

Surely God is....Good?

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When Life is Unfair

Psalm 73

I. Candid Confession

II. Contradicting Circumstances

A. Success of Sinners

B. Suffering of Saints

III. Comes To Church

A. _____

B. _____

C _____

IV. Confidence In Christ

Day One: Genesis 32:22-32

- Where did Jacob go, and who was with him (22)? Describe their river crossing (23). What happened when Jacob was left alone (24)? How did the man try to get Jacob to stop wrestling him (25-26)? How did Jacob respond (26)? In this bizarre encounter, only by realizing the man's true identity would Jacob demand such a thing. How do you think he knew it was God wrestling him?
- How and why was Jacob given the new name of Israel (27-29)? Here in the Bible, struggling with God is depicted as both good and worthy of memorialization. How does this sit with you? What slice of God's assured goodness does this story highlight?
- How did Jacob get the blessing he asked for (29)? What name did he give to that place (30)? Why (30)? What did he do after seeing God "face to face" (31)? How did the Israelites remember this pivotal moment in their history (32)? Ask the Lord how he wants *you* to remember that wrestling with him can be a blessing.

Day Two: Job 10

- How does Job attempt to justify his lament (1)? Before God, what makes it possible for *you* to "give free rein" to your complaint? When do you feel free to "speak out in the bitterness" of your soul? Summarize the questions Job directs at the Lord (2-7). Meditate on verse 7. In such a headspace, how could anyone possibly consider God good? Share your thoughts with the Lord.
- What are Job's remarks about God being his creator (8-12)? Meditate on verse 12. Do you echo this confession, or do you feel differently? Speak to the Lord about this. How does Job describe the powerlessness he feels before God (13-17)? Of these verses, which one jumps out at you? Why?
- How does Job then expand upon his utterance in verse one: "I loathe my very life" (18-22)? Re-read verse 20. Imagine asking the Lord to "turn away" so you can "have a moment's joy." What can the Lord do with a confession of such radical doubt?

Day Three: Job 24

- What does Job long for the Lord to do (1)? As one "who knows him," in what ways can you identify with these questions? Summarize the acts of oppressors (2-4). And what about the plight of the oppressed (5-12)? Which of these injustices evokes the strongest response in you? Why do you think that's the case, and how might the Lord want you to channel your emotion?

- How does Job describe the evil that happens in darkness (13-17)? Take a moment to consider for yourself the way evil operates. Also consider whether you are complicit in any of it. How do you either actively or passively “rebel against the light”? Repent. Allow Christ to draw you into his light and presence.
- In verses 18-25, what more hopeful picture does Job paint? This major Bible plot, echoed in Psalm 37, Mary’s Song, Revelation 21-22, etc., emboldens faith and fans the flames of hope. Ponder these story points and allow the Holy Spirit to minister to you.

Day Four: Matthew 27:32-56

- Who carried Jesus’ cross (32)? Describe the circumstances of Jesus’ crucifixion (33-37). The sign, though mocking, speaks truth. What other truths does the crucifixion communicate to you?
- Who else was crucified (38)? Who joined the soldiers in taunting Jesus (39, 41, 44)? In what ways (39-40, 42-44)? Attacked from all sides, how do you think Jesus felt? Describe the final moments leading up to, and the culmination of his death (45-50). This gut-wrenching and chaotic scene, centered around Jesus’ agony and confession of profound doubt – as expressed in his quoting of Psalm 22:1, is a lot to take in. Respond to the Lord.
- What was the immediate aftermath of Jesus’ death (51-53)? How do these powerful events bolster the confidence we have in Christ to save the day? How did the centurion and others respond (54)? Meanwhile, what were Jesus’ women friends up to (55-56)? If you were an eyewitness, how do you think you would’ve responded?

Day Five: Matthew 28:16-20

- It’s eight days after Jesus’ resurrection; set the scene (16). What other Bible stories involve seeking God on a mountain? Pray for your own mountaintop experience – that you’d be filled with robust faith and confidence in Christ. How did the disciples respond when they saw Jesus (17)? Despite the mountaintop setting, why do you think some doubted? Imagine what your response would’ve been.
- What did Jesus say about himself (18)? What three things did he tell the disciples to do (19-20)? What promise did he make (20)? Meditate on these words: “all authority...has been given to me” and “surely I am with you always.” Imagine Jesus speaking them to you. May his assurance bring clarity and confidence.
- One chapter prior, as we read for day four, Jesus was on the cross, full of doubt. And now, here he is abounding in assurance. Reflect on your own ups and downs of faith and doubt. Be encouraged: Jesus empathizes with you even in this!