

Why Live Godly in an Ungodly World?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 February 2021

Preacher: Bill Story

- [0 : 00] Good morning. Good to be back with you this week. I was unable to be here with you last week because I was following doctor's orders and getting my second shingles shot thing, which shot me down.
- So I don't know. But glad to be here. Back on my feet and kind of normal temperature and I don't know how normal I can actually be, but normaler than I was last week.
- So anyway, so take out your Bibles with me and turn to Psalm 37 this morning. Psalm 37. As if you've been following us, you know that we've been looking at several Psalms of lament.
- We looked at four different Psalms of lament, struggling with, which I felt were appropriate for our times, going through times of wilderness, going through times when we feel like, where is God?
- I can't see God in this. Is he hidden from us? Is he forgotten us? And those are Psalms that just are genuine expressions calling out to God and how we handle that kind of sorrow and difficulty time.
- [1 : 22] Now we come to Psalm 37, which I really believe is an answer to those laments. It acknowledges that we're still dealing with hardship and evil and wickedness, evildoers, that kind of thing.
- But it brings an answer and it brings a response to that. So this is a great Psalm of hope, a great Psalm of realism.
- And bottom line, I think it answers the question, why would we live godly in an ungodly world? When it doesn't pay at the beginning, why would we do it?
- Why endure? So I think that's a really important question to ask today. Why continue to be faithful when it's so easy to not be faithful during these times? So it's a great, I think, good question for us to look at this morning.
- So what I want to do is read the word, ask the Lord to teach us, and then we'll dig in. So if you're able, please stand as I read from Psalm 37, a Psalm of David.
- [2 : 34] Fret not yourself because of evildoers. Be not envious of wrongdoers. For they will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb.
- Trust in the Lord and do good. Dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.
- Commit your way to the Lord. Trust in him and he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your justice as the noonday.
- Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him. Fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices.
- Refrain from anger and forsake wrath. Fret not yourself. It tends only to evil. For the evildoers shall be cut off.
- [3 : 42] But those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land. And just a little while the wicked will be no more. Though you look carefully at his place, he will not be there.

But the meek, the meek shall inherit the land. And delight themselves in abundant peace. The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at him.

But the Lord laughs at the wicked. For he sees that his day is coming. The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows. To bring down the poor and needy.

To slay those whose way is upright. Their sword shall enter their own heart. And their bows shall be broken. Better is the little that the righteous has than the abundance of many wicked.

For the arms of the wicked shall be broken. But the Lord upholds the righteous. The Lord knows the days of the blameless. And their heritage will remain forever.

[4 : 48] They are not put to shame in evil times. In the days of famine they have abundance. But the wicked will perish. The enemies of the Lord are like the glory of the pastures.

They vanish. Like smoke they vanish away. The wicked borrows but does not pay back. But the righteous is generous and gives. For those blessed by the Lord shall inherit the land.

But those cursed by him shall be cut off. The steps of a man are established by the Lord. When he delights in his way. Though he fall.

He shall not be cast headlong. For the Lord upholds his hand. I have been young and now I am old. Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken.

Or his children begging for bread. He is ever lending generously. And his children become a blessing. Turn away from evil and do good.

[5 : 53] So you shall. So shall you dwell forever. For the Lord loves justice. He will not forsake his saints. They are preserved forever.

But the children of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land. And dwell upon it forever. The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom.

And his tongue speaks justice. The law of his God is in his heart. His steps do not slip. The wicked watches for the righteous. And seeks to put him to death.

The Lord will not abandon him to his power. Or let him be condemned when he is brought to trial. Wait for the Lord. And keep his way. And he will exalt you to inherit the land.

You will look on when the wicked are cut off. I have seen a wicked, ruthless man. Spreading himself like a green laurel tree.

[6 : 52] But he passed away. And behold, he was no more. Though I sought him, he could not be found. Mark the blameless. And behold the upright.

For there is a future for the man of peace. But transgressors shall be altogether destroyed. The future of the wicked shall be cut off.

The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord. He is their stronghold in the time of trouble. The Lord helps them and delivers them.

He delivers them from the wicked and saves them. Because they take refuge in him. So reads the word.

Let us pray for God's teaching. Lord, we pray that you would teach us. Thank you for what David has written to sing, to teach, to instruct. Help us to grasp these principles, these proverbs, these wise sayings, to grasp how they apply to us and how they answer the question, why would we live godly when it does not pay in this world?

[8 : 13] Grant us, Lord, to see your wisdom and change us, encourage us, lift us up, give us eyes to see. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated.

Well, there's several old sayings, popular sayings. I don't know what kind of sayings they are, but they popped into my head as I was thinking about this psalm. You probably know them.

Nice guys finish last. See, you do know. Only the good die young. How come the good die young?

Only the good die young. The bad live forever, right? You only live once. So eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die.

They're all about get what you can get now. They're all about don't be the nice guy because you get trampled on. So many believe that to get ahead in life, it's about the survival of the fittest, which does fit with the world's philosophy of evolution.

[9 : 38] It's survival of the fittest. Eat dog, eat dog. Got to get ahead. You got to look out for self. Do what you got to do to get what you want. Live for now.

So if this world, if Paul even says that, if there's no resurrection, if there's no life after death, Paul himself says, eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die. Because if this is all there is, get it now.

So it's logical. But Paul's point is, this isn't all there is. We all know, and I believe people who are unbelievers know this, that there is more, because God has put eternity in our hearts.

God is, we're going to look next week at Psalm 19, the evidence that God has given in creation, that he does, in fact, exist, and he proclaims it to the world.

There is a God. He has made us for himself, and he calls us to live differently. So you heard some of the saints, only the good die young, nice guys finish last.

[10 : 47] Well, Jesus has some sayings too, remember? The last shall be first. The greatest is the servant, or the least, or the slave.

So there's a counter thinking that Jesus talks about. Psalm 37 compares two different lives, values, two different views of life.

There is the earthly life, represented by the wicked person, and there is the heavenly, or eternal, perspective. Jesus talked about this in Psalm, not Psalm, excuse me, Matthew 7, in his great sermon, where he said, enter by the narrow gate.

Why? For the gate is wide, and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. There's the broad road. That's where most people go. Why? Because it's easy.

It's easy. And our soul wants what's easy. But then he says, but the gate is narrow, and the way is hard, that leads to life.

[11 : 59] And those who find it are few. Two kinds of people, Jesus says. Here's the many and the few. There's those that choose the big, broad road, the easy way, and there are those that choose the narrow way, but it's hard.

The road less chosen. So, as I said, I think Psalm 37 here of David is an answer to the Psalms of Lament. It answers, where is God?

Why has God hidden himself? Why am I in despair? Why does evil prosper? How long, oh God, before you answer our prayers?

Those Psalms, I think this is a response to the problem of evil or wickedness. This text uses the word wicked 14 times in its 40 verses.

The wicked, the wicked, the wicked, the wicked, the wicked. He's comparing him with the righteous, who are mentioned several times as well. The wicked is called also an evildoer in verse 1, a wrongdoer.

- [12 : 59] So, who is the wicked person? Well, according to this Psalm, he's not calling everybody wicked. He's calling the wicked person that has a certain perspective and value system. He, in verse 12, plots and conspires against righteousness. Verse 14, he intimidates people with violence. He's a violent person, aggressive person. Verse 16, he seeks riches, seeks, abundance. That is his, that is, that is his value. And verse 20, 21, he's an enemy of God. The wicked person is an enemy of God. They are takers, not givers. They're out to get. They, they, they, they take, but they don't give back. That's how David defines or describes the wicked person. So, Psalm 37, I think is the answer to the question, why should we live godly? Not should, why would we?
- [14 : 03] When evil prospers, when righteous people suffer, when the good die young and the nice guys finish last, why still be the nice guy? Why still be the righteous? Why still do what's right? Why bother? What's the use? If you do good, you will suffer. If you are humble, you will get stepped on. If you don't push, you'll get neglected. So, why be this kind of person? When injustice abounds, what is the hope? So, here's a psalm. What we've been looking at in the psalms are mostly prayers. All the laments we've looked at are prayers. They're prayers of confession, prayers of venting, prayers of, but they're directed to God. They're talking to God. Notice in this psalm, it's not a talking, it's not a prayer to God. It is wisdom to the believer. He is teaching.
- [15 : 06] It's like reading the Proverbs here. It's kind of like, he's giving wise sayings through here. There's comparisons, and it's kind of like reading the Proverbs. So, it's a psalm of wisdom and instruction. It's to, it's to the believer who struggles with evildoers, who struggles with continuing to do the right thing when it doesn't seem to pay. See, so that's what he's saying right off the beginning. Fret not yourself because of evildoers. Be not envious of wrongdoers. You see those people, they're getting ahead. They're prospering. They're cheating, but they're getting ahead and they're getting away with it. Should, so what's the use of doing, you know, I'm doing the right thing and I'm not getting, I'm getting behind. So, we could kind of look at it that way. So, here's this psalm. And I think its focus really is, when you boil it all down, it's answering that question, why would we live godly in an ungodly world?
- [16 : 11] I think there's two reasons here. The psalm, though it's kind of like Proverbs after Proverbs, there is some structure here and I think we find it by seeing in the first 11 verses, there is a call to godliness. There are, in the first 11 verses, there are 15 imperatives. Trust, commit, wait, you know, several instructive calls. And then, we don't see any from verses 12 through 26. And then once again, in verse 27 to the end, we see, once again, a call. So, it begins and ends with this call to godliness. This instructive, this, these imperatives. And then in the middle, there's this middle section, verse 12 to 26, that's kind of a contrast. Proverbs of contrast. Here's the wicked person, here's the righteous person. And it's kind of contrasting their values. So, I've tried to break that down into two reasons here then.

[17 : 23] Why live godly? Why bother? Not just because God has said so, but what are the reasons that will motivate me? What are the things that help me really want to do that, even though it doesn't pay in the beginning?

One is because those who wait for the Lord have an eternal mindset. That's the first reason. And then, secondly, those who wait for the Lord seek a greater treasure.

So, they have an eternal mindset. And secondly, they have a greater desire than those who are earthly. I remember being amazed by John Piper's book called Desiring God.

He described this Christian hedonism, which attracted me. It's like, hedonism? Isn't that bad? Hedonism is like, well, what, you know, what's best for me? And Piper argued from the Psalms and from C.S.

Lewis' writings, he argued that actually when we settle for worldliness, we have a low desire, a low hedonism.

[18 : 42] It's not satisfying enough. He says, a real godly person desires the best kind of satisfaction and that only comes from God.

So, he calls it a Christian hedonism. So, he seeks higher treasure, not just the kind that rusts and fades away. He seeks an eternal, a lasting, a satisfying satisfaction.

It's not wrong to want those things, it's to want them because that's what God offers to us. And this Psalm kind of talks about this. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.

See, this Psalm kind of brings that out. So, why would I live godly in an ungodly world? Well, one, because I don't just think of the temporary, I think of the eternal.

I'm driven by the eternal. And secondly, because I'm seeking a higher treasure than anything this world can offer. See, it's a mindset, it's a view, it's a value system.

[19 : 44] So, first of all, those who wait for the Lord have an eternal mindset. So, he begins and ends this Psalm with instructions. So, in the verse, first 11 verses have this instruction about relying on the Lord.

As I said, there are 15 imperatives here from verse 1 through verse 11. Six of them focus in the middle here, focus on a relationship with the Lord, which I thought was interesting.

So, he talks about fretting not and not getting angry and those kind of things. But then in the middle here from verses 3 through 7, it's like all of them are related to the Lord.

So, he says, trust in the Lord. And then he says, verse 4, delight in the Lord. Verse 5, commit your way to the Lord.

Trust in Him. And then verse 7, be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him. See, so they're focused, the heart, I think, in these initial instructions are the Lord, the Lord, the Lord.

[20 : 57] And then it's framed by the first verse 1, you know, fret not, and then again, fret not, is in verse 8. Fret not, don't be anxious.

Why? Because these, the evildoers are only temporary. He says in verse 2, verse 1, fret not because of evildoers, do not be envious of wrongdoers.

Why? Verse 2, for they will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green earth. Now, how long does green grass last?

Does it fade right away? No, it's got a season. It has a season where it's green. We love it. We're looking forward, we're in winter now, we're looking forward to, when does the green come back? When do the colors come back?

And then it's green for all, and then it fades. That's God's way. It's just, we get to enjoy the beauty of the flowers, but then they fade and they wither. And he's saying, that's how it is with those who are wrongdoers, those who are earthly minded, that will fade.

- [22 : 05] It's temporal. Not right away, although he does use the word soon. But notice, but remember, he's thinking from an eternal perspective.
- So compared to eternity, they will soon fade. He says it again in verse 10. He talks about, verse eight, refrain from anger, forsake wrath.
- Fret not yourself, attends only to evil, for the evildoers will be cut off. Those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land. Verse 10, in just a little while, the wicked will be no more.
- Just a little while. From eternity's perspective. In our modern day thinking, it's okay, not quick enough. Not quick enough. This seems to be going on forever.
- But in compared to, as Paul says, the surpassing glory of eternity compared to the temporary trials and suffering are incomparable.
- [23 : 04] But we're in the middle of the hard part, so that's hard to see. We see it by faith. So then secondly, in the end of this psalm, so verses 27 through the end, he again pulls together there's some, not as many imperatives, only six.
- But once again, the middle ones focus on the Lord. So verse 27, he has two imperatives. Turn away from evil and do good. Okay, then we go down to verse 34.
- Wait for the Lord and keep his way. So notice in 34, the middle two imperatives are the Lord related. Wait for the Lord, keep his way. And then 32 has two more.
- Excuse me, 37 has two more. Mark the blameless and behold the upright because he's making a point about see this mindset. So for those who take refuge in the Lord, there is a future is his point here.
- I want you to notice how much he talks about eternal perspective. So begin with verse 27. Turn away from evil and do good. Why? So you shall dwell for a while?
- [24 : 17] You'll have a good time for a little while? No, forever. Forever. Okay, then see verse 29. The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell upon it forever.
- Is this a temporary earthly land? No, this is forever land. That sounds like Disneyland. Is there a forever land in Disneyland? This is a... God started it.
- It wasn't yet. All right, so then down to verse 37, we see it again. Mark the blameless, behold the upright. Why? For there is a future for the man of peace. And again, 39 and 40.
- The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord. He is their stronghold in the time of trouble. He will help them. He will deliver them. He will deliver them from the wicked and save them because they take refuge in him.
- So it talks about a future. It talks about God will provide. God will come through in the end. And then the other thing I wanted you to know is the reward from the Lord is emphasized by one particular phrase five times through the psalm.
- [25 : 24] Maybe you noticed it when we were reading through. One phrase stands out and it's the phrase, they shall inherit the land. So we see it five times.
- We see it in verse nine. But those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land. Again, verse 11. The meek shall inherit the land.
- Verse 22. For those blessed by the Lord shall inherit the land. Again in verse 29.
- The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell upon it forever. And then finally verse 34. Wait for the Lord. Keep his way. And he will exalt you to inherit the land.
- So why inherit the land? Why that phrase? What would inherit the land mean to a Jew? You know?
- [26 : 21] Land important to the Jews? Yeah. That was the promise to Abraham, right? The promised land. Abraham lived in the land in tents. Never bought a piece of property till his wife Sarah died.

But the promise of the land. It was a promise to his descendants. A promise to Isaac's descendants. A promise to Jacob's descendants. A promise to Judah's descendants. A promise to Moses. A promise to future generations.

A promise to David. Well, so what is this? And then Jesus in Matthew 5. Remember the Beatitudes? Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth or land.

In Hebrew the word for land and earth, same word. The same atom. The same dust. Well, inherit the land. So what does that mean?

Is he talking about an earthly hope? He's talking about going back to that strip of land in Israel and camping there? That was a physical promise that God fulfilled in the time of Joshua to the Jews.

[27 : 27] In fact, the book of Joshua says it over and over again. God has fulfilled his word. God has fulfilled his word. God kept his promise. So is that still what we're looking for?

Well, no. We have hints in this psalm that it's bigger than a temporary land site. It's forever. It's forever. It's eternal. It's something lasting.

And then the book of Hebrews clarifies this for us. Remember how Hebrews puts it? Hebrews 11, 13 to 16. Talk about these people of faith.

Noah and Abraham and Sarah, all these people of faith. He says, these all died in faith, watch this, not having received the things promised.

They died in faith. They didn't get what was promised. They haven't received it. But, watch, he goes on. But having seen them and greeted them from afar, their eyes of faith saw into the future and saw it.

[28 : 35] Having acknowledged, watch this now, having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth, in the land. For people who speak thus make it clear they are seeking a land, a homeland, a place.

If they had been thinking of the land from which they had gone out, the promised land, they would have had opportunity to go back.

But as it is, they desire a better country. that is a heavenly one.

We're talking about Old Testament guys. We're talking about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David. They got to the promised land and they said, it's great.

Moses sent the spies in, right? What's in there? Oh man, flowing with grapes and pomegranates and if you like pomegranates, you know, but also there's giants and waltzes and I don't know if we should go.

[29 : 43] There's problems going in there. So yeah, it was a great land but Abraham, first one who comes to this promised land, what does he do? Lives in tents.

Lives in tents. Then his son Isaac lives in tents. His son Jacob lives in tents. The 12 tribes lived in tents. What's wrong with the land?

Well, there's famine in the land, there's enemies in the land. You go to the promised land, it's got all kinds of problems. That little strip there, as great as it is, it was a true promise and fulfillment of God but it was a picture of something bigger.

It was just a picture and Abraham got it. He got it. I'm looking for something bigger than that. It's not just this plot of land that I can grow some stuff in and hopefully protect and, you know, keep secure and when enemies come and then when the famine comes, you know, we keep hearing of famines in the land of promise.

How come? And they have to go, you know, Ruth has to go to, or Naomi has to go out. What's with all the problems? Well, the land is just a picture. It's the heart of God's promise of future rest and security and a place.

[31 : 04] Those who wait for the Lord have an eternal mindset. They're looking for something better than God's promise here on earth.

They know his promise is bigger than that. They know his promise is more lasting than that. It's not a temporary fix. It's not a temporary security. It's not a temporary treasure.

Our future hope is heaven. And a new heaven and a new earth. That's God's promise of ultimate rest and security.

On earth, we are exiles and strangers. This is not our home. We're just a passing through as the song goes.

This is not our best life now, Joel. Joel wouldn't listen to this. That's why he's so dangerous. He's getting people's eyes focused on now.

[32 : 12] That's not eyes of faith. This is not our best life now. You'll be disappointed. And you can't find it in Jesus' teaching.

You can't find it in the Psalms. You can't find it in the Gospels. You can't find it in Paul's writings. And you certainly won't find it in the book of Revelation where we're going in a little few weeks. Not our best life now here.

Our best life is to come. Our best life is to come. And that's what we live for. Those who wait and trust in the Lord have an eternal mindset.

That's why they endure. Because they're not banking on now. There's a second reason he gives. And that comes in the middle of this Psalm from verses 12 to 26 where he does a comparison now.

He's going to talk about the wicked person and the righteous person. He's going to talk about those who focus on the temporal and those who focus on the eternal.

[33 : 16] Those who focus on earthly things now and those who focus on heavenly things. He's going to show three contrasts. The wicked person who's temporal versus the righteous person who has eternal desires.

He's going to focus on treasures. Those who have a value of earthly treasure and those who value future. Heavenly treasures. Then he's going to talk about their securities.

The wicked person is going to be the taker. He needs it now. His security is here. So he's taking. Taking. He doesn't want to give because he's insecure. But the righteous person is going to be the giver because his security is in the Lord.

His refuge is in the Lord. I can give. The Lord will provide. And this psalm is full of it. I'll never see the day when the righteous is in need.

In the time of famine. God's there for you. He may not be overflowing but he'll have plenty. So he sets up these contrasts.

[34 : 20] So here's the way I would say the second reason. A couple different ways to say it actually. Why live godly? Why endure hardship? Well secondly because eternal blessings far surpass temporal abundance.

The eternal blessings and riches of the future the treasure in heaven far surpass temporary abundance. Another way to say this is those who wait for the Lord seek a greater treasure.

They don't settle for a temporary earthly treasure. So first contrast he gives in verses 12-15 is this temporary versus eternal perspective.

He says verse 12 12-14 actually just focuses on the wicked person. He says the wicked verse 12 plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at him. They hate the righteous person but the Lord laughs at the wicked.

Why? Because he sees that his day is coming. It's temporary. He has temporary success. His plots are only temporary. The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows to bring down the poor and needy.

[35 : 38] Look at this. They use violence. They're aggressive and they pick on the poor. They're bullies.

That's the word. Difficult word. Bully. They're bullies. Beat up on the little guy to get ahead. Take advantage. Right? So they draw the sword and bend their bows to bring down the poor and the needy to slay those whose way is upright.

What happens? Verse 15 Their swords shall enter their own heart and their bows shall be broken. In the end. Not right away but in the end. The wicked person thrives right now but his day is coming.

He will reap what he has sown. All of his violence and abuse in the end is self-destructive. It will come back.

God will see to that. Now we don't get to see it right away. It doesn't happen as quick as we want but it will happen. Then secondly we see a different another contrast of values in verses 16 to 20.

[36 : 53] He seems to focus on treasures earthly or heavenly. So he says verse 16 Better is the little that the righteous has than the abundance of many wicked.

See by comparison it's not about earthly. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken but the Lord what? Upholds the righteous.

The Lord knows the days of the blameless and their heritage will remain what? Forever. It's about eternal. It's about heavenly. Their value the righteous person has values that are heavenly not earthly.

Earthly abundance will be broken and will vanish away. Verse 17 The arms of the wicked will be broken. But the righteous the blameless person their heritage remains forever verse 18 verse 19 They shall not be put to shame in evil times in the days of famine they will have abundance but the wicked will perish.

The enemies of the Lord because that's what a wicked person is. They're an enemy of the Lord are like the glory the pastures that vanish and like smoke they wisp away. So it's the treasures and Jesus told us the same thing where your heart is where your treasure is don't store up for yourselves treasures on earth where thieves come and where rust destroys etc.

[38 : 23] We know where you buy a new car or you buy a new something right and what happens first time you go to the shopping market got a ding in the car what? you know it's gonna fade it's gonna lose its value as soon as you drive something new off of a you know it's just the way it is that's earthly Jesus has stored your treasure in heaven because nothing can touch it there it's safe I used to have a little car called the 240Z I was very proud of it it had all fixed up and nice and painted and Dylan and I had just gotten married so she lived in San Francisco and you park see I'm used to parking I park far out and take three or four spaces you know nobody touched that car San Francisco you can't do that we go to the market in San Francisco there's one little tiny thing and so I had the gall to take two spaces see today I would look at that guy his knucklehead right and I remember coming out of the market and in red lip strict it just said one space per car this was a beautiful pearl white 240Z and I was like ah and I'm like got it well I didn't get it that calmly but I got it my treasure was that that was my treasure it was my value you know it's like ah and with one quick little swipe of lipstick it's that was hard to get off by the way just a simple little silly thing that that's what happens with earthly things they don't last we know that we know that but something in our soul wants more of that we you know we want the newest we want the better we want the longer you know whatever we it's just part of what's natural to us so the earthly one will be broken the earthly abundance will be broken advantage the righteous one blameless one verse 17 will be held up by the

Lord his inheritance will be forever and God will provide for him even in the hard times the third contrast we see in verses 21 to 26 here is a contrast of security you takers versus givers so the wicked person is a taker and the righteous person is a giver because their security isn't in their things see so verse 21 says the wicked borrows but does not pay back but the righteous is generous and gives so there's a contrast one's a taker one's a giver for why for those blessed by the Lord the righteous person who's trusting in the Lord waiting for the Lord who gives because his security is in the Lord he's looking at the future the blessed by the Lord shall inherit the land so we see that the wicked person is the taker!

his security is in things it's all about himself and that's the most natural thing in the world to do that's what we do naturally and even as believers we can slip into that because that's just our soul talking we're listening to our soul we want to fix now we want some comfort now understandable but the person of faith kind of reverts and renews his mind and says okay wait a minute what's a value what's a value so the righteous person who is the righteous person by the way we hear that term you know there's the wicked and the righteous who's the righteous is that the one that you know dresses a certain way and does all the right things and never swears and never you know chews or is that what girls that do or you know what was that old saying no look at the way he defines a righteous person in this song a righteous person is somebody who trusts in the

Lord who waits upon the Lord who delights in the Lord who commits his ways to the Lord doesn't fret so it's not so much about his actions it's more about his heart what is he trusting in what is he relying on what so when I say godly why live godly I don't mean necessarily the way that you perform outwardly a godly person the word godly means to be God oriented to be God word doesn't mean I live perfect by any means but I'm thinking of the Lord I'm looking to the Lord I'm listening to the Lord and even this song talks about falling right he talks about verse 23 and 24 the steps of a man are established by the Lord there we go the righteous person is walking on the narrow road right so the steps of a man are established by the Lord when he delights in his way you know it's about okay

I'm delighting in God's way my steps are ordered Proverbs talks about the same thing trust in the Lord with all your heart lean not on your understanding in all your ways what acknowledge him and he will what make your path straight why because I acknowledge him I involve him in my life I'm talking to him and listening to him it's not hard well Jesus didn't say it's easy right he says it's hard the nerve is hard it's simple that's what I meant simple but it's not easy does that make sense it's not complicated but because of our soul and because of our baggage and because of the world we're in we're easily let off we're easily distracted and we fight that that's part and that's part of what psalm 37 is talking about

[44 : 56] I got all this stuff going on around me what do I do with that how do I live with that how do I be light in this world but not be conformed to the world right how can I I don't hide from the world I still must!

engage the world how do I do that and stay faithful and be a light that shows Christ to others I think it looks a lot different than we were taught growing up at least the way I was taught growing up so the wicked person is the taker the righteous person is the giver so let me end with this how do we view suffering and hardship what is the meaning of our enduring hardship trying to be faithful to the Lord what is the purpose of staying faithful it's not simply so that I can say pat myself on the back and go good boy you're a good boy I'm tired of that I don't want it that doesn't drive me at all what's the purpose why do it it's hard why live godly when suffering for it here's

Paul explanation beautiful explanation 2nd Corinthians 4 he says now he's he gets flack from the world and he gets flack from the christian churches okay so Paul Paul's in a heart between a heart place and a you know Paul I'll interpret that later if you want to know what that so here's what he says for what we proclaim is not ourselves Paul says but Jesus Christ as our Lord with ourselves as your servants for Jesus sake for God who said let light shine out of darkness has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ so we have received Christ because God has said let there be light in your heart and when he said let there be light in your heart we sprung to life and now we see what we did not see before now then he summarizes he says we have this treasure this treasure of

Christ we have this treasure in jars of clay what picture just got funky it's a treasure don't you want to put it in a precious beautiful setting somewhere it's in a jar of clay jar of clay he's talking about this earthly body is what he's talking about we have this treasure!

of clay why to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us he doesn't put it in beautiful pictures of of a delicate antique something or other puts it in simple jars of clay not impressive looking this power is inside a very normal average weak looking container that's Paul's point the power belongs to God so in other words when the power shows up it's obviously not the jar so he goes on he says let me explain it we are afflicted in every way but not crushed wait a minute Paul didn't you read the book your best life now no Paul didn't read that book in fact he would have thrown it away and burned it we're afflicted in every way but not crushed we're perplexed but not driven to despair we're persecuted but not forsaken we're struck down but not destroyed always carrying in the body the death of

[49 : 11] Jesus always that's an everyday that's all the time caring about the body of Jesus and it doesn't look like a best life it's a hard life but why do we do that so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies in our jar of clay for we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus sake why so that the life of Jesus the real power not the jar the real power that he put in us may also be manifested in our mortal flesh my what did Jesus say to Paul about the thorn in the flesh Lord take the thorn take the thorn take the thorn three times I prayed Lord said no because my power is perfected in your weakness you need to be weak

Paul I don't want you to look! I don't! want you to look like yeah I can conquer the world I want you to look like you really are and people will go it's not him it's something he has like we read today let your light shine in such a way that they may see your good works but not glorify you not say it's you they'll say no it's God you let your light shine in such a way in other words in your weakness in your humility in your flaws not in your fakeness not in your righteous look no real like David he's pretty real isn't he in these psalms he doesn't look like a hero to me especially back in some of the psalms of lament we're reading it's like come on David where's your faith oh it's there it's real messy looking but it's there and this is what

Paul is saying we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that the surpassing power belongs to God not us not making us look good it's making him look good and isn't that what our world needs to know it's not about how did you get all reformed and cleaned up and so you look like this great person they don't want to know most of that's fake they want to know you're as bad as I am you're as weak as me but you have something because you're still smiling and you're still hopeful and you're at peace I know you struggle I know you're not perfect but man you've got something that's what Paul's talking about see the treasure out of the jar of clay simple plain jar of clay see

God is conforming us to his son he wants us to look like Jesus and what did Jesus look like was Jesus boy was he glorious in his appearance was he majestic did he look like a king no I mean did he look like a success no did he have a bunch of stuff a lot of wealth no no actually no but he had something my goodness he had something I want that right so God is conforming us to him and just like Jesus learned obedience through suffering we learn by trial and humility and weakness Peter learned by failing Satan is going to sift you Peter but I prayed for you not that you win but that your faith doesn't fail but that you get humbled so you might learn it's not about you

I'm faithful greatest thing to learn about Peter is he's not that big strong guy I kind of want him to be big strong guy I cheer for big strong guys right?

[53 : 47] He turns out to be a failure and that's when he becomes a witness and after you have fallen then you can strengthen your brothers from your weakness God is conforming us to him so that they might see the world might see Christ in us his strength in our weakness his power in our suffering his grace in our trial his life in our dying his spirit in our bodies see and God it shows how does the life of Jesus show in our dying in our weakness it shows in how we go through it how we handle it I'm what what does he say the righteous person does he's trusting in the Lord he's delighting in the Lord he's committing his ways to the Lord he's waiting there's that word we see it a couple times again he's waiting waiting to wait remember how the psalmist likes to put it he's waiting to wait yeah get it now waiting to wait okay okay fun no it's not about now waiting to wait because his values are different his security is different and his desires are much higher why live godly in a wicked world because it's

God's way to transform us from earthly to eternal from earth minded to eternal minded that takes time don't beat yourselves up please it takes time we've lived how long with the earthly view right it takes some time God will do it and because it shows the world where true life is as we endure for righteousness sake as we endure suffering for righteousness sake the world will see where true life is not here it's in him it's in his promises it's in future glory let me close with David's words the steps of a man are established by the Lord when he delights in his way though he fall he shall not be cast headlong for the

Lord upholds his hand amen let's pray father thank you for your word we thank you for David who is so real thank you lord that he doesn't hide anything he doesn't hide the trouble he doesn't hide his pain thank you lord that that shows us what trusting in you looks like it shows us what delighting in you looks like and so father continue to teach us and continue to bring us along as those who are the righteous not because of how we act but how we trust this we pray in Christ's name amen