

Guest Speaker

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[0 : 00] Bible, turn to Psalm 73, and then we get a handout to you as Bo comes up. Amen. Well, thank you, Pastor Trent. It is a blessing to be here with you. It feels like a reunion a little bit for me, coming to see folks and greeting y'all as you come in. It's just a blessing to be here tonight, and I thank you. Seriously, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for the difference that you're making in so many people's lives and the difference that you've made in my life and my ministry.

As we come to Psalm 73, I've retitled this once, and I think I'm going to have to retit it again because I was... Where'd Ben go? Ben. Ben and I were talking right before. He's like, what are you going to preach? And I said, we're going to preach about how do we answer messy questions. He's like, well, I was talking to somebody who was asking about aliens and all these things, so I'm glad to have some help with that. Unfortunately, that is not this message, okay? So we're going to have to get a little bit more specific. And because this Psalm, if you're familiar with this scripture, it's a Psalm of Asaph, a Psalm of a song leader, a man who knew God, walked with God, and he basically asks the question, is it worth it to live for God? I've been living for God, trying to do right, and it seems like it's not working. And that is the messy question because if you think about this man, as we study through this, this man knew the answer to that question. And I think you know the answer to that question too. Is it worth it to live for God?

Who would raise their hand and say, yeah, it is. Okay, yeah, all across the room. You know the answer. So we can close up and we can go home. But that is not what happens as the Psalm. He knows the right answer. But it's a messy question because it's a real question that he really grappled with.

And these messy questions that we grapple with, most of the time, we don't even ask them. In fact, we're a little bit afraid to ask them questions about faith, questions about life. Is it worth it when something bad happens to somebody who's serving God? Are we doing something wrong? There are real questions that have tricky answers that we feel ashamed to ask. And friends, I believe this is not just for you and me. As I was studying through this, I was thinking some of my own questions throughout my life as a Christian that I've asked and grappled with and had to study the Bible and had to pray and to seek God and say, God, what is the answer here? This is not just for you and me, but I'm convinced that one of the most important things of our day, of our time, is that we need to be able to help people grapple with their difficult questions. And here's what I mean by that. Over the past 60, 70 years in our country, Christianity is on a pretty steady decline. You know, we'd like to say that, hey, this is a Christian nation, but for the first time since, well, the first time in the history of our nation, in 2020, a survey showed that 47 percent of Americans would agree that church plays a significant role in their lives, less than the majority. Friends, we're losing ground. I think you know this. That's why there's pictures all across the wall that we want to send people out to reach people for Christ. In our own nation, we are facing a time when people are saying, hey, church, it's not the default. Knowing the Bible, it doesn't really matter. It doesn't really affect my life. And sometimes it's because what has happened as Christians, as the church, is we've created an environment where people can't come in and ask difficult questions and get real answers, right? Because if you come in with a question that sounds a little bit heretical, right? If you came in tonight and said to Pastor Trent, hey, preacher, you know, I'm not sure if it's even worth it anymore to come to church or to read my Bible or to serve God. You'd be a little embarrassed to ask that, right?

At least I would. Because I should know the answer, but I'm grappling. It's messy. And there's a real struggle there, and it's what people are really dealing with. And we need real strategies of how are we going to help people walk through these difficult questions that maybe they don't even want to express. And it's not just, hey, is it worth it to live for God? But there's many other areas that people have questions, real questions, real questions that are going to determine how they are going to believe and how they are going to live. And so as we come to Psalm 73, we meet a man that was, he was highly committed. He loved the Lord, but he was really grappling with some messy questions. So how does God walk him through that? That's what we're going to see in this scripture.

[4 : 50] Would you go with me, Psalm 73? Let's read down through this. We're just going to take the whole Psalm, read down through, because it's a beautiful, I can't speak tonight, guys. Forgive me. It's a beautiful drama, if you will, of how God takes him from one place to another place to a place of answered questions. Verse number one says this, truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. But as for me, my feet were almost gone. My steps had well nigh slipped, for I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men.

Therefore, pride compasseth them about as a chain, violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness. They have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt and speak wickedly concerning oppression. They speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. Therefore, his people return hither, and waters of a full cup are wrung out of them. And they say, how doth God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High? I want to stop there for a second. Did you get the feel of what this man is dealing with? He starts off and he says, yes, I know the truth. I know the doctrine. I know the teaching. God is good to Israel. But what does it say in verse number two? But when I look right here, but as for me, that's one of those phrases that you may want to underline or highlight or circle or something like that. If you've not already got that marked, my feet were almost gone. I wasn't sure. I know that God's good to all these other people, but for me, I have some questions. Is it good to question God, to question God's goodness? I think that's where some of the shame comes in, right? That's where some of the embarrassment comes in.

This was a man that led people in worship, but he's wondering, is God good to me? I've got questions. Let's continue reading. Verse number 12, I believe is where we left off. Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world. They increase in riches. Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued and chastened every morning. If I say I will speak thus, behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me until I went into the sanctuary, into the sanctuary of God. Then understood I their end. Surely thou did set them in slippery places.

Thou castest them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as in a moment they are utterly consumed with terrors as a dream when one awaketh. So, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image. I want to pause there because you see the movement of what's happening here. This is where he gets to the middle. He's grappling with this question saying, is it worth it? I have cleansed my hands. I've purified my heart. I'm trying to live for God.

I'm trying to honor God. I'm serving God. Is it worth it? Because I look around at all these others who are classified as, did you notice there, they're classified as wicked or ungodly or all these other things. They're not serving God and they've got it all together. I'm serving God and I'm plagued. And did you notice when it all changed? Where was it? We'll do a little Bible trivia. What verse? Where did it all turn around? Verse 17. Exactly. Until, what happened? Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end. It takes some time, but he really had to grapple and then he began to get some answers when he stepped into the presence of God. Let's continue reading down to the end of the chapter. Thus, my heart was grieved. Verse 21. And I was pricked in my reign. So foolish was I and ignorant. I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee and thou has holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. For lo, they that are far from thee shall perish. Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. But it is good for me to draw near to God. I have put my trust in the Lord God that I may declare all thy works. Would you go with me in prayer? Let's open up this message with a word of prayer. Father, we ask you to teach us and to help us this morning, this evening. God, we come to you and there may be some in this assembly, in this congregation. God, that they have questions.

[9 : 45] And their questions, if we looked at it from a Bible perspective, we know the answers. We know the Bible trivia. We know what's the right solution. But there's a struggle in our hearts and souls to know that it is true, that you are good to us, that you are leading us and guiding us, we wonder.

God, I pray for the person here that is struggling with a question, that they would not turn away from you, but that they would keep showing up, they would keep trusting you and allowing you to gently, mercifully address their question, to address their doubts. God, we know that you're all powerful, you're all knowing, and we trust you that you're able to work in our lives in just a powerful way.

God, I pray for every Christian in here, every believer, that you would give them the strength and the wisdom to help others as they're walking through times of doubt, times of struggle, because you've called us to be witnesses to your goodness, to your love, to your righteousness.

And I pray that you'd help us when we don't know the words to say, when the questions are too messy, too difficult for us to figure out, that we would rely upon you and upon your Holy Spirit to guide and to teach and to change lives as only you can. Pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

If you have your outline there, here's the first thing. How do we deal with messy questions? Well, the first thing, God is going to teach us some stuff. And so God is, first of all, He needs to teach us about our weakness. He needs to teach me about my weakness. That's your first blank there. God is teaching me about my weakness. And that's why I believe you see happening there from verse 1 down to verse number 11. You see a man that he's smart, he's Bible literate, he was somebody who would be up here on the stage. You would look at this man Asaph and say, he knows the Lord and he has it all together. He has his doctrine right. He knows God. He knows something about the Bible, but he was going through a battle that perhaps he had never faced yet, right? Because he's growing up and he's been taught how to minister and to work in the temple and do all of these things. But now he's entering a new phase where he's got a question and it's a mess inside his soul. Look with me at some of the things that are going on. He makes a confession.

[12 : 02] And what was his confession? Let's read verse number 2 and 3. He says, But as for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped, for I was, and say this next word with me, I was what? Okay, y'all are doing good. I know it's Sunday evening or it's time for dinner.

We need to go home, get to bed, get to start on the week. But we're going to work together on this. What's his confession? I was what? Envious. That's something for a man of God, for a servant of God to say, to stand up and say, well, perhaps he wasn't standing before people. But with God, he gets very honest for a minute and says, I was envious. And I want to summarize some of the things that he's envious about. He looks around and he sees the wicked man. He sees the oppressor. He sees the one who is taking advantage of people who obviously has no regard for God, no care of what God's word says or what it means to worship God or any of these things. And he sees them flourishing.

He sees them prospering. They're doing good. But not only are they prospering, he sees them strong. He sees them without suffering. He sees them without problems. And he looks and he says, I can't get over this. I was envious at the foolish. And what does it mean that he was envious? It means he saw their prosperity. He saw their health. He saw their wealth. He saw their strength, their influence, all of these things. And he says, I saw that and I wanted it. Now, did he know better? What do you think? I imagine he probably did. He probably knew better than to want what the wicked man has, than to want the life of the wicked man. He's a servant of God, but he said, he made a very real confession. I was envious. I saw what they had. I wanted it. And it was tearing me up inside.

What is envy? Envy is one of those things I don't believe we talk about very much, right? When's the last time you were in a prayer meeting and somebody raised their hand and said, hey, I have a confession. I mean, I've been envious this week. But it's one of those things we may not confess, but I think we all deal with on one level or another. I saw it. I wanted it. I deserve it. I'm choking up on something.

I don't know what we're doing tonight. Envy. What is envy? Proverbs 14 30 says, envy is like rottenness in the bones. It eats you up from the inside out. And he makes a very clear confession of his weakness that I was envious. That's pretty strong. There was a man, I read his article about, maybe you've heard of this idea that people are deconstructing their faith, right?

[14 : 39] They come to a point in their life when they're not sure that what they've been brought up believing is true or right. And so they start pulling apart and saying, hey, and they're questioning everything. Is this true? Is that true? What's going on with that? You know, the thing about this idea of deconstruction is that what this man said was people who often face this idea of deconstructing their faith or their faith falling apart, very often they are the same people that had an extreme level of dedication and devotion to God. They earnestly believe that the church is valuable, is important, and they believe it's worth fighting for, their faith is worth fighting for, right up to the point where they don't. Consider that for a second. They believe it's all true and they would say, yes, I believe it. And they're grappling with issues, but they believe it and they say, this is worth it and this matters until they don't. And I believe what we do, what we see here with Asaph, we see a man who is teetering right on that critical moment. Is it worth it or is it not?

Is this right or is it not? Is it worth giving my life to or is it not? He was envious. Why was he envious? A couple of things we've mentioned, but here's your next few blanks. I was envious. What was I envious about? He was envious of their prosperity. We look at verse number three and verse number seven speaks about the fact that these wicked people, they had it all. In fact, they had more than heart could wish. Now, Bible trivia. Is it possible to have more than heart could wish? Because that's what he's doing. He's looking around and he's like, man, they have more than heart could wish. Is it possible? Yea or nay? No, it's not. You know your Bibles very well. It's not. Because what does the scripture say? The scripture says that man's eyes are never satisfied. You might jot down Proverbs 27, 20. And that phrase in and of itself starts to reveal what's going on in his life. You see, Asaph, he's making some incomplete observations. He's looking and saying, they have a good paycheck.

They have plenty of grain. They have servants. They have farms. They have all of this stuff. They have it together. But it was incomplete because even though he might have looked and said, they have more than heart could wish, if he was in their shoes, he would want more, right? Because the eyes of man are never satisfied. It's the Instagram fallacy, right? You scroll through Instagram or any social media and you see someone's life and you see all of their highlights, right? Yes, this means yes. This means no. You see their highlights most often. Most often, somebody's not Instagramming and saying, you know what? Today, I am just envious. I am envious of this person and that person and all these things. Know their Instagram and saying, hey, I had a great cup of coffee or this happened or that happened or, you know, look at me. I'm traveling or these things.

That's only a very, very narrow part of the picture. And you feel terrible because you look at what somebody else has and say, if I had that, then I would be good. But that's only a part of the picture. Because if you had that, you'd want more. Man's eyes are never satisfied. Not only that, but their strength, their strength. That's your next blank. He's envious at their prosperity, their strength. Verses four and five speak about how they, it says, for there are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men. Now, another question, is this observation true? Were these wicked people without problems, without pain? Well, maybe in that moment they were. But what did Job tell us? Job in Job 14, verse one, I think we have it there. We'll have it up there up on the screen. Man that is born of woman is a few days in what? Full of trouble. All right. So he looks at the slice of the wicked man's life and says, man, I wish I had that. I wish I had that. I wish I had that. But that's not even the real picture. And that's often what happens is we get an in, we get incomplete observations and they lead us to an incorrect assumption about how life should work. But he's looking, he sees their prosperity, their strength. He also sees their influence. That's the next one, their influence. He says that they're speaking, they're bold, they have a voice, if you will. If you look at verses six and then eight and nine, let's read a couple of these. He says in verse six, therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain, violence covereth them as a garment. Down to verse number eight, they are corrupt and speak wickedly concerning oppression. They speak loftily. It gets this idea, at least as I was studying through it that, Hey, these wicked people, they're over here and they can say whatever they want. They can do whatever they want. They can say this about God or that about God or this about life or all of these things. They can speak things that I wouldn't even imagine saying, and nobody's going to tell them to stop. But Asaph's like, man, I'm over here saying, Hey, let's serve God. Let's walk with God. And and he's like, look where it's gotten me because in his personal life, he's saying I'm plagued. I'm troubled. I'm struggling. And so these are the things he's envious of. So what's the lesson here?

The lesson is this. This is a hard one. Own up to what's going on in your hearts. Own up to what's going on your hearts. That's your blank there. Own up to what's going on your hearts. You see this man, Asaph, I believe there was a time where he came before the Lord and he just said, God, here I am. I am envious. I have no, there's no nice way of putting it right. We like to, we like to dress it up and we like to use euphemisms and different words to say, Hey, this is what's going on. I just, you know, I just wish things were a little bit better. No, I'm covetousness.

[20 : 16] I'm covetousness. I'm covetous. That's the right word. I'm covetous. I want, I desire all of these things. I desire something that I know that I shouldn't. And you get real. Where are you at tonight?

What is the messy, difficult question that you're looking at and you're struggling with? Nobody else knows. Maybe your spouse doesn't know. Your parents don't know. Nobody knows but you and the Lord. And until you get real with God and say, God, hey, this is where I'm at. This is what I'm wondering about. God's not going to, and here's the thing that I want to let you know about this. God's not going to strike you down. Here's one of the things that I love about this Psalm. This man, Asaph, what does God do? God doesn't strike him down, even though it's like, hey, you should have known better, Asaph. Why are you being envious? Why are you doing this? That's not how God works. Even Jesus. Back on Easter, we were studying the book of John with the resurrection. And you remember where the disciples, they're fearful and they're hiding and Jesus comes and shows up and says, hey, yeah, I'm actually alive. Be happy. And there's three times where he says, peace be unto you. And one of the times is when he shows up when Thomas is there. This is one of the things I love about this, okay? Because the first time he shows up, you have the 10 disciples, right?

And they're all there. They're assembled. They're afraid. But he shows up and says, peace be unto you. Hey, I'm alive. It's all good. And then Thomas isn't there. And Thomas, you know, he has his famous words of, I will not believe unless I put my finger in his, in the scars in his hands and thrust my hand to his side and all of those things. And when Jesus shows up, what does he say to Thomas? Thomas, get your act together. You doubting man, you're foolish. I mean, I can't believe you wouldn't just listen to the other disciples. No, he says the exact same words. Peace be unto you. You see, sometimes I believe we have this view of God that's like, hey, if I don't have every little thing laid down, nailed down just right, God's going to strike me down. That's not how God works. You come to God with your doubts. You come to God with your questions. And God, through his presence, in his presence, through his word, he is going to address those. So don't check out. Get honest with your questions. Own up to what's really going on in your heart. All right, number two. We got to move a little bit quickly. God is teaching me. He's teaching me about my weakness. And then he's teaching me a new point of view. He's teaching me a new point of view. God takes this man and he brings him through these stages where I imagine there was a time when

Asaph was kind of rejecting the idea that anything was wrong. He was kind of shoving it down in his life. This envy that I'm feeling, you know, I'm just going to put that in the back burner. I'm going to show up at work. I'm going to lead the worship. I'm going to do right. I'm going to honor God.

He's pushing it down. But God says, no, we need to own up to something. You're envious, Asaph. And he does that. And then God begins to teach him a new point of view. God convicts him. And that's the next confession there. I'm convicted. I'm convicted. It feels vain to follow the Lord. And there's sort of an interesting connection. Before I get to that, let's go to verse number 12. And let's look at that for a second. He looks around and this is basically the conclusion he makes. He's seen the prosperity.

[23 : 28] He's seen the strength. He's seen the influence, the boldness, all of these things. And then he says, behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world. They increase in riches. Basically, what he's saying is there are people out there that could care less about God and they can still have a good life. That's the conclusion that he comes to. And then God begins to convict him and to teach him. Verse number 13, he says, verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency. God, I've been trying to walk with you. I've been trying to do right and be honest and live for you. But all day long, verse number 14, for all the day long, have I been plagued and chastened every morning. He says, it feels like it's vain. It feels like it's empty because even though I'm trying to do right, I'm trying to honor God. It's to no value because I don't have what they have, right? The wicked, they can do wickedness, but have a good life. I can do right and I get a bad life. How's that fair? That's essentially what's going on. And he makes the confession of God, this is where I'm at. This is my point of view on life. And God's going to unravel us and teach him a new point of view. Look with me at the next verse. If I say, I will speak thus, behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. That's kind of a curious verse. But basically what he's saying is, if I verbalize this, if I say that, if I say what I'm thinking, that you can be wicked and still have a good life, then I'm going to offend against the generation of thy children.

I'm going to hurt other people's faith is essentially what he's getting at there. Where he says, if I just say what I'm feeling, I know I'm going to hurt other people's faith. So God, I'm coming to you and I'm in turmoil. Do you feel the turmoil here? I'm struggling and it's messy and it's hard to know what to think, know what to say. But God, I come to you. I don't know what to say. And it's too painful. Verse number 16. When I thought to know this, it was all too painful for me. His heart is just overwhelmed. It's at the breaking point. It's burdens. And then he starts to get that new perspective. Let's read that next verse. This is just, I think this is one of the most gracious verses in all of God's word. Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end. You see, God had to teach him a longer term perspective, an eternal perspective, if you will, where he's looking at the wicked and saying, okay, they can be wicked and live a good life. Yeah, they might have a good life right now. They might have a good life for 40 or 50 or 70 or 80 years. But you know what's going to happen? God's teaching me their end. What's going to come after that? What's going to come as the conclusion of their life? And look what it was. He says, surely thou did set them in slippery places. Thou castest them down into destruction. Yes, they may be wicked and have everything good right now, but they're going to destruction.

Because God is a just God. Amen or no? He's a just God. And so they might be strong right now, but their end is going to be destruction. You've put them in, what does it say? Slippery places.

You know what is so interesting about that? This is a complete reversal of what's happening in his own life. And how do we know that? Back up with me for just a second to verse number two. But as for me, my feet were almost gone. My steps had well and I slipped. He starts off thinking, man, I'm the one that's slipping around in life and I can't get any traction. I don't have anywhere to stand. I don't have a foundation. They have strength. They have prosperity. They have a foundation.

And even though right now I'm struggling and I'm slipping around, you ever been like ice skating? Is anyone here a good ice skater? It's a little bit tough. Okay, we got a few good ice skaters. All right. But for the rest of y'all, you're probably like me where it's like, it's kind of like rollerblading, but it's kind of not. It's a bit slick. And if you're not careful, you're going to fall down on that ice.

[27 : 28] And ice is really hard. Has anyone ever found that out by experience? Okay. Some of you, you know exactly what's going on there. So he's saying, I was in slippery places, but I got a new perspective. God's going to establish me and they are going to be in slippery places. See, that's a complete reversal.

God's teaching him a new perspective, but I believe it didn't start happening until he owned up and said, God, this is what's really going on in my heart and mind. I'm struggling. And then God begins to teach him and say, oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, my child. They're going to be in slippery places and you are going to be okay.

So the lesson, the lesson, relief from internal turmoil comes through God's point of view. Relief from this internal turmoil comes from God's point of view. You see, friends, we know that we grow by faith, right?

Faith is really the whole Christian life. We're saved by faith. We walk by faith. Faith is the whole thing. We live by faith. We don't live by sight, but we live by faith. And that's what God is teaching him.

God's teaching Asaph, hey, don't look around and don't look at all the things that they have going for them. And don't make conclusions based on that. Make conclusions based on my word and based upon who God is.

[28 : 48] Because you'll look around and you say, hey, I must be getting the short end of the stick here. But when we get God's point of view, God's perspective, he relieves us from that turmoil.

So a couple thoughts real quick before we move on to our last point. How do we get a hold of that moment where everything changes? Because I think if you're here tonight and you're struggling with a real question, that you probably know the verses on it.

You probably know the right answer. But you personally, you're struggling. How do you get to that point when things can change? When things can be settled again in your soul?

Well, did you just notice what happened with this man? He said, I went into the sanctuary of God. Then understood I their end. There's something about getting around God's people, getting around the preaching of the word of God, that can begin, God can use those things to do a deep work in your heart and life.

And so one of the things, if you feel like you're on the verge where it's like, man, I'm not sure right now. I'm not sure if it's worth it. Maybe it is. Maybe it's not. Stick. Stick. Stay.

[29 : 56] Keep showing up. It might be a week. It might be a month. It might be, I don't know, it might be years. That you might wrestle with that question, with that struggle of like, man, how does this all fit together?

How does this all work? Why am I, you know, why does life feel so unfair? Why do you get what I'm saying? There's these questions. Stick. Keep showing up. Because as you keep showing up, God is going to keep using his word to teach you, to grow your faith, to help you, to know how to walk with him.

And one day, that answer is going to be crystal clear. I get it now. I understand God's perspective on this. And it'll strengthen you to be able to walk with him like you never have before.

Here's another thought that stuck in my mind with this. Friends, do you have a place? Do you have a place, just speaking real frankly, do you have a place where you personally get along with God? And what I mean by this is, you know, I think, I don't know about you, but I see that those in my, you know, age range, my generation, sometimes we just think, hey, I can, you know, I can read my Bible wherever I want, or I can, you know, get along with God wherever I want, which is true.

But there was one of the sweetest times of the past few years that I've served at Newton down there in Covington, there was a man who was a preacher. He pastored a church in Pennsylvania, and he had lived down in the Covington area for a long time.

[31 : 18] And I went to his funeral. And you know, God's taught me a lot about funerals, I'll be honest. Is anyone here a fan of going to funerals? You're like, I don't know, I can't raise my hand. Well, I think on some level we sort of should be.

Because what does Ecclesiastes tell us about the house of mourning? It's better to go to the house of mourning than the house of, what is it, the house of feasting? I should have worked on memorizing that verse a little bit better. But the idea is this.

It's better to go to a funeral than it is to go to a party. Because that's where we're all going one day. If Jesus doesn't come back, that's where we're going. And one of the things that stood out about this man, Leon Foote, about his life, was that he had a specific place, and his family talked about this.

The other preachers at the funeral talked about this. They said Leon Foote had a rock out in the backyard of his house where he would go and get alone with God and he would pray. And he would take his grandkids out there and he would pray with them and talk with them about the Lord.

And you know, there was something that's like, if we have this funeral, and this man served God for many, many years, but we're going to talk about that rock. We're going to talk about that place where he specifically went, and it was a place, not because it was particularly anything special, I don't think it was a special rock, but he could go and he could sit there and he could pray and he could be alone with God.

[32 : 28] Is that discipline in your life? Because if your life is made up like most of the world around us, of running here, running there, doing this, doing that, when we get home and when we stop moving, what are we doing?

We're on Netflix, we're on YouTube, we're on social media, we're doing whatever. When we stop moving, we entertain ourselves to death. There needs to be a time when we stop moving and it is simply for the purpose of saying, God, I'm here to talk with you.

Make that a habit in your life. Because it may be that in those moments, God's going to teach you something about a new point of view that will resolve some of the turmoil that's happening in your life.

Finally, God is teaching me to value him above all. God is teaching me to value him above all. That's the next, the third big point there. God's teaching me to value him above all. When we get down to 21, down to 28, it's pretty amazing.

He has a confession that God was convicting him. Here's your next point. God is convicting me of misplaced values, of misplaced values. I was placing value upon wealth and upon prosperity, upon no pain and upon this boldness and brashness, this influence.

[33 : 38] I wanted what they had, but God's convicting me. Man, I had misplaced values because I wasn't looking at the whole picture. I wasn't looking at the eternal scope of things. That, hey, their end is destruction.

And here's the lesson. God is everything to me. God is everything to me. He's going to say down in verse number 23 that God, he keeps me.

I am by him. He says, he holds my hand. He guides me with his counsel. He will receive me into glory. He says, God is everything to me. And that is the lesson we need, friends.

That we would understand that our God, he's everything. He's the beginning. He's the end. He's everything I need for my life. I don't need to look at the wicked and his prosperity and say, I want that. No, I want God. I don't want his lack of pain.

I want God. I want God. I want God. That's all I want. He is everything to me. Let's read a couple verses down there before we finish. In verse 24, thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory.

[34 : 38] Verse 25. This is the new confession. This is the new confession. You are all I want. That's your final blank there. You're all I want. He gets down. He's been confessing his envy.

He's been confessing his misplaced values and all of these things. All of these things that God is just teaching him through this time. And he makes a new confession. God is everything I want.

Let's read a few of these verses before we close. He says, This just stuck out to me and sort of blew my mind a little bit.

Remember what he was looking for in the beginning? He's looking for prosperity. Right? He said, The wicked, they're prosperous. He's looking for strength. The wicked, they're strong. He's looking for this influence or this boldness. And what happens at the very end?

Did you see what he found in the Lord? Did you notice what he said about God? In verse 26, he says, God is the strength of my heart. The wicked, they're strong.

[35 : 59] No, me? God. He's my strength. I don't need their strength. I have strength in the Lord. Continue with me. And this might blow your mind too. And my what? Portion.

Okay. Let's say it. We're almost done. Six o'clock. My what? Portion. They're prosperous. Well, is it better to have the world's prosperity or for God to be your portion?

Which one do you want? God to be my portion. He is my wealth. He is everything I need. And then finally, you get down to verse number 28 and he says, It is good for me to draw near to God.

I have put my trust in the Lord God that I may declare all thy works. The wicked, they're loud and brash about their disbelief in God and the way they ignore God.

But you know what? I can be loud. I can be bold. I can be influential because I know what God has done for me. And I am going to declare. And so what do you find? In the Lord? Everything he thought he could find over here, he could actually find it in the Lord.

[36 : 58] So you got some messy questions. You got some difficult issues that you're facing. Would you allow God tonight to speak into your heart and to guide you back to him?

To guide you to his heart. He loves you. He wants to do a work in you. And would you allow God to use you in someone else's life? You might take this model of Asaph. And you know, when somebody comes to us and discloses a question that they're really struggling with.

Friend, don't write it off. Did God write you off in your doubt, in your insecurity, in your fear? No, he didn't. He accepted you. And he helped guide you. And sometimes you might just be that person that would guide someone else back to the Father's heart.

Would you bow with me? Father, we come to you and we're just grateful for Jesus. We're grateful for the fact that you come to us and you say, peace be unto you. In our doubts, peace be unto you.

In our fears, hey, come back to me. God, I pray tonight that there might be some that would have questions. They have real doubts. They have real fears. God, would you speak into their heart right now?

[38 : 01] Would you bring scripture to mind that they might be strengthened and stabilized and secured upon your word? God, we love you so much. We pray that you'd use us to be instruments of the gospel in others' lives.

That we might help others walk through their messy questions. So that they would come and walk right back into your presence. That they might know you more deeply than they ever have before.

Brother Trent.