

Sermon-Based Questions

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Look Up: The Book of Psalms

Envy: Psalm 73

Introduction:

1. What are some of the things you envy in others: their possessions: money, house, car? Their appearance: beauty, nice clothes, slenderness, good health? Their success, job, vacations, dinner dates? Their obedient children? Something else_____?
2. Describe a time you had a reversal in how you saw someone you envied as they revealed their struggles to you.

Reading (Scripture Reference):

Read Psalm 73

Understanding:

3. Pastor Dave described Asaph as “a Levite, who had special responsibilities in the Jewish temple. He was also a musician appointed by King David to be one of the key worship leaders, a highly respected spiritual leader in Israel.” Yet he had struggles. Can you describe a time when a you had the same struggles with faith as Asaph?
4. **Look around:** What did Asaph see in the ones he was envying (verses 3-12)? How does his list compare with your own experience with envy?
5. Have you ever wondered if following God was worth it? You see your struggles and yet others who deny God “have it made.” What did Asaph do when he tried to understand what was happening (verses 13-17)?
6. **Look again:** What two things did Asaph see when he looked with *corrected vision* at the people he’d envied (verses 18-20)?
7. Pastor Dave quoted C.S. Lewis, “There are two kinds of people: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says (ultimately), ‘All right, then, have it your way.’” How can you pray for people you know who seem to be in the second group?
8. **Look in the mirror.** What resulted when Asaph’s instincts took over (verses 21-22)? What do you see when you get a clearer vision of yourself as your instincts take over in an unfair, annoying, unpleasant situation?

9. What is the true source of your prosperity (v. 23)? Compare to what Jesus said in Luke 12:22-34. What did Jesus say about finding your treasure? What do you treasure?
10. **Look up.** Read Ephesians 2:13. Pastor Dave said, “the most basic problem humans have is separation from God. It’s not a lack of prosperity or lack of success. The deepest issue we have is that we have this ache in our souls that only God can fill. That’s the epiphany that Asaph has.” “As for you” how do you get nearness to God?

Application Activity:

Create a Psalm

Using Asaph’s psalm as an example, write a psalm about your experience with (name an emotion). Cry out to God about your struggle. Describe the situation. Include a profession of innocence or a confession of sin and repentance. Acknowledge trust in God’s presence. Close with a request or praise.

Asaph’s Psalm

1. A cry to God [Psalm 73:1-3]
2. A description of the situation [verses 4-12]
3. A profession of innocence and/or A confession of sin [verses 13-15]
4. A turn to God acknowledging trust, assurance that He’ll be present [verses 16-24]
5. A closing request or praise [verses 25-28]

Your Psalm

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Prayer: (Turn your psalm into a prayer):

Lectio Divina:

1. Reading: Have someone from your group read the passage aloud.
2. Meditation: Spend an entire minute in complete silence, contemplating what was just read. Feel free to re-read the passage or jot down thoughts/highlight what stuck out to you.
3. Sharing: At the leader's signal, invite group members to share their insights for about 5 minutes.
4. Repeat: After the 5 minutes are over, repeat the process 2 more times. Listen/read like you haven't heard this passage before. If there are longer moments of silence, the leader can prompt discussion with the following questions:
 1. What did you hear and what seems important?
 2. What is the Holy Spirit impressing on you?
 3. What does it make you think of from your life?

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.

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. Psalm 73:23-26