PSALMS

A SERMON SERIES

When Faith Doesn't Seem to Be Working

PSALM 73



"God is good."

But what happens when **life doesn't feel good?**

WHY PSALMS?

Words for the life you actually live

150 poems and prayers. Many voices. Five books.

Praise in joy. Lament in grief.
Confession after failure. Trust in uncertainty.

PSALM 73:1–3 · NIV

1. Honest disappointment

1 Surely God is good to Israel,
to those who are **pure in heart**.
2 But as for me, my feet had almost slipped;
I had nearly lost my foothold.
3 For **I envied the arrogant**
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

PSALM 73:4–8 · NIV

When the wrong people seem to win

4 They have no struggles;
their bodies are healthy and strong.
5 They are free from common human burdens;
they are not plagued by human ills.
6 Therefore **pride is their necklace**;
they clothe themselves with violence.
7 From their callous hearts comes iniquity;
their evil imaginations have no limits.
8 They scoff, and speak with malice;
with arrogance they threaten oppression.

PSALM 73:9–12 · NIV

The life he envied

9 Their mouths lay claim to heaven,
and their tongues take possession of the earth.
10 Therefore their people turn to them
and drink up waters in abundance.
11 They say, '**How would God know?**
Does the Most High know anything?'
12 This is what the wicked are like—
always free of care, they go on amassing wealth.

PSALM 73:13–15 · NIV

“Why am I even trying?”

13 Surely **in vain** I have kept my heart pure
and have washed my hands in innocence.
14 All day long I have been afflicted,
and every morning brings new punishments.
15 If I had spoken out like that,
I would have betrayed your children.

Disappointment becomes dangerous
when it starts deciding whether obedience is worth it.

Where are you wondering whether faithfulness is worth the cost?

PSALM 73:16–20 · NIV

2. A changed perspective

16 When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply
17 till I **entered the sanctuary of God**; then I understood their final destiny.
18 Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin.
19 How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!
20 They are like a dream when one awakes; when you arise, Lord, you will despise them as fantasies.

THE REVERSAL · PSALM 73:2, 18

“I am slipping.”

“Their ground is slippery.”

God’s presence changed
how he understood what he saw.

PSALM 73:21–24 · NIV

He was bitter. God was still holding him.

21 When my heart was grieved
and my spirit embittered,
22 I was senseless and ignorant;
I was a brute beast before you.
23 Yet I am always with you;
you hold me by my right hand.
24 You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will take me into glory.

Even when your faith feels unsteady,
God's grip is steady.

What conclusion about your life do you need to bring before God again?

PSALM 73:25–28 · NIV

3. God becomes his treasure

25 Whom have I in heaven but you?
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.
26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart
and my portion forever.
27 Those who are far from you will perish;
you destroy all who are unfaithful to you.
28 But as for me, it is good to be near God.
I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge;
I will tell of all your deeds.

GOD IS MY PORTION · PSALM 73:26

The good life becomes a life near God.

He began by envying what others had.
He ended by treasuring the God who held him.

JESUS AND THE PSALMS

The cross looked like defeat.

The resurrection changed the verdict.

THIS WEEK · PSALM 73

Bring the part of your life you have stopped talking to God about.

God, here is what I am experiencing.
Here is the conclusion I am drawing.
Show me my next faithful step.