

SUMMER IN THE PSALMS

Despair or Delight...

You Choose

Message 3

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► Outline

Whom have I in heaven but You? And earth has nothing I desire besides You.

Psalm 73:25 (NIV)

A. Introduction

B. Choices that lead to despair:

1. Focusing on _____.
(Psalm 73:1-3)

2. Focusing on what _____ have.
(Psalm 73:4-14)

C. The way to delight:

1. _____ on God.
(Psalm 73:15-17)

2. The _____ of God.
(Psalm 73:18-22)

3. The _____ of God.
(Psalm 73:23-28)

Answers: B. 1. myself 2. others C. 1. Focusing 2. Justice 3. Goodness

Resource Information: Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, a Division of Tyndale House Ministries, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved. C/R refers to a 'cross reference.' Today's outline and discussion guide are available through the Brookwood Church app.

► Discussion Guide

Use this guide by yourself or with friends to pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus. To connect with others, visit brookwoodchurch.org/adults.

Conversation Starter

What bogs you down?

Prayer

Pause quietly for a few moments to allow the presence of God to settle into your spirit. Ask God to help you hear His voice and give you a responsive heart as you reflect on this week's material.

Bible Study and Group Discussion

Read Psalm 73:1-12 out loud.

1. The writer, Asaph, begins with a declaration that *God is good*. Recall or share with your group a time you experienced the goodness of God.
2. Asaph described his crisis of faith as losing his footing (his feet were slipping, and he was almost gone). What picture does this create in your mind? How does this imagery relate to envy?
3. What did Asaph see in the people around him? Share how you can relate to his observations and complaints.
4. Comparison can be a thief of joy and contentment. Have you ever been envious of someone else's life or possessions? If so, what emotions did you wrestle with?

Read Psalm 73:13-28 out loud.

5. Name a time you felt like a victim or didn't deserve the bad things happening to you. What impact did that have on your relationship with God?
6. How could this Psalm help you when you struggle to share your doubts and questions with God?

7. List some truths Asaph recites in vs. 23-26. Which do you find most inspiring? How can you find contentment when you've gone unrewarded for the good you do?
8. The term *theodicy* (implicit in this Psalm) means *defending the goodness of God in view of the existence of evil*. How do you reconcile the idea that God is just, and yet the wicked prosper?
9. How does Psalm 73 prepare you to have a meaningful conversation with someone who doubts the goodness of God?
10. What are the primary truths taught in this Psalm? How is God leading you to respond?

Spiritual Practice

A spiritual practice is something we can do to help us live in and enjoy God's grace. Our hope is that these would become a regular part of your life, so that walking and talking with God is the most natural thing you do.

The word *delight* (or some form of that word) shows up in the Bible more than 200 times. Make a list of the attributes of God you see in Psalm 73, then jot down several blessings you've received from Him. Allow this time of reflection to move you into greater delight in the goodness of God.

Memory Verse

Whom have I in heaven but You? And earth has nothing I desire besides You.

Psalm 73:25 (NIV)

Daily Reading

Day 1: Psalm 86:1-7

Day 4: 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Day 2: Psalm 27:11-14

Day 5: Acts 17:30-31

Day 3: Micah 6:8

Prepare for Next Sunday

Next Sunday, August 6, we'll continue the series *Summer in the Psalms*. To prepare, read **Psalm 19**.

