

S.N. July 18, 77 A.M. -  
(P. outline)

## SETTLED IN THE SANCTUARY

### Psalm 73

#### INTRODUCTION:

We look at a spiritual biography. The great value of the book of Psalms is that in it we have Godly men stating their experiences in life. Giving us an account of things that have happened to them. In their spiritual life and warfare.

What we find from the beginning to the end of the Bible is the account of God dealing with his people. And regarding the experience of this man, we find that his is parallel to ours. Of course we are looking at a man who is radiant and happy. And we are certain that (God is good). And that life is filled to the brim with good things. His face is beaming, his eyes are bright. He has found God and he has felt the rich blessings flooding his soul. His confusion has all gone and passed. He had a serious struggle going on in his heart.

There are times when the soul is weary and when we feel that we are incapable of receiving any more direct instructions. The mind is tired, the heart is bruised battered and beaten by the waves and billows of life. And here is the very realization of this man as he gives us the account of his story. This man did not hesitate to tell us the truth about himself. He admits very freely about the situations in his life. And he talks about the material things. And about wicked people prospering. And about troubles and problems that disturb him. And he comes to a hasty conclusion -- well, (is) it really worth it. In our language today we would say is the Christian life worth all that we put in to it? Is it really worth while to go to God's house and worship. In the light of eternity and in the light of God's word, does it really matter whether or not we are Christians.

Here is a question. Now this man is going to tell us -the whole account of his

life. The sad past wrapped up in V. 2-12. The sickening present - V. 13-14. And a solvable future - V. 17.

I. A SAD PAST - V. 2,3, 12.

The Psalmist begins to tell us the past history of his life.

V. 2 - My feet were almost gone, my steps well nigh slipped. My friends, that is an honest confession of a sin that had taken his life almost - and he had met with all kinds of people. And that certainly is a reality with people today. Now he says I am going to tell you just what happened to them. The thing that led me to almost stumble and lose my way. He sums it up by starting with the proposition that he had had a religious experience. He went astray but he came back. But the danger was so subtle as he talks about himself.

I might say here that his confession of sin is not in the form of an exhibition. There are some people who are very willing to talk or confess their sins. As long as they can talk about themselves. This is a very subtle danger. The man in this Psalm does not do that. He tells us the truth about himself because he wants to glorify God. He is honest. In showing a contrast between himself and God, he really ministers to the glory of God.

V. 1 → He says now I am going to tell you a story of what happened to me and the things that I want to leave with you is this - the goodness of God. God never varies. This is my proposition. And God is always good to us.

He begins with a conclusion really - in that first verse. This man had had an experience - he went right to the point and right to the thing that he wanted to glorify. And where he had arrived, and he starts at the end. The Psalmist is not interested as an experience. He is not telling this just to thrill some audience.

Or to get a crowd to listen to some of his tales. But he is telling it to illustrate the great truth about God.

And he is going to talk about some of the things that happened in his life - and things that have happened in our own lives. He started at the right place but something went wrong and he was losing everything and now how could he get it back. He was badly shaken.

He talks about his sad past. And he is willing to share this in his biography - the temptations, the pitfalls, the envy, the doubt. The near disaster of all the unspeakable calamities. He felt his feet going out from under him. He said even the foundation upon which he was depending was crumbling. His faith was almost gone.

Perhaps no one of us is able to realize the tragedy obtained in the description here. You would be alarmed to find that you were on the point of losing your eye sight or your health. If the physician announced the news to you - it would be almost more than you could bear.

What about the realization of your faith, And your grip on God almost gone. That you are losing your assurance and your mercy of God. In the saving power of God. How would you react in this.

This was a sad past. Why, his soul was struggling. He had almost gone over the brink of the fall. And you can watch him as he suffers under the grip of doubt. And he is somehow the wreck which he has almost plunged into disaster. And all of

us need to shun this. The pitfalls.

How may we become a possessor of a strong faith. How may we avoid the perils that he missed. And what is the secret of this man.

This is a very gripping story. It seems that God is sitting by and quietly listening to the man who is ashamed of himself. But he lets himself talk, and how patient God must be.

His past life had been very diverse but in one thing - it is very true about you, as well as the Psalmist.

One thing which is true in the past of every one of us, is what he talked about. Rom. 3:23. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The Bible says that the problem is sin. Which is common in every one of us.

*Dr. A. J. Barton - Washington, Meeting Pres - Went Barber Shop, Capt. Bely - Block Barber said "Bos, Dis Am The Congressional Bank Shop - Dr Barton "Well, you have Senators, don't you?" "Yes sir, yes sir take the Chair Sir!" - Barton sat in the Chair - Barber turned the Chair so Dr Barton was in Horizontal Position. Then, Barber got suspicious, began rather face, asked "Bos, what is you?"*

We look to our past and there are some things in our lives that we wish were not here. Now there may be some of us today who have lived a good moral life. We may say, we have lived better than some other people that we are able to point out. And yet all of us if we are honest with our God, would have to admit that there are some things in the past that ought not to be there. The sin problem is brought up of course to each of us.

Now the course of guilt is very unpleasant. Multitudes of people are plagued with this problem. And this is part of the sad past of the Psalmist. The anxiety, the uneasiness, and the restlessness in his life. Judas, one of the Disciples of our

Lord, he betrayed the spotless son of God for 30 pieces of silver. And guilt gripped his soul. He offered to give the money back. But they would not receive it. And the Bible says he went out and hanged himself. He could not handle his guilt.

In the Old Testament, the brothers of Joseph, who had sold their brother and lied to their father, 20 years later, was still thinking about that matter. Gen. 42:21. We are guilty concerning our brother.

Peter - Went out, Wept That Dark Night -

Also in the past, is the condemnation of sin. The Bible says that he that believeth not, is condemned already - but he has not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God. John 3:18. One of the sweetest truths in all of the Bible, indeed is the truth that God loves us. And that God, a holy God, is a just God.

The man had a burden of sin. We are told that a man sometimes can do some things in his life and feel no touch of conscience whatsoever. He can do some things that he ought not to do, and it seems not to bother him a bit. Yet, somehow, there will come a time in life when he will be troubled. There will be remorse. There will be the weight that is heavy upon his life. It will be the old sin problem and it weighs heavily upon him.

And what Jesus Christ did, and came to do, was to deal with the sad past of every man. 2,000 years ago Jesus came to Bethlehem for that specific purpose. He lived among us and he put away sin with the sacrifice on the cross. To deal with the past, he came to make it possible that the slate might be wiped clean. And he lived a very perfect life. And he never did anything that was wrong.

The Bible also declares that Jesus took our condemnation at the cross. Rom. 8:1.  
Declares that there is now therefore no condemnation which is in Christ Jesus. The  
word condemnation means there is no judgement - no crisis. Jesus will suffer, in other  
words. Those that are in Jesus will suffer no judgement of God upon sin because the  
wrath of God was poured out upon Jesus Christ of God for all sin. And the cross set  
us free.

They tell us the best way to fight a forest fire is to find a place where the  
fire has already been. If you will stand where it is already burned over, then you  
are safe. So the Christian who comes to God through Jesus Christ, the cross of  
Calvary, the judgement of God burns where God's wrath was poured out upon your  
sin.

And when Jesus came to the river Jordan to be baptized, John said, behold the  
lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. It is wonderful to know what  
God does with our sin. He casts them into the depths of the sea. He wipes away  
our sin - he blots them out of his book. He casts them behind his back. And he  
remembered them no more. He removes them as far as the East is from the West.

13  
Now if you have had a sad past like this Psalmist, then you need to consider  
the goodness of God which he found as the remedy. V. 3 - he went on to say that  
I was very envious. I saw the prosperity of the wicked. There were men on every  
hand who seemed not to have any trouble. And they were not plagued like believers.  
Or God worshipping people. And they set their mouth against the Heavens. And  
against God. And in V. 12 - he said the ungodly prosper in the world. And they  
increase in riches.

So when the Psalmist saw this happening, he said, I quit going to church. And I nursed my grievances day by day. And I had a sad past. And envy got ahold of me. And he saw that his life, and life all around him was filled with inequalities. He and his family endured illness, poverty, loneliness, his wicked neighbors enjoyed luxury. And excellent health and it seemed that men who gave no thought of God prospered amazingly. No want of theirs was unsatisfied. They got richer and richer. Pride and selfishness. Ruled in all of their behavior. Now every time the Psalmist thinks about these men, he is brought right up to the place of apostasy - of giving up on God. He became more certain that God was failing him in ordering the affairs of men. That God was either asleep or God's righteous standard was not correct. And that faith could not stand in such an atmosphere of self-pity.

Envy just took a hold of him. And envy became bitterness within him. And this turned him to be miserable.

When one is out of tune with God, he is not in a position to bring happiness and contentment to others.

So here was a sad past in this biography which he unfolds. He seemed to be saying that God was blessing the ungodly. But he was forever chastising his own children. I don't know, the Psalmist might have felt a little bit ashamed of writing this confession. About his sad past on paper.

## II. A SICKENING PRESENT - V. 13-14

He continues to move on from the sadness of the past, and the sourness which he had in his life. Into the sickness of the presence. There was still smoldering

in his life. It was very sickening.

V. 13 - Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, washed my hands in innocence.

For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

Why, he sort of asked some questions -- why should I do good. This kind of loyalty that I have been used too. Have I not cleansed my heart in vain. He was not in a position to answer this question. But he put it out. His conclusions must have been wrong. Because no one would want to worship a God who was undependable. This man was in a dangerous position in the present. His faith was almost gone and soon he would be a godless creature. He would be without hope, or anchor, or God.

Therefore, he talks about the past and then he takes just a glimpse at the present. And right now, we are thinking about what we did yesterday or the day before. We are thinking about what you are going to do this afternoon or tomorrow. Well, Jesus Christ can mean something to you in your present life.

The Psalmist said, did I just clean myself. And now look what is happening in this present time. Look all around this world today. There are restless, unhappy people. Who have everything a person could want to make them happy. People have more and more - but they enjoy it less and less. They are miserable. They have material things. They have all the things that money can buy and they are not really happy. Many times I have had people to say to me - my life is empty. My life is miserable. I lack something. There is something missing in my life.

Something must be wrong with my life.



You know if we had time to switch over and look at Solomon for just for a commercial here. In the book of Ecc. which was written by King Solomon, he talks about the happiness he sought and he went around and around.

*Some L's*

1 - The first thing he says in 2:7 - I tried luxury. I got me men servants and maid servants. I had me a winter home. And I had a summer home. And he had material things. All these - the Bible declares that he was the richest man that ever lived. It was estimated that his income as a king was in access of 20 million dollars. He had everything that money could buy. That was quite a sum in those days. The whole world was at his very finger tips. Solomon said, I looked on and behold all this vanity and vexation of spirit. And there was no profit under the sun. 2:11. So here luxury and material things did not make him happy.

2 - He said I tried liquor. I sought in my heart to get myself into wine. Ecc. 2:3. He had access to every kind of alcoholic beverage that is known to man. And he didn't find happiness in the bottle. But he discovered that there was no happiness in the bottom of a bottle. There was just a temporary escape and a hang-over that goes with it. *Bleed this out*

3 - Solomon said I tried lust. I Kings 11:3. He had 700 wives, princesses. I wonder if you ever thought of that. How would you like to have 700 wives. And all of the cousins and kin folks to come and spend a week with you in the summer time. *concubines*

Solomon said I tried lust. And a lot of people in the world today are trying lust. They think they can find the fulfilled in life, with a love affair or some little harmless caper on the side to fulfill the desire that is knawing at their heart. Solomon said this didn't make me happy.

4 - Solomon tried learning. He was the wisest man who ever lived. He was an expert on every subject of his day. He knew just about everything there was to know.

In addition, he wrote 3000 proverbs. He wrote 1005 songs.

He wrote perhaps the greatest love song ever penned by mortal man. The beautiful song of Solomon.

The queen of Sheba traveled many miles to hear him speak. And she said, there was no more spirit in her. The half was not told me. I Kings 5:7.

But do you know that Solomon with all of this learning, and wisdom - finally said that all was vanity and vexation of the spirit and there was no prophet under the sun. 2:11. He was saying you can go and have all of these things and still have an empty heart. Now young people need to take a lesson at this point. I think young people need to get all the education they can get - even up to a doctor's degree. But the best education is not going to solve all the problems if you don't have Jesus Christ in your heart. You will be a miserable human being.

Chapter 12:1 - Solomon said, remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth. What are you looking for in the Lord?

Now, becoming a Christian is not going to immediately solve all of your problems. It is not going to take care of all of your troubles. It doesn't mean that you are not going to ever have any more trials.

Because there are some problems that are attached to becoming a Christian. Paul was often persecuted because he was a Christian. If you live a Christian life, you are going to be looked upon as not very cool. And it hurts sometimes to be a Christian.

But here is a man who had a sickening present. He was still smoldering under these burdens.

III. A SOLVEABLE FUTURE - V. 17

V. 17  
This biography begins with all of his background and comes to a significant place where he was satisfied with the future. And he is building a schaffolding and showing us where he is going to stand. V. 17 - Until I went into the sanctuary of God - then understood I therein.

V. 24 - Thou shalt guide me with thy council and afterwards receive me to glory. Here is a solveable future for this man. (Fortunate indeed) that he found the solution to his problem. How was he to do it. Should he renounce God and go about peddling his doubts. Or should he go to the sanctuary and give God a chance to reclaim him.

What would you do? Do you think you are as wise as this Psalmist proved to be?

He put himself where God could deal with him - realizing his own helplessness. He turned to the holy place. He went where the great physician could heal him.

The memory of other days flooded his mind. How near to God he had been in those days and what joy he had had. How rich had been the fellowship in that sacred place. And strangely enough, he felt that God knew that he was there. And was making his way to him. It warmed his heart to know that God had singled him out.

The Psalmist didn't say a whole lot about the furnishing of the church. The choir, the sermon, or even the program of worship. He didn't come with that on his mind. But he came knowing that here he was in the presence of God. Now this should be your thought when you come to church next Sunday. This poor fellow found God and he knew that God was vitaly interested in him.

How easy it would be for many people who had problems to find that they are solvable if they would yet come and have them settled in the sanctuary.

He set reverently in his place of worship - and there he thought of the mysterious ways that he had been able to see his wicked neighbors. In their true light. Those men who had been so prosperous and so carefree. Now, he sees that they are in dangerous places. And his fears are quieted.

He realizes that the triumph and the prosperity is temporary.

And certain destruction that awaits them down the road. They are rushing blindly and madly toward a fearful end. Prosperity at its best is a passing thing but the strong hand of a righteous God is now in full control.

He asked himself - why be envious of wicked men. Why begrudge them the fleeting pleasures that come their way in life's brief stay. Why lose faith in God because of these evil men. He saw the folly of his heart. He had greatly exaggerated the things that these Godly men had enjoyed. They knew no genuine joy. They possessed nothing that would last. They had no anchor for the approaching storm. They had no God. Sudden destruction was near. There was going to be an inevitable crash. He had been stupid.

Suddenly, he saw himself on a screen. He found to his utter amazement that he

possessed great wealth. The very presence of God was a tremendous treasure to him. I am continually with thee. What a store of riches. God is going to guide him. Be with him.

All through his miserable days, no doubt God was near to protect him. This thought suddenly overwhelmed him. Of all of the days and nights that he had forfeited to sweet fellowship.

V.25  
V.28  
I wonder how it is with you = in shadow, in sunshine, in work, in play, in tears, in joy, in youth, in old age, in life, in the hour of death. Have you discovered the sense of full meaning, of such blessing, as this man has discovered. To know that God is their help and willing to guide. Whom have I in Heaven but thee. And there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee. God is the strength of my heart and my fortune forever. It is good for me to draw near to God. I have put my trust in the Lord God. That I may declare all of his works, he concludes - the tremendous conviction.

He is going to draw from a new possession. He has God. His support is here.

Now instead of gloom and sadness, sickening feeling. He is jubilant in his praise, and in his thanksgiving. He is climbing to higher ground.

Why he has found peace, and what a wonderful thing that is. He didn't need tranquilizing pills to sleep at night. People use those pills for everything. They get up with a pill in the morning. They have to have a pill in the middle of the day to keep them going. They take another pill to curb their appetite. Another pill to make them eat. Take another pill when they go to bed. They have a pill for everything. But peace is not found in this.

There was some joy in this man's heart. The happiest people on the face of the earth are God's people. And it is reflected here in what the Psalmist had to say.

And how can people today be lonesome in the city of Chesapeake and live as though they are lost in a desert. And say that nobody loves them.

Yes, you have a future. What is it going to bring to you. If you are a lost person. You can expect exposure and fear. And if you die without Christ, you go to the judgement bar of God. And Jesus describes it as Hell. Now a Christian is looking forward to something. And a Christian doesn't care whether he dies or whether Jesus comes first. Either way it is going to be alright with him. Because he is going to Heaven.

Whittier wrote -

I know not where his island's lift  
Fonted palms in air  
I only know I cannot grift  
Beyond his love and care.

Nothing can separate us from the love of God. This is Paul's triumphant message in Roman's.

Let me ask you personally today - while you are here in the sanctuary - this matter could be settled as the Psalmist settled his. Is your soul torn with confusion. Have you lost your grip on God. Is your soul embittered by pain and discouragement, loneliness, fear. Are you in danger of losing your footing or your faith.

Would you like to seek a solution and a remedy.

Would you today welcome this treatment. That God stands ready to give. Why not turn today in the sanctuary. Have you lost your touch with this holy place. Why not come back and put yourself in the atmosphere and put yourself where God can give you a clear picture of his loving heart.

You may be certain that here in this sanctuary, God waits with the answer. Something happens here. If life is demanding more than your weary soul can bear, if you feel yourself crushed under life's cruel blows, if self-pity, bitterness, envy, reach for the control of your better self. Why not run eagerly unto him. And find the thrill here - his voice will speak. Your problem can be spread out before him. And hear his blessed words - my grace is sufficient for thee. What a blessed assurance dedicated to the worship of God.

The Psalmist settled it in the sanctuary.

I read a story of Eddie Cantor who was in a large city and without warning, a terrific wind storm swept through the city streets. And there was a blinding rain. Along with many other people, Mr. Cantor, found himself crouched in a huge shelter way of a door leading to the church. I think his words speak what we are talking about. "The world today is going through something far more threatening than a wind storm. Every single one of us needs refuge of one kind or another. I know of, no better place to go for it, than a church!" The greatest calamity that can befall a people is the loss of religion. Don't let it happen here. Go to church!"

In his sanctuary you will find God. You will be conscious of his deep interest to you and your problems, and your faith. You will be thrilled again at the constant presence of God. in your life. Lo, I am with you always. You will be lifted from

your fears of doubt and envy. You will be strengthened by the assurance.

In your darkest hour you will feel as the Psalmist in V. 24. Someone guiding and directing your steps. How can you miss the way. No joy could ever be richer than yours when you discover this assurance. Is not this the assurance that your heart craves. Can you compare these treasures to all the world has to offer. God wants to come and give you his blessing. And you will find then, with the Psalmist, here in the sanctuary.