

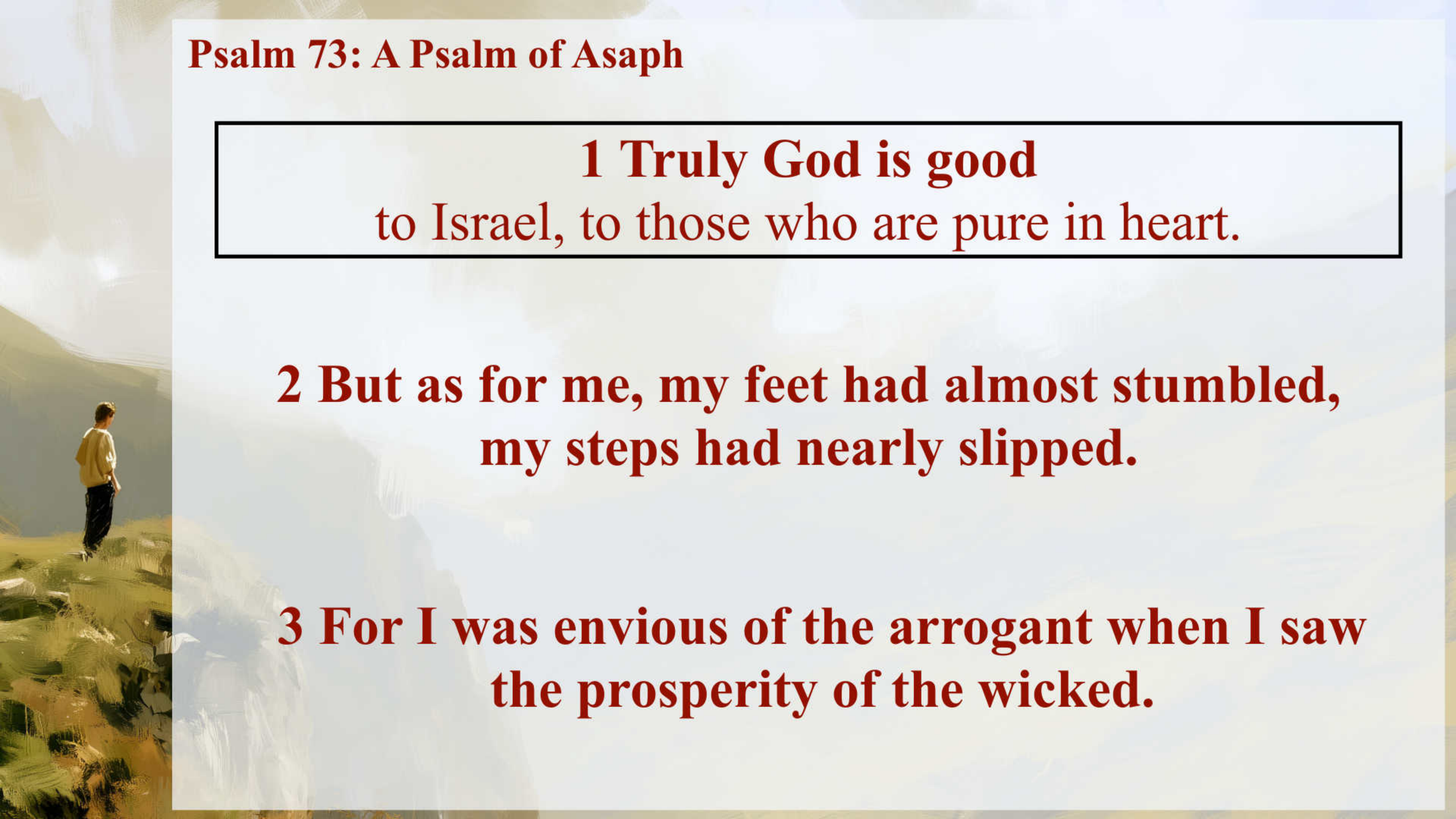


“It Is Good To Be Near God”

Psalm 73

September 13, 2026

New Baptist Church

A person in a light-colored sweater and dark pants stands on a grassy hillside, looking out over a vast, hazy landscape. The scene is misty or foggy, with rolling hills and a soft, diffused light. The person is positioned on the left side of the frame, looking towards the right.

Psalm 73: A Psalm of Asaph

**1 Truly God is good
to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.**

**2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,
my steps had nearly slipped.**

**3 For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw
the prosperity of the wicked.**

A person in a light-colored shirt and dark pants stands on a grassy hill, looking out over a vast, hazy landscape under a bright sky. The person is positioned on the left side of the frame, looking towards the right.

Psalm 73: A Psalm of Asaph

3 For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Envy is the pain one feels because someone else possesses what one does not have. **Envy** is more than just desire; it is turning another person's good into a grievance

The Effects of Envy on the Soul

1. Envy distorts a person's view of reality.

4 For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek. 5 They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.

2. Envy causes resentment towards God.

A person in a light-colored shirt and dark pants stands on a grassy hill, looking out over a landscape. The background shows rolling hills and a bright sky.

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2. Envy causes resentment towards God.

6 Therefore pride is their necklace; violence covers them as a garment. 7 Their eyes swell out through fatness; their hearts overflow with follies. 8 They scoff and speak with malice; loftily they threaten oppression. 9 They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue struts through the earth. 10 Therefore his people turn back to them, and find no fault in them. 11 And they say, "How can God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?" 12 Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches.

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The Effects of Envy on the Soul

1. Envy distorts a person's view of reality.

2. Envy causes resentment towards God.

3. Envy produces resistance and blindness to God's presence and work within one's own life.

13 All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence.

14 For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning.

*Envy has turned his hardship and suffering from being reasons to trust God even more into reasons to think that God does not love him. **Because of envy, hardship is driving Asaph away from God, not toward God.***

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The Effects of Envy on the Soul

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*Envy has turned his hardship and suffering from being reasons to trust God even more into reasons to think that God does not love him. **Because of envy, hardship is driving Asaph away from God, not toward God.***

15 If I had said, "I will speak thus," I would have betrayed the generation of your children. 16 But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task,

Envy caused Asaph to view God through the lens of his circumstances, rather than to view his circumstances through the lens of what he knew to be true about God: God is good.

Psalm 73: A Psalm of Asaph

3 For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

17 until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end.

Asaph has been interpreting God through his circumstances. But in the sanctuary, he begins interpreting his circumstances through what he knows about God.



The circumstances outside the sanctuary have not changed, but his distorted view of reality, his resentment towards God, and his blindness to God's presence and work do change.

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The circumstances outside the sanctuary have not changed, but his distorted view of reality, his resentment towards God, and his blindness to God's presence and work do change.



Asaph's view of the people he envied changes

18 Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. 19 How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors! 20 Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms.

Asaph realizes the people he envied are living lives of vapor, or no substance, lives that can not stand in the presence of God.

Asaph's view of himself changes

21 When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart, 22 I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you.

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The circumstances outside the sanctuary have not changed, but his distorted view of reality, his resentment towards God, and his blindness to God's presence and work do change.

Asaph's view of the people he envied changes

Asaph's view of himself changes

Asaph's view and resentment towards God changes

23 Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.

24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. 25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.



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The greatest gift of the gospel is not simply what God gives us; it is that, in Christ, God gives us himself. When you have him, there is nothing in this world that compares.

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The greatest gift of the gospel is not simply what God gives us; it is that, in Christ, God gives us himself. When you have him, there is nothing in this world that compares.

26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Enjoying God is not just the goal of the Christian life; it's the foundation of it.

Do You Enjoy God?

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23 Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.

24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. 25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.

26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

27 For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. 28 But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.”

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24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. 25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.

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- The psalm began with Asaph envying those who were far from God. **It ends with Asaph saying, “It is good to be near God.”**
- The psalm began with his feet almost slipping. **It ends with God as his refuge.**
- The psalm began with envy over what other people possessed. **It ends with contentment in God, who holds him by his right hand.**

A painting of a man standing in a field, looking out over a vast landscape. The man is in the lower right foreground, wearing a light shirt and dark trousers. He is looking towards a green valley with rolling hills in the distance. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall style is impressionistic, with visible brushstrokes and a warm, golden light. A white text box is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image.

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