

Sunday November 15th, 2020

Sermon Series- "Come Ye Thankful People, Come!" Part #2

Outline and Bible Study on Thankful Living from Psalm 37

"Thankful Even When Things Don't Make Sense!" Part 2 (Psalm 37:12-33)

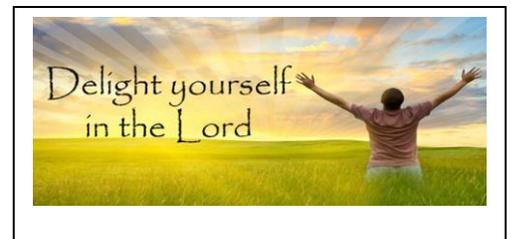
Introduction: When life doesn't make sense, how do you thank God? David wants us to embark in a life of delighting in the Lord. Now David wants to give us practical wisdom of how to know that being good, even when it may not make sense compared to others, is how we can delight in Him.



When it doesn't make sense remember...

- 1. The wicked may plot, but Jehovah laughs knowing what is coming. (vs. 12-13)**
- 2. The wicked may threaten, but Jehovah knows and reciprocates fairly and justly. (vs. 14-19)**
- 3. The wicked will borrow, but Jehovah generously delights and upholds our steps. (vs. 20-24)**
- 4. The wicked watch our lives, but Jehovah will never leave us or forsake us. (vs. 25-33)**

Conclusion: We gather together to delight in God, and He delights in us!



Bible Study: “Come Ye Thankful People Come!” Part #2 Psalm 37:12-33

1. Have you ever become discouraged at the world, situations, and even others who seem to get away with things that don't make sense? Where is the fairness and justice in life? David reminds us in Psalm 37 that God is delighted in His children even when we suffer trials and hard times. God is not mad at us. David is working at teaching wisdom and practical living so we can commit, trust, and delight in Him no matter what the “wicked” may do.



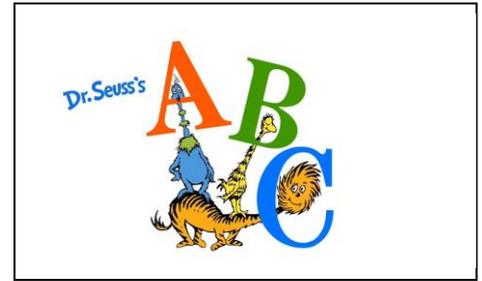
The outline of Psalm 37 is as follows:

1. The imperatives for us to delight and not fret at evildoers. (vs. 1-11)
2. The contrast of what evildoers may try, but Jehovah is countering and caring for us. (vs. 12-33)
3. The exhortation to wait upon Jehovah's power who will make things right someday! (vs. 34-40)

Take time and re-read the psalm and make notes about how David is assuring us that God will ultimately triumph when we live in a world of injustice and exploitation. If you are feeling that everything is hopeless and useless, and would cause you to want to give up, mark the thing in this section of the psalm which helps to encourage you. We see repeatedly in this psalm that “the Lord upholdeth the righteous” (vs. 17); “the Lord knoweth the days of the upright” (vs. 18); “and the enemies of the Lord shall... consume away” (vs. 20). What are some of the things we see around us that cause us to fret or wonder why being good doesn't seem to pay? Notice that the “wicked will be cut off” is mentioned five times (vs. 9, 20, 28, 34, 38).

2. Have you ever heard of the phrase: “Wise heads prevail?” Hot heads lose control, cool heads prevail. Inexperience overreacts, experience calculates more carefully. David wrote this psalm from the vantage point of his old age. He wrote this towards the end of his life: “I was young but now I am old” (vs. 25). He was turning this song into a piece which teaches wisdom. There are several phrases of this psalm which are quotes from the book of Proverbs; such as Proverbs 3:5, and Proverbs 24:19 is almost exactly like verse 1: “Fret not yourself because of evildoers, and be not envious of the wicked.” There are at least seven verses of Proverbs which were used and quoted in this psalm. That is why it is a “wisdom” or “proverbial” psalm. It is meant to teach young people wisdom and experience. When you go to the Proverbs, the very first chapters

are called the “my son” chapters. We believe Solomon wrote them, but when he referenced his father’s teachings, we know that he meant David. This psalm had a direct effect in Solomon’s life. So years of experience mellowed David into a man of deep insight, integrity, and balance. Yet David never lost the conviction that God’s watching over him and he would eventually prevail.



אֶל־תִּתְחַר בְּמַרְעִים אֶל־תִּקְנֵא בְעֵשִׂי עוֹלָה
 כִּי כְחָצִיר מִהֶרָה יִמְלֹו וְכִירְק דָּשָׁא יִבֹלֵן
 בְּטַח בִּיהוָה וְעֵשֶׂה־טוֹב שְׂכָרְאָרְךָ וְרַעַה אֲמוֹנָה
 וְהִתְעַנֵּג עַל־יְהוָה וְיִתְרַלֵּךְ מִשְׁאֵלֹת לִבְךָ
 גּוֹל עַל־יְהוָה דְרָכְךָ וְכִבְטַח עָלָיו וְהוּא יַעֲשֶׂה
 וְהוֹצִיא כְאוֹר צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּטָה כְּצִהְרִים

Something also important to note about this psalm. It is one of the very few psalms that the English reader does not appreciate the alphabetic outline of the psalm but it is nevertheless there. This is David’s alphabet song. David sought to begin every other verse with each successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Verse 1 begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, verse 3 with the second, verse 5 with the third, and so

forth. It was written this way so it would be easy for children to learn and memorize it. That is why it could be said that this is an “A,B,C’s” song for teaching children. This wisdom psalm has the theme very much like Psalm 49, 73 and the book of Job.

3. Reread verse 4 and verse 23. Try to remember to develop a definition of delight. Delight is love “doing a cartwheel”. It’s love stepping it up. It is more than a feeling, it is an action. I asked everyone to try to develop a good idea of “delight” for him or herself. Someone on our worship team said, “Love is singing, but delight is dancing before the Lord.” Another person said, “Love is fixing a car, but delight is when you drive it out on the road.” We need to understand the action of delight in our lives personally. Have you tried to find a way to describe your delight for God? It is my aim to dare you to embark on a life of “delight” that it would be your goal over the next month into Christmas, to embark on a relationship with God in which you delight in Him and He in you. My prayer is that we as a church people step it up a notch as we enter the Thanksgiving season.

The unfortunate thing about injustice is that it makes you concentrate on it. When something goes wrong for you, it is sometimes difficult to remember all the things that have gone right. And it is even more difficult to remember the Lord in it all. But “delight... in the Lord” is what David insisted we should do (vs. 4). To delight in the Lord while suffering injustice requires great discipline of mind and will. But there is a beautiful incentive. “Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart” (vs. 4). It does not mean that you can ask for and anticipate receiving anything your selfish heart may desire. But it does mean that if the Lord is your delight, He will give you desires that are new and beautiful, and guarantees He will answer your prayers.

A great reminder comes from Andrew Murray in his writing, "God's Presence Through Prayer." This is what he said: *"Christians often complain that their private prayer is not what it should be. They feel weak and ineffectual; the heart is cold and dark; it is as if they have so little to pray, and in those prayers no faith or joy. They are discouraged and kept from prayer by the thought that they cannot come to the Father as they ought or as they wish. Child of God, listen to your Teacher. He tells you that when you go to private prayer your first thought must be the Father who is delighted you came. If your heart is cold, get into the presence of the loving Father. As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities and delights in you. Do not be thinking of how little you have to bring God, but think, instead, about how much He wants to give you. Just place yourself before Him and look up into His face; think of His love, His wonderful, tender, pitying love. It is the Father's loving heart that will give light and warmth to yours. Just do what Jesus says: Just shut the door and pray to thy Father, which is in secret. Is it not wonderful? Yes, it is wonderful to be alone with God, your infinite, loving Father!"* (pg. 79-80)

4. There are four sections that contrast what the "evildoers" are doing, but it is contrasted with what Jehovah the Lord is doing. Again, the name for the Lord is the "Great I AM" the Self-existent One. There are four compare and contrast sections in this part of the psalm. See if you can figure out what the "wicked" are doing, and how Jehovah responds to them.

a. Comparison #1- (vs. 12-13) The wicked... _____.
But God... _____.

b. Comparison #2- (vs. 14-19) The wicked... _____.
But God... _____.

c. Comparison #3- (vs. 20-24) The wicked... _____.
But God... _____.

d. Comparison #4- (vs. 25-33) The wicked... _____.
But God... _____.

5. I love and have underlined verses 23-24 as the key verses in this section. Notice the illustration that Jehovah holds us with His strengthening hand. It may be good to look up some verses reminding us of the power of God's hand:

Psalm 10:12, 14-

Psalm 21:8-

Psalm 31:5, 8, 15-

Psalm 119:173-

Psalm 121:5-

Proverbs 3:27-
Isaiah 41:10, 13-14-
Matthew 22:44-

“Hold my hand,” says a father to his young son as they get ready to cross a busy street. With his father’s strong hand wrapped around his tiny fingers, the boy feels safe, unafraid. Have you ever wished that someone could take your hand and safely lead you through life’s uncertainties? If so, you may find comfort in the words recorded by Isaiah.—Read Isaiah 41:10, 13.

Isaiah directed his words to Israel. Though God viewed that nation as his “special property,” it was surrounded by enemies. (Exodus 19:5) Did Israel need to fear? Jehovah used Isaiah to convey a reassuring message. As we examine those words, let us keep in mind that they also apply to God’s worshippers today.—Romans 15:4.

“Do not be afraid,” urged Jehovah (Verse 10). These are not empty words. Jehovah explained why His people did not need to fear: “For I am with you.” He is not a distant source of aid, promising only to arrive in time to help in moments of need. He wanted His people to know that He was with them—as if by their side—ever ready to support them. Is that not a comforting thought?

I also love the assurance in verse 24- “If they fall, it isn’t fatal, for the Lord holds them with His hand” (The Living Paraphrase). Jehovah never throws us out or casts us off. Even when we stumble, He is holding us up. When we fail at times, or even fall to a besetting sin, He is there to restore. What are some areas from your life where you can thank God for His holding when you stumbled?

6. How does reminding ourselves of David’s “A.B.C.’s of wisdom through these verses (12-33), help us and help us prepare the next generation of Christians? Often we feel so disturbed that honest men suffer, and we are frustrated that rogues seemingly go free. The unfairness and injustice of life is one of the hardest things we face.

I want to close with a wonderful illustration I found in the October 6, 2020 issue of *The Fishwrapper* called “It Doesn’t Make Sense”.

“It doesn’t make sense...

- *That people who do not enjoy going to church on earth think they will be happy in heaven.*



- *That people who do not go to God's house on earth want a mansion prepared by God in heaven.*
- *That people who do not serve the Lord as part of God's program on earth (the church) expect to have a reward in heaven.*
- *That people who are uncomfortable being with God's people on earth want to spend eternity with them in heaven."*

It reminds us that we are to be a testimony in our lives for Jesus now, right? And that we need God's people and church. Are we faithful?

