

Reflection Questions: Psalm 73:1-16

For the message, "When Life Doesn't Make Sense" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on August 5, 2018

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read the Scripture text: Psalm 73:1-16

A summary of the message: A worship leader in ancient Israel by the name of Asaph wrestles with the problem of the prosperity (shalom) of the wicked. Against the background of the orthodox belief that God is good, he sees people doing bad things and getting away with it, and he begins to envy them. In fact, he tells us that he almost ditched his faith.

Key Quotes from the message:

- Matthew 5:45, "He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."
- Luke 6:35, "Love your enemies, do good to them...because He is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked."
- Larry Crabb, "When I am not convinced that God is good, I will quietly, but with tight-lipped resolve—take over responsibility for my own well-being."
- Phillip Yancey, "Any discussion of how pain and suffering fit into God's scheme ultimately leads back to the Cross."
- Os Guinness, "Christianity is the only religion whose God bears the scars of evil."

Bottom Line: The crucifixion of Jesus tells us that God himself was willing to experience the worst the world could dish out. And the resurrection of Jesus is his guarantee that pain and suffering and the seeming flourishing of evil do not have the final word.

Let's get started...

- Describe how you have wrestled with the problem of evil? When did it first become an issue for you? How have you tended to deal with it?

QUESTIONS

1. Let's think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.

- What grabs your attention in this text? How are you challenged, convicted, encouraged, or surprised by this text?

- What do you think God might be trying to teach you by having a psalm like Psalm 73 in the Scripture for us with all its rawness and honesty?

2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.

- What does this text assume to be true about the community of God's people?
- Considering the honesty and rawness of this Psalm, what kind of community of faith is this text calling us to become?

3. Let's think about how this text applies to our city.

- How does this text help us understand and have compassion for people who have suffered deeply, or who are trying to reconcile the goodness of God with the seeming prosperity of evil?
- How might we tie in what God did for us in Jesus with understanding the problem of evil?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

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- _____
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