

# **The “Joy” of Enjoying God**

**PSALM 73: 23-26**

---

# **Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647)**

---

Question 1. What is the chief end of man?

Answer 1. Man's chief end is to glorify God,  
and to enjoy him for ever.

# Our #1 purpose in life

---

- to glorify God;
- to enjoy him for ever;
- Some think that these are two opposite things:
- “My problem is that I can never decide which it is I’m really to be about—to glorify or to enjoy God forever.”

# To glorify God

- **The Greatest Commandment** (Matt. 22: 36-37)

---

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

Jesus replied: ““Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’<sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’<sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

- **The Great Commission** (Matt. 28: 18-20)

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

# To glorify God

---

- The Greatest Commandment (Matt. 22: 36-37)
- The Great Commission (Matt. 28: 18)
  
- focuses on commitment, discipleship, the giving of self to our Lord and the needs of others

# To enjoy God

---

- focuses on the blessings that God brings into our life
- easily ends up focusing on ourselves as we celebrate and enjoy the blessings and gifts of God

# **Glorify God or Enjoy God?**

---

- Not opposed to each other but go hand in hand

# To enjoy something is ...

---

- to take delight or pleasure in something
- to have something for one's use or benefit
- We enjoy God's many blessings and gifts: salvation; provision; protection; guidance
- But ... God is a person, not a “thing”

# To enjoy someone is ...

---

- to take delight or pleasure in that person
- to receive a benefit or to experience a benefit from that person
- We enjoy God's many blessings and gifts: salvation; provision; protection; guidance
- But ...do we take delight or pleasure in God Himself?

**Enjoying the gifts only?  
or desiring and delighting in the Giver as well?**

---

# **When it's very hard to enjoy God**

---

- Psalm 73 – Lord, why is life so unfair?
- 2 Corinthians 12: 1-10 – Lord, please remove my weakness!

# Struggles of a Slipping Saint

---

- <sup>1</sup> Truly God is good to Israel,  
to those whose hearts are pure.
- <sup>2</sup> But as for me, I almost lost my footing.  
My feet were slipping, and I was almost gone.

(Ps. 73: 1-2; NLT)

# Psalm 73 – 28 verses

---

- his struggles (vv. 1-14)
- his journey back to the Lord (vv. 15-28)
- “Why are the wicked doing well while the godly are suffering?”
- “Why aren’t those who are glorifying the Lord blessed?”
- “What’s the use of obeying the Lord?”
- “Why should I be good?”

# Things that prevent us from enjoying God

---

- Doubt
- Anger
- Frustration
- Despair
- Key verse - v. 3:

For I envied the proud  
when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness.

# **What did he “see”?**

---

- the wicked and proud prospering while the godly are suffering
- Materialism: focuses on what is seen

# **What slipping saint saw ...**

---

- ³ For I envied the proud  
when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness.**
- ⁴ They seem to live such painless lives;  
their bodies are so healthy and strong.**
- ⁵ They don't have troubles like other people;  
they're not plagued with problems like everyone else.**

# **The wicked & proud are doing so well**

---

- ⁶ They wear pride like a jeweled necklace  
and clothe themselves with cruelty.**
- ⁷ These fat cats have everything  
their hearts could ever wish for!**
- ⁸ They scoff and speak only evil;  
in their pride they seek to crush others.**

## **What he saw and heard ...**

---

**⁹** They boast against the very heavens,  
and their words strut throughout the earth.

**¹⁰** And so the people are dismayed and confused,  
drinking in all their words.

**¹¹** “What does God know?” they ask.  
“Does the Most High even know what’s happening?”

**¹²** Look at these wicked people—  
enjoying a life of ease while their riches multiply.

## **He then asked himself ...**

---

**13** Did I keep my heart pure for nothing?

Did I keep myself innocent for no reason?

**14** I get nothing but trouble all day long;

every morning brings me pain.

# What slipping saint had forgotten

---

- There's more to life than what we can see
- Sin does have its temporary pleasure - *the fleeting pleasures of sin* (Hebrews 11: 25)
- There's a life to come and everyone will have to answer to God - ... *people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment* (Hebrews 9: 7)

# The turnaround

---

- He remembered his responsibility to others
- from self-pity to remembering basic responsibilities & loyalties

If I had really spoken this way to others,  
I would have been a traitor to your people. (v. 15, NLT)

If I had spoken out like that,  
I would have betrayed your children. (v. 15, NIV)

## The next step ...

---

- He tried to understand “all this”

When I tried to understand all this,  
it troubled me deeply (v. 16, NIV)

So I tried to understand why the wicked prosper.  
But what a difficult task it is! (v. 16, NLT)

## **And the next step ...**

---

... till I entered the sanctuary of God;  
then I understood their final destiny. (v. 17, NIV)

Then I went into your sanctuary, O God,  
and I finally understood the destiny of the wicked. (v. 17, NLT)

# In God's presence, we see things differently

---

... till I entered the sanctuary of God;  
then I understood their final destiny. (v. 17, NIV)

Then I went into your sanctuary, O God,  
and I finally understood the destiny of the wicked. (v. 17, NLT)

# **Worship: glorifying and enjoying God**

---

To worship is to quicken the conscience  
    by the holiness of God,  
To feed the mind with the truth of God,  
To purge the imagination by the beauty of God,  
To open the heart to the love of God,  
To devote the will to the purpose of God.

- William Temple

# **Now he sees clearly – wicked are slippery sinners**

---

<sup>18</sup> Truly, you put them on a slippery path  
and send them sliding over the cliff to destruction.

<sup>19</sup> In an instant they are destroyed,  
completely swept away by terrors.

<sup>20</sup> When you arise, O Lord,  
you will laugh at their silly ideas  
as a person laughs at dreams in the morning. (vv. 18-20; NLT)

# **God asked: *Would you like to trade places ?***

---

- Sudden unexpected judgment
  - Complete irreversible destruction
  - Personal inescapable wrath of God
- 
- “I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!” (Matt. 7: 23)

## **He now realizes how foolish he had been**

---

**21** Then I realized that my heart was bitter,  
and I was all torn up inside.

**22** I was so foolish and ignorant—  
I must have seemed like a senseless animal to you.

(vv. 21-22; NLT)

# He is able to enjoy God again

---

**23** Yet I still belong to you;  
you hold my right hand.

**24** You guide me with your counsel,  
leading me to a glorious destiny.

**25** Whom have I in heaven but you?  
I desire you more than anything on earth.

**26** My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak,  
but God remains the strength of my heart;  
he is mine forever.                   (vv. 23-26, NLT)

# **God's guaranteed personal presence**

---

- In the past, You took my hand
- In the present, You guide me with your counsel
- In the future, you will take me into Your glory

# **The “joy” of enjoying God – now & forever**

---

“The wealth of the wicked means nothing. They have nothing. Without God, without forgiveness, without heaven, they have nothing. With God we have everything and always have everything, no matter the outward circumstances of our lives.”

– Robert Rayburn

“The godly have a better portion even though all they have is God.”

- Jonathan Edwards