

242 for 2015

Songs of the 70's

—Psalms 70-79—

Lesson: 4
Text: Psalm 73
Handout/Prep: September 23
242/Discussion: September 28-October 2
Proclamation: October 4

Refresh

Since your last meeting, seek to refresh not simply your memory (of outlines and illustrations, etc.), but also your past week, your present weaknesses, your will, your wonderings.

- 1) Review key themes. What did you hear last Sunday? Was it gospel? Could you tell this story to someone else? Will you tell it?
- 2) Address — or add — any questions you still wish to hear covered or clarified from the reading, the discussion, or from the sermon.
- 3) Explain any new insights (about God, church body, neighbor, self, service, etc.) you encountered or experienced. How does this Word inform your understanding of the Lord who is telling the story? How does it inform your place in His story?
- 4) Consider anew how the Word of God read and proclaimed last week offers refreshment to you:

Read

Psalm 73; I Chron. 6:31-39; 16:4-7; 25:1-2; Luke 4:1-14; 22:39-43; 23:36-38; 24:18-27

Reflect

In this section, expect to find a mixture of questions and considerations relating to the text/reading. Reflect both within (thought, prayer, study, etc.) and without (writing, discussion, action, etc.).

- 1) Based on its tone and lyric, if you were to give Psalm 73 a song *title*, what would it be?
- 2) At the outset of Psalm 73, you will see that the Psalter is now opening “Book Three” of its collection. How might this notation help believers better to join in this song?
- 3) Who is Asaph (cf. readings listed above from I Chronicles)? How does knowing about Asaph contribute to your understanding of this song (along with the next 10 songs)?
- 4) Do you agree with the assertion made in verse 1? Is it true *always*? Why, or why not?
- 5) In vss. 2 and 3 of Psalm 73, Asaph begins to question seriously something quite serious(!) In your own words, how would you express his struggle? Have you ever entered this inquiry with sincere depth and/or sincere doubt? If so, what led you there? Did you seek, and ever find, a resolution to the problem? If so, describe the resolution and how you obtained it.
- 6) In vss. 4-12, as part of his personal (and theological) problem, Asaph offers an assessment of “they”: Who are “they?” Is his description spot-on accurate? An embellishment? Other? Explain. Using modern terms, who would you likely put into the “they” category, and why? (ex. “celebrities,” the “rich and famous,” “the 99%”). *Is God good to them?* Why/why not?
- 7) In vss. 13 and 14, as Asaph moves his eyes from “they” to “I,” what does he see in his own “heart” and “hands” and “day?” In your own words, what is Asaph feeling and/or concluding in vss. 13 and 14? Explain.
- 8) Within the setting of Psalm 73, what is vs. 15 adding to the dynamic? How does it reflect your own walk, and talk, of faith?
- 9) After replaying his problem in head and in heart, what does Asaph admit in vs. 16? What happens next in vs. 17; specifically, where does Asaph go and what does he learn? How does this movement help Asaph? Does it help *you*; can it change your tune, too? If so, how? And if so, why?
- 10) As the song transitions in vs. 18, Asaph appears to speak from a new vantage point. What has he learned about the relationship that exists between God, himself, and “they?” List at least three clear realizations expressed in vss. 18-26 that communicate a fresh outlook and renewed trust in God. Which insights gleaned grip you the most? Testify.
- 11) As Psalm 73 closes, is the singer *sure* that God is good to His people (cf. vss. 27-28)? Is he even *more* sure than when he started the song (cf. vs. 1)? Why, or why not?
- 12) Who truly prospers in this song? How does this come about, and why does it come about?
- 13) As a singer of Psalm 73, what is it calling you to *do*? What is it calling you to *know*? To *feel*? Is one of these aspects accented more prominently? Explain.
- 14) How is this song about you? Do the lyrics of Psalm 73 provide words for your circumstance today? Do they give expression to your wants? Your worship? Your world? Why/why not?
- 15) How is this song about Jesus? Did He experience Psalm 73? Did He sing Psalm 73? Explain.

Relate

How does this Word relate to your relationships with God, fellow saints in the church, your neighbor, yourself (i.e. He, We, Thee, Me)? Consider the value of considering each relationship *in this order*. Moreover, seek to understand how the “fruit of the Spirit” (i.e. “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;” cf. Galatians 5:22-23) informs your answers/applications in each relationship.

1) *He*

How does this Word reveal God?

- His character? [attributes, works, wonders, control, etc.]
- His covenant? [plan, story, promises, blessings and curses...]
- His commands? [will, ways, call to repent, believe, obey...]
- His Christ? [pointing to, need for, fulfillment by, glory of...]

2) *We*

How does this Word speak to God’s people as a whole?

- As a global body [Displaying unity? Love?]
- As a gathered body [Assembling for worship? Regularly? Eagerly?]
- As a growing body [Making disciples? Equipping saints?]
- As a gifted body [Exercising gifts? One-anothering?]
- As a GURC body [Local applications? Edifying? Specific? Shared?]

3) *Thee*

How does this Word inform the way I love my neighbor?

- With my words? [kindness, truth-telling, gospel/evangelism...]
- With my works? [doing justly, loving mercy, meeting needs...]
- With my welcome? [hospitality, listening ear, availability...]

4) *Me*

How might the Spirit use this Word to move me — from the inside-out?

- My consecration [set-apartness, unto holiness...]
- My commitment [love of God in heart/soul/mind; walking humbly...]
- My conviction [of particular sin, of need for restoration...]
- My conscience [internal calls to specific actions, needs, people]
- My cornucopia [personal applications of fruit-full-ness; cf. Gal. 5]
- My calling [use of gift(s) granted/equipped with, for service]
- My conflict [with people, with inner struggles, with my flesh...]
- My congregation [see applications above, “We”]
- My comfort [see applications below, “Rest”]
- My conversation [with spouse? children? unbelievers? believers?]
- My communication [in particular: assess ability/desire to tell the gospel from *this text*. Why not try now in your own words?]

Resolve

As revealed from this text, and as guided by the Holy Spirit, note at least one insight or specific action that would prove fruitful (see again Galatians 5:22-23) in your walk as you make your way to Zion. For example, does this week's study or proclamation of good news call you to:

Remember?	_____
Repent?	_____
Resist?	_____
Reconsider?	_____
Relay?	_____
Relish?	_____
Rejoice?	_____
Other?	_____

Rest

In view of all the above, rejoice that the inner posture of a child of God is/ought to be one of rest — a deep-seated joy that exudes gratitude and ongoing trust in the One who proves Himself forever faithful — to His people, to His plan, to Himself! This reality serves to refocus and encourage weary, walking saints. Today, can you name one way, or one area of your life where you would like to rest in Christ more? How does this present Word speak to your need for rest? With His gospel refreshing you, seek the Lord's comfort as you pilgrim upward in His service.