

## **Envyng the Evildoer** **Psalm 73**

### **Introduction:**

1. When a believer is encountering problems, the temptation is to look at others who are not God's children, see their prosperity, and become envious.
  - Why do they have good health? Why do they have a nice house, a new car, lots of money? Why does God permit them to prosper while I go through trials, tribulations, and problems?
2. Satan desires that we look horizontally (at others), not vertically (at Christ) when going through problems.
3. The great man of God, David, fell prey to this temptation (vs. 3). He became very envious of the wicked and their prosperity.
4. What does it mean to be envious of someone? It means to resent what others have and wish you had it.
5. Is envy really a sin? Let's read Romans 1:28-31 and Galatians 5:19-21.
  - Envy is in the middle of these lists of fleshly sins such as drunkenness, fornication, murder, haters of God, witchcraft, hatred, and many others.
  - Envy really is a serious sin of the heart. God sees every envious thought of our hearts.
6. In Psalm 73, David gives us some valuable principles to remember when we are going through problems, and our hearts are tempted to become envious of others.

### **What happens when we become envious of others?**

1. We become frustrated. vs. 16; cf. Proverbs 14:30
  - Envious people are frustrated people.
  - They are constantly thinking about what someone else has and what they don't have, and it kills them inside. It eats at them continually. David said it was painful.
2. We become centered on self. vs. 12-14
  - David had an old-fashioned pity party. At any pity party, the guest of honor is always the same – self! Self is the center of attention.
  - We can get the martyrdom complex. "I'm the only one. Life is unfair. I deserve better." When we become full of envy, we begin to have accusing thoughts about God and how He has dealt us a raw deal.
3. We begin asking ridiculous questions:
  - Why isn't God just and fair?
  - Is trying to live for God really worth it? vs. 13
    - "I was doing better when I was serving the devil. I could pay my bills."
  - Why does God bless others, but not me? vs. 1-2
4. If we simply stopped, thought about it, and meditated on His Word, we would know:
  - God is always just and fair. Romans 9:14

- We **are** blessed. Ephesians 1:3
- Serving God is always worth it. Romans 8:18

### **What causes us to become envious of others?**

1. A lack of spiritual discernment. vs. 3, 5, 7; cf. 2 Corinthians 4:17-18
  - David was judging based on what he saw outwardly. vs. 3, 5, 7
  - Spiritual discernment causes us to look at invisible, eternal things, not outward, temporal prosperity. 2 Corinthians 4:17-18
  - When you look at people enviously, if you knew what their lives were really like, you might not want to be in their shoes. They may be miserable on the inside. You've heard the old expression, "Never judge a book by its cover."
2. A dissatisfaction with what God has given. vs. 3
  - Obviously, they had material possessions that David didn't have, and David didn't think it was fair.
  - Why is this? He wasn't content with what God had given him. Philippians 4:11; 1 Timothy 6:6
  - Content people have something money cannot buy – peace! They don't have to worry about things like "who has what, and if it's bigger and better than mine." It doesn't matter, so they aren't even looking.
3. A comparison of ourselves with others. vs. 12, 14
  - Notice David's comparisons (vs. 1, 2, 12, 14). This is why David had become full of envy and was miserable. "I have all these problems, but look at **them**."
  - Let's look at 2 Corinthians 10:12-13. Paul says, "We are not going to compare ourselves with each other; it is unwise. We'll measure ourselves with God's ruler."

### **How do we overcome the sin of envy?**

1. Focus on the intangible blessings of God. vs. 25-26; cf. Psalm 37:16-17
  - Your character, integrity, and righteousness – no man can take these from you.
  - Intangible blessings – God's strength is always available (37:39, 73:26), God's counsel (73:24), God's sustaining grace (73:23, 37:17, 24), our eternal inheritance (37:18)
2. Look past the present to the end. vs. 17-19, 27; cf. 37:37-38
  - Paul Harvey always said, "And that's the rest of the story." In the same way, as believers, we must look at the full picture.
  - Evildoers' prosperity will be gone in a heartbeat, and they will have nothing.
3. Draw near to God. vs. 17, 26, 28
  - After David went into the sanctuary and spent some time with God and focused on Him, he got everything back in perspective.

- Envy comes when we get our eyes off of God. It is a sign of a backslidden heart (vs. 2-3). It is the sign of a person who has taken his or her eyes off of God.
- When we are focused on Christ and spending time with God, we have to come away saying, “God has been so good to me. Better than I deserve.”

**In Conclusion:**

1. Earlier in the lesson, we mentioned that when we become filled with envy, we get frustrated and it causes pain. This is so true.
2. If we are to overcome life’s problems, we cannot allow ourselves to become focused on others and become envious of what they have and possess, or become envious that their lives seem trouble free.
3. All this ultimately does is end up destroying us.