

Andy Deane • August 9, 2020
Unfiltered: When Life Doesn't Seem Fair

"A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones." (Prov. 14:30)

PSALM 73: A Psalm of Asaph

The Problem of Envy:

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. 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. 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. 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. 16 When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply.

WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN WE STRUGGLE WITH ENVY?

#1 Remember The Big Picture (17-20)

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.

- Don't forget the end of the story: heaven or hell
- What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?" (Mark 16:26)

#2 Acknowledge Your Natural Distractions (v.21-22)

21 When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, 22 I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you.

- Rise above your natural thoughts (like animals) and process life as one filled with the Spirit of God.
- 10-10-10 Rule: When making a big decision ask, "what are the consequences of my decision in 10 minutes, in 10 months, in 10 years?" (and for all eternity!)
- "...the fleeting pleasures of sin." (Hebrews 11:25)
- "Don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers..." (Matthew 6:31-32, NLT)

#3 Count Your Spiritual Blessings (v.23-24)

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.

- Asaph appreciated the #1 presence, #2 support, #3 inheritance of God.
- Followers of Christ are more blessed than we know!
- "...those who seek the Lord lack no good thing" (Psalm 34:9-10)
- "...blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ." (Ephesians 1:3)

#4 Find Contentment in God (v.25-26)

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.

- The cure for envy is finding contentment in God.
- In envy we are chasing after inferior pleasures. Don't settle for less than a great relationship with God!

How Can Sinners Be Near to God? (v.27-28)

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.

- We have a problem in that we are "unfaithful" (v.27)
- So how can it be "good to be near to God" (v.28)?
- I must make the "Lord my refuge" (v.28)
- Call out to Jesus for forgiveness & find refuge!