

REJOICING ON GOD'S PROMISES

WHEN GOD SEEMS SILENT

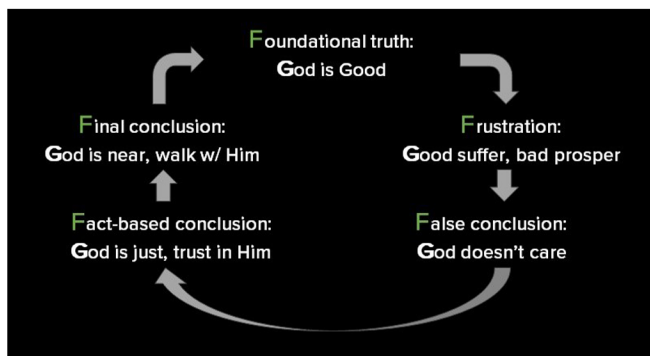
PRECEPT

PSALM 73:1-28

¹Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. ²But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. ³For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. ⁴They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. ⁵They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills. ⁶Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence. ⁷From their callous hearts comes iniquity; their evil imaginations have no limits. ⁸They scoff, and speak with malice; with arrogance they threaten oppression. (Read the rest of verses 9-28.)

PROMISE

Asaph was a worship leader and prophet in the time of King David, but he almost lost his faith in God. Bitterness and envy over what seemed to be an unfair situation led him to a spiritual crisis. He struggled to understand why it seemed that wicked people were so prosperous and healthy. He contemplated the seeming prosperity of the godless while he himself is suffering unjustly (vv. 1-10). By deeply considering the truth, Asaph was able to come to a firm conclusion: his faith in God was justified.



In an almost spiritually fatal attitude, he is tempted to renounce his faith and agree with the godless that God is too far away to notice what they are doing (vv. 11-15). The speaker is oppressed by his ill feelings (v. 16) until he enters "the sanctuary of God" (v. 17), and suddenly in worship his perspective changes. Worship changes everything because it changes our understanding, moves us to an eternal position of seeing, and reminds us of what is really important.

Because of God's presence, the psalmist is assured of His protection and guidance. God protects him by holding his "right hand," by giving him internal fortitude, and by providing for all his needs. God guides his servant by giving him wisdom and insight as he travels on to everlasting glory. The "glory" of God is his blessed presence, which affects one's whole way of life. There is no one but God, his Sustainer in heaven, with whom the psalmist longingly desires to fellowship. Therefore he is more prepared to face his present existence with all its problems. He is prepared to grow older and experience failing health and even adversity because God is his "strength," "portion," and "refuge" (v.28).

Regardless of how long or how deep a dark night of the soul seems to last, believers can have hope. God promises to come near to us if we come near to him (James 4:8). If we continue faithfully to do so in humility, repentance, and by faith, even when we cannot see, hear, or feel Him, we will eventually break through the long night and see dawn begin to arise. When God seems silent or far away, we must rejoice in His promise to draw near to those who draw near to Him.

PRACTICE

1. Drawing Near to God. How can someone draw near to God? What are some practical ways you have learned to draw near to God by faith?

2. Repentance. Would anyone like to share your testimony of a personal breakthrough you experienced by drawing near to God?

PRAYER

I. Discipleship

- Pray that discipleship in the family will be the first priority of every Christian parents there are.

II. Volunteers

- May our volunteers not grow tired and weary of serving the flock. May God sustain them and fill them with joy.

III. ReachOutLives Ministry

- Praise God for the blessings He pours out on us. May our community be blessed by our new ministry.

IV. Life Worship

- Pray that each member will seek God first in everything they do, glorifying Him in all areas of their lives.

V. Ministries

- Pray that all ministries will serve God and His people passionately.

VI. Life Kids

- Pray for joy and strength for all our teachers to disciple the next generation.

VII. Life Link

- Pray that grace and hospitality will fill the hearts of all our Life Link volunteers.