Psalm 73 The end of the wicked contrasted with that of the righteous. A Psalm of Asaph.

God certainly is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart! 2 But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling, my steps had almost slipped. 3 For I was envious of the arrogant As I saw the prosperity of the

wicked.

4 For there are no pains in their death, and their belly is fat. 5 They are not in trouble like other people,
Nor are they tormented together with the rest of mankind. 6 Therefore arrogance is their necklace;
The garment of violence covers them.

7 Their eye bulges from fatness; The imaginations of their heart overflow. 8 They mock and wickedly speak of oppression; They speak from on high. 9 They have set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue parades through the earth.

10 Therefore his people return here, and abundant waters are drunk by them.
11 They say, "How does God know? And is there knowledge with the Most High?"
12 Behold, these are the wicked; And always at ease, they have increased in wealth.

13 Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and washed my hands in innocence;
14 For I have been stricken all day long and punished every morning. 15 If I had said, "I will speak

16 When I thought of understanding this, It was troublesome in my sight 17 Until I entered the sanctuary of God; Then I perceived their end. 18 You indeed put them on slippery ground; You dropped them into ruin.

19 How they are destroyed in a moment! They are utterly swept away by sudden terrors! 20 Like a dream when one awakes, Lord, when stirred, you will despise their image. 21 When my heart was embittered
And I was pierced within,

22 Then I was stupid and ignorant; I was like an animal before You. 23 Nevertheless I am continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand. 24 You will guide me with Your plan and afterward receive me to glory.

25 Whom do I have in heaven but You? And with You, I desire nothing on earth.
26 My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. 27 For, behold, those who are far from You will perish; You have destroyed all those who are unfaithful to You.

28 But as for me, the nearness of God is good for me; I have made the Lord God my refuge, So that I may tell of all Your works.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

- **What questions were provoked within you?**
- **Did anything confuse you?**
- **Did anything move you emotionally?**
- **Did God instruct you to do something?**
- **Did you gain any insight into God's character?**

Paul's observations and insights

1. **Asaph, singer, worship leader, musical family, keeper of the forest.**
2. **Why did God choose Israel?**
3. **Asaph saw his own vulnerability and how looking at things the wrong way, can easily deceive him.**
4. **Why would anyone be envious of the arrogant?**
5. **How do you feel when you see evil people prosper?**
6. **Why is arrogance 'their necklace'?**
7. **He says, 'they mock and wickedly speak'. Jesus said, 'what comes out of our mouths reveals the condition of the heart!'**
8. **The voice of faith confessed, tests and reaffirms**

9. **It confronts the hard question: how is it the wicked often prosper while the godly suffer so much?**
10. **Asaph's problem is real, he believes God is good, but he knows that he is suffering.**
11. **Here lies the crisis of faith and experience: Asaph believes one thing, but his experience tells another.**
12. **The solution comes when he enters the sanctuary of God's presence.**
13. **If you know God is with you in your suffering, it makes a difference!**
14. **In God's presence he saw things from an eternal perspective.**
15. **He recognised the shallowness of worldly wealth and power.**
16. **He realised that God is the only true source of life and joy.**
17. **He saw that honesty with God matters.**
18. **Disappointment and anger with God are pointless.**
19. **They say, "How does God know?**
20. **Why do people live their lives as if God doesn't know and see what they are doing?**
21. **Is it right that the wicked and the powerful are making all the big decisions?**
22. **Was Asaph right when he says in vain, 'I have kept my heart pure and washed my hands in innocence'?**
23. **What do we do when 'living right', doesn't imminently bring us into blessings?**
24. **What is it 'to betray a generation of children'?**
25. **Is it true that until we see things from Gods perspective, we are vulnerable to confusion.**
26. **It's only when he comes into the sanctuary of God's presence he sees things clearly.**
27. **He realises all the pleasures the wicked and arrogant get in this life, are only for a short while.**
28. **Eternity will paint a very different picture for the wicked.**
29. **What is it for your heart to be 'embittered'?**
30. **How might we avoid being pierced to the heart?**

31. **Asaph says, 'I was stupid and ignorant' - was he not bringing a curse upon himself with these words?**
32. **God is the one who has a plan for making right decisions.**
33. **When has God taken hold of your right hand?**
34. **Is there anything significant about the right hand opposed to the left hand?**
35. **How does it work that 'God receives us to His glory'?**
36. **Can you imagine coming to a place of complete freedom, where you desire nothing on earth?**
37. **As a Christian, who do we have in heaven fighting on our behalf?**
38. **What is it for 'our heart to fail us'?**
39. **How is God your strength?**
40. **What is it to be far away from God?**
41. **How does the concept of perishing apply to human beings?**
42. **Where does God rate being faithful in His moral compass?**
43. **It's a choice to live near God while on earth, how might we move closer?**
44. **What did Asaph do to get closer to God?**
45. **How do we make God our refuge?**
46.
47. **Our experiences with God make our relationship with God a testimony.**