

WHY ARE UNBELIEVERS MORE PROSPEROUS THAN CHRISTIANS?

Psalm 73:2-17 Key verses 2,3

Introduction: To the unbeliever there are many things about God he/she doesn't understand and when one becomes a Christian, there are still many things that are not understood of God. Often the Christian asks the question "why do the unbelievers, even the wicked, prosper more than God's own people?" If you have ever wondered about this, you are among countless other Christians who also have pondered why the "injustice." It seems that those who are believers and faithful to the things of God should be blessed with more things than the unbeliever but that doesn't happen. Why not?

I. IT SEEMS THE WICKED PROSPER WHILE THE GODLY ARE OPPRESSED

1. The Godly, believers, Christians, for the most part seem to be afflicted people.
 - Christians are the objects of hatred and contempt to the ungodly world. (*John 15:19*)
 - Christians are caused to suffer many things from the unbelieving world. (*2 Timothy 3:12*)
 - Quite frequently the greatest enemies of a Christian are those of his/her own household. (*Matthew 10:35-36*)
 - From God, the Christian receives many strokes of "Fatherly" correction which the unbelievers are usually exempt. (*Hebrews 12:6-8*)
2. The unbelievers, on the contrary, frequently pass through life without any particular trials or troubles.
 - They have nothing to cause them to be humble, so they become prideful.
 - They often become violent.
 - They gratify their every sensual desire.
 - They cannot tolerate any restraint, whether from others or from God.
 - These are the people who usually get ahead in life and are the ones who receive the wealth and honors of the world.
3. There is the general idea that God will show His love for all who are good and His wrath to all who are bad.
 - The friends of Job concluded that he must have been a hypocrite and a deceiver since he was suffering so much.
 - Job couldn't understand why the wicked were so prosperous while, he, who tried to follow God was being tormented and punished so greatly.
 - However the Bible reminds us: "*Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth..and if we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...all earthly comforts shall be added unto us...*"
 - Therefore as we look around us and see prosperous people, we need to remember that they are not necessarily on the right side of God and if we are having trouble we must be on the wrong side.
 - God does not have anything to do with those who are unbelievers and of Satan.

II. THERE IS A SOLUTION TO THIS SEEMINGLY DELIMA OF UNFAIRNESS

We cannot understand why the unbelievers, the wicked, prosper and those of us who are trying to follow God and His commandments do not prosper. We cannot understand until we do as did the writer of our passage in Psalm - go to God with the problem.

1. We find that even though the unbeliever, the wicked, are prosperous, they are in great danger.
 - "...*their feet are in slippery places...*" and it is impossible for them to stand very long.
 - Solomon said, "*The prosperity of fools destroyeth them...*"
 - When one gains riches, he/she immediately sets his/her heart upon those riches and trusts in them rather than in God.
 - Are these type of people to be envied? Those who are in such a precarious position, those who have not placed their lives and trust in God?
 - The unbeliever, the wicked have no sure grasp/hold on their wealth.
 - Pharoah's land was destroyed by plagues.
 - His army destroyed in the Red Sea.
 - Ahab and Jezebell destroyed.
 - King Herod eaten with worms.

2. The unbelievers, the wicked will meet their due punishment.
 - God bears the wicked for a season, but "*their feet shall slide in due time...*" They will be cast into everlasting destruction. Now, do you envy these people?
 - From a world of comfort and ease to an eternal world of torment, they will be cast.
 - Remember the parable Jesus told about the Rick man and Lazarus?
 - *Psalm 92:7 Job 20:4-5*
 - Thus the present seemingly superior state of the unbeliever, wicked affords no real ground for us to complain, no matter how afflicted and destitute we might be.

III. TAKE AN INVENTORY OF THE SITUATION OF THE BELIEVER

1. There are many who indulge in all manner of evil although others see nothing amiss, but God sees the heart and knows the evil thoughts.

2. The Psalmist spoke in our text of his THOUGHTS and yet he realized that they had almost destroyed and ruined his soul.

3. What kind of thoughts are dangerous to the believer's confidence in God?
 - Proud thoughts.
 - Vain thoughts.
 - Envious thoughts.
 - Wrathful thoughts.
 - Covetous thoughts.
 - Worldly thoughts.
 - Believers need to humble themselves and pray that their thoughts and hearts will be forgiven.

4. If the believer sees him/herself as God sees him/her, then he/she may say as did the Psalmist,
"So foolish am I and ignorant, I am even a beast before thee."

CONCLUSION:

1. Let us believers be satisfied with our present condition whatever it may be.
 - Judas was Jesus' treasurer but was a thief and ultimately betrayed Jesus.
 - What if all the other disciples had envied him?
 - Remember the rich young ruler? He had everything except the right relationship with God.
2. Instead of seeking earthly and world prosperity, let us turn our desires to those things above and seek prosperity for our souls.
 - If we could have anything and everything of this world, we would still have to leave it all when death comes for us.
 - If, however, we possess spiritual riches, we will have them throughout eternity.
 - If we are rich toward God, we are truly rich. (*2 Corinthians 6:4-10*)
3. Think about it, have you been putting the things of this world ahead of the things of God?
 - If so, it is wrong and you know it. You know that there is absolutely nothing of this earth you can take with you when you leave her.
 - Remember the old song, **"I'd Rather Have Jesus Than Silver or Gold?"**
4. Every human being will one day leave this earth and go into eternity to spend it in one of two places. No preparation is needed to spend eternity in Hell for that's where all unbelievers will go. However, preparation is needed to spend eternity in God's heaven and Jesus is the only way to prepare for that wonderful event. God says to *"believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved..."*