldly gives voice to a couple really blunt questions that all of us will wrestle with at some point in our lives when we see the wicked prospering:

- Is godliness worth it or just a waste of time? Is God really good to those who follow Him?

Psalm 73 arms us with everything we need to work through these questions.

I. Admit Your Doubt and then Don't Wait to Unpack It Because It Always Involves More than Just an Intellectual Problem

Psalm 73:2 "But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped."

Asaph, a seasoned saint, tried to wrestle his way through what he knew about God, while he felt like there was no evidence in support of it.

Don't make the mistake of thinking doubts only happen to immature Christians and novices of the faith. Don't ever begin to assume that you're impervious to doubt.

Asaph's doubts had reached this emotional, painful boiling point because of three things that still get us out of sorts today.

A. Let's Start with What He Saw

Psalm 73:3 "For I was envious of the boastful, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked."

He saw something and it threw him off balance spiritually.

We live in a world where the wicked can prosper as godly people are sometimes crushed on the lower rungs of the success ladder.

When you've seen these things and lost your footing, you can lose your balance and can experience a kind of spiritual vertigo or disorientation that opens the door for doubt.

B. Look at What He Was Going Through

Psalm 73:14 "For all day long I have been plagued, and chastened every morning."

We're not told what he's going through, but every morning the pain is there.

Psalm 73:16 "When I thought how to understand this, it was too painful for me"

He's not just having an intellectual problem with his theology, but he's waking up in the midst of a personal experience that has driven him to the point of spiritual crisis, because it's so painful to try to even understand.

There's a real and intellectual question at the heart of every doubt, but doubts never just come through our thinking. They come through our experiences that make what our minds know seem unreal to our hearts.

C. Look at What's Raging in His Heart Besides Just Sorrow and Pain

Psalm 73:2 "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."

The sinful emotion of envy was lurking in his heart.

Since our sinful motives keep us from being truly objective, some of our suffering is self-inflicted and prolonged because of our own sinful desires that are in the mix of our sorrow.

II. Resist the Urge to Isolate Yourself But Instead Move Closer to God and His People

Psalm 73:17 "Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end."

Asaph went to the sanctuary to participate in corporate worship with the people of God. He went there to not be alone in his crisis of faith!

You didn't get into your doubts just by thinking and you'll never work your way out of them just by thinking. Your doubts have been fed by what you've seen and experienced, so you need to see and experience something else.

The people of God participating in truth-oriented worship is a powerful place of reorientation and healing. You're far more likely to press through your doubts and come out whole on the other side in community with other believers.

Go to God and tell Him that you're depressed or confused, that your faith is wavering because you're missing something in your thinking that has led you to false conclusions, and that you need help to understand.

Hebrews 12:5 "And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as sons..."

God designed His Word to argue against your human logic and your personal experience that scream what you think has to be true.

God's love bumps up right against some of our ugliest moments, thoughts, and behaviors.

In **Psalm 73:22-24**, Asaph realizes that in the midst of his mess that God was still holding his hand and He never stepped back or let go of him.