

# Drawing Near to Regain Perspective

Psalm 73

April 19, 2020

“In anything that resembles a crisis, the man who knows wants to be alone with God.” Dr. Eric Frykenberg

## 1. Appearances can be **depressing** (73:2-12)

*“How Firm a Foundation, ye saints of the Lord  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word”*

It is too easy to slip by looking around at others

The vagaries and **randomness** of life

*I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked*

An emotional pulling out of the rug (see Isaiah 11:3)

A “**health** and **wealth**” gospel for the wicked!

*They . . . they . . . they . . .* (note pronouns)

Strong bodies, callous hearts, conceited minds, boastful mouths, popular following, oppressive violence, mocking words, stinking rich, practical atheists “*Does God know?*”

## 2. What good does it do to try to be good? (73:13-17)

Envious contemplation of the world ends in **self-pity**

New punishments(?) every morning (opp. Lam. 3:23)

Consider the effect of your **words** on God’s children

Confess what you don’t understand, as well as what you do

Questions **shrink** to their proper size in worship

## 3. The short term view of life is **stupid** (73:18-22)

The dark and slippery path to utter ruin (see also Psalm 35:6)

- Ruin is a **natural** consequence of a godless life
- Ruin is personal “*you cast them down*”
- Ruin is **unexpected** “*suddenly*”
- Ruin is spiritual “*completely swept away by terrors!*”
- Divine judgment to be of no **account** to God

To be near-sighted, is to be ignorant, dumb as a **post** !

## 4. The incomparable riches of staying near God (73:23-28)

<sup>23</sup> *Yet I am always with you;*

*you **hold me** by my right hand.*

<sup>24</sup> *You **guide me** with your counsel,*

*and afterward you will **receive me** into glory.*

<sup>25</sup> *Whom have I in heaven but you?*

*And being with you, I desire nothing on earth.*

<sup>26</sup> *My flesh and my heart may fail,*

*but God is the strength of my heart*

*and my portion forever.*

<sup>27</sup> *Those who are far from you will perish;*

*you destroy all who are unfaithful to you.*

<sup>28</sup> *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.*

**(23)** To be “*always with*” God is to never be forgotten or dismissed or ignored or overlooked, my hand in His.

**(23-24)** The verbs “*hold me . . . guide me . . . receive me*” give assurance in salvation’s journey from beginning to end. In Romans 8:29-30 in God’s eternal plan He predestines, calls, justifies and glorifies as a done deal, a sure thing secured for us by the giving of His Son.

**(24)** To “*receive me into glory*” is an Old Testament glimpse of the New Testament truth of everlasting life in Christ in the presence of God.

**(25)** Nothing in all creation “*heaven . . . earth*” can separate us “*from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (Romans 8:39)

**(26a)** A failing heart and flesh is inevitable, so is the strength (rock) that God provides.

**(26b)** My “*portion*” is my inheritance; Asaph was a Levite (Deut. 10:9).

**(27)** To be “*far from God*” is spiritual adultery, unfaithfulness (Hos. 1:2) those he earlier envied, he now realizes are destined to be destroyed.

**(28)** The goodness of God to Israel in verse one, is now back in view in the final verse of Psalm 73 “*It is good to be near God.*” The psalmist is committed to telling others where he has found refuge. There is room.