

"FROM FEAR TO FAITH"**Introduction**

1. Strange thing: A man of faith with unbelief!
2. It upset him + offended him
3. But he got over the experience + he tells us here how this happened.

1. HOW UNBELIEF LOOKS AT THIS WORLD

- 1) Asaph was clearly troubled – texts
- 2) The problem defined: The prosperity of the wicked
- 3) Here is a good man "slipping" up:
 - (i) God correctly respected
 - (ii) the sinner's conduct correctly stated
 - (iii) But God's providence wrongly looked at
- 4) Note what is said of sinners:
 - (i) pride: v.6
 - (ii) blasphemy: v.9
 - (iii) carefree in life + death: v.4-5
 - (iv) no fears as they come to the end: v.4
- 5) How different from the true believer! v.5
APPLICATION: Even Christians can have wrong views

2. HOW FAITH LOOKS AT THIS WORLD

- 1) How the change came about: in God's house
APPLICATION: The importance of going to church / sermons
- 2) Now his thoughts are totally altered:
 - (i) before, he only looked at the present
 - (ii) now, he sees the future
OBSERVE: "...of all men most miserable"

- 3) Faith always takes account of the future:
 - (i) look at the wicked after death
 - (ii) see how terrible is their end.
- 4) Along with this knowledge comes sorrow:
 - (i) that he had been so envious
 - (ii) that he had been "like a beast"
 - (iii) he had had unworthy thoughts of God
OBSERVE: Faith + unbelief have opposite views
- 5) God here shows us the end of a worldly life – we all need to know it:
 - (i) Summary of their life
 - (ii) Summary of their after-life
- 6) See how all this is stated by Christ: "What shall it profit..?" etc

3. HOW FAITH LOOKS AT THE UNSEEN WORLD

- 1) To have faith is life-changing:
 - (i) the unbeliever lives for this world only
 - (ii) see how deceptive his life is
 - (iii) see how brief his happiness is
OBSERVE: "A teaspoon of pleasure..."
- 2) But by faith we see the unseen:
 - (i) we see how God eventually punishes sin
 - (ii) we see that our present trials are short
 - (iii) we appreciate the mystery of providence
- 3) Now, at the end, faith fills his soul:
ILLUSTRATION: a balloon: deflated, refilled.
 - (i) what the true believer has NOW
 - (ii) the privilege of knowing GOD
 - (iii) the duty to be a witness for God

CONCLUSION

1. God's ways on earth are a mystery
2. Unbelief goes hopelessly wrong
3. DO you have real faith?

PSALM**73: 1 – 9****73: 16 – 22****73: 23 – 26**