

Listen, watch, or read the sermon on the website if you missed it. Turn to the back for an outline of the sermon.

This week's reading in the 2015/16 reading plan includes: Numbers 4-10; Psalm 38-47

Ice Breaker: Apart from God, what in your life are you most likely to trust in or rely upon during a trial or when facing a threat?

1. Discuss anything that jumped out at you in your private devotions this week.
2. Together, read Psalm 37:1-6. This first part of the Psalm has active verbs to get us going when we find reason to fret or to be envious of the wicked.
  1. Describe what you think it means to “trust in”, to “delight in”, and to “commit your way to” the LORD.
3. What is one practical and immediate reason to not envy the wicked for getting what they want out of life?
  1. What/who do they trust in? What/who do they delight in? What/who are they committed to? So what exactly is it that they are getting?
    1. How about the same questions for you? Do you ultimately want the same things as them? Consider Psalm 73:25-26 (no typo); James 4:4; Psalm 1:1-2.
4. Together, read Psalm 37:7-9. This section gives passive verbs to slow us down when we want to react to our fear or envy of the threatening or prosperous wicked.
  1. Describe what you think would be wrong responses to this situation?
    1. Consider the opposite of “be still and wait” and “Refrain” in this setting.
5. Pastor David explained that evil ultimately can't help but serve the good purposes of God (cf. Gen 50:20, Acts 4:27-28, Rom 8:28, Eph 1:11, Ps 145:9).
  1. But if the sword falls on the heads of believers in this life how do we interpret vv 14-15?
    1. Consider Matt 10:28; Rom 8:15-25; also Psalm 37:23-24.
    2. Do you feel the granite foundation of the sovereignty of God under your feet? If not, why?
6. What do you depend upon most when facing trials or a threat? Financial stability? Relational harmony? Lifestyle comforts? Health? Accomplishment? Safety? Morality? Freedom?
  1. In other words, where is your refuge?
    1. Together, read the final verses of the Psalm, vv 39-40.

**Sermon Idea:** “Trust that’s anchored in Christ is the right response to evil against us.”

**I. Understand that evil people will prosper only for a season.** (vv 1-2)

- A. God’s people should not be worried about the ‘success’ of God’s enemies. (v 1)
  - 1. David, the psalmist, instructed believers not be upset with the seeming success of wicked people. (vv 1-2)
    - a. God’s goodness to evil people should not bother the righteous.
      - 1. God’s goodness extends to both the righteous and the wicked.
      - 2. Ps. 145:9, 15-16; Mt. 5:44-45
    - b. God uses evil people to accomplish His purposes.
      - 1. When we face evil that comes to trouble us, we know that God is at work in us personally and in the broader Kingdom work.
      - 2. Rom. 8:28; Gen. 50:20
  - 2. Illustration: Consider examples from David’s life.
    - a. Saul hated David. (1 Sam. 15-31)
    - b. David’s son Absalom conspired to take the kingdom from David. (2 Sam. 15-18)
- B. Any ‘success’ God’s enemies enjoy is temporary. (v 2)
  - 1. God’s goodness and mercy do not negate His wrath.
  - 2. In v 2, David uses a “here-today-and-gone-tomorrow” illustration to make his point
  - 3. Since the success of the evil is temporary, the psalmist has decided that fretting isn’t just wrong, but it’s also hurtful to us ourselves; it’s unnecessary and unbecoming
  - 4. Exo. 34:7; Ro. 1:18; 2 Pe. 3:8-10

**II. Resolve for God to use evil to mature, not weaken, our faith.** (vv 3-8)

- A. God commands His children to focus on following Him rather than to worry about the wicked.
  - 1. Living by faith means reliance on God. (v 3)
  - 2. Living by faith means satisfaction in God. (v 4)
  - 3. Living by faith means dedication to God (vv 5-6)
  - 4. Living by faith means patience in God. (v 7)
  - 5. Living by faith means leaving judgment to God. (v 8)

**III. Hope in the reward that God promises to the humble.** (vv 9-11)

- A. The wicked will be judged according to their works. (vv 9-10)  
The humble will be judged according to their faith. (v 11)