

SERMON: MAINTAINING YOUR FOOTING IN A SLIPPERY WORLD

Psalm 73:1-3

(1) Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. (2) But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. (3) For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Introduction

We use the term “transparency” a lot these days. The first use is to describe the property of a physical medium such as air, water, or glass to allow light and images to clearly pass through the material. Now it also means to express feelings, opinions, and motives. The book of Psalms is the most humanly transparent book of the Bible. The writers expressed how they were feeling at the time of their writings. They expressed their joy and faith, but they also expressed their fears, doubts, uncertainties and even their anger. God allowed these “transparent” writings to be included in Sacred Scripture to let us know that there will be times when we will not be thinking or feeling our “Sunday morning best.” The spiritual, *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian in My Heart*, is not from someone who is seeking salvation, but rather from someone who has already been saved and is praying to God to bring his or her feelings in line with the standards of the teaching of Christ. The cruelty of slavery could easily make one become hateful, revengeful, and unforgiving. Our fore parents knew the demands of the kingdom required them to even love the slave master. That was a bitter pill to swallow-almost impossible. With God nothing is impossible! So, they prayed through song: “Lord, I want to be Christian in my heart-in my heart.”

Now to our text, Asaph the writer, was transparent and expressed how he almost lost his moral footing and his faith in God when he saw the prosperity of the wicked and the struggles of the good people. He even saw foolish people who had used bad judgement doing alright. “I did everything right and still got covid and other people who were reckless in their behavior did not contract the virus. That doesn’t make sense.” In addition to Asaph’s challenge, there are many things that can impede our progress and if we are not careful, can make us lose our spiritual footing. Let’s look at a few of these. I’m sure you can think of many more.

Exposition

1. One May Lose Footing by Not Paying Attention To Surrounding Environments.

(There Are Many Slippery Surfaces In Our Society.)

(We Must Know What to Embrace, Tolerate, And Reject.)

(Today, Opinions and Desired Narratives Are More Important Than Truth.)

(We Must Watch, Pray, Read the Bible, and Think.)

2. One May Lose Footing By An Awkward Step When Moving Too Fast.

(It Is Possible To Slip Down On A Stable Surface.)

3. One May Lose Footing By Over Emphasizing Success.

(Success Should Be Seasoned With Grace and Gratitude.)

(When Success Goes To Your Head You Become Dizzy.)

(When Success Goes To Your Heart You Become Humble and Grateful.)

4. One May Lose Footing By Brooding Over Failure.

(Failure Is Not Final Unless You Allow It To Be.)

(We Must Learn To Bounce Back From Our Failures.)

(Peter Denied Jesus, But Recovered On the Day of Pentecost.)

5. One Can Maintain Footing by Total Reliance And Obedience to God.

(A Simple, Profound Truth.)

Closing Thoughts

Our only hope for maintaining solid footing in this ever-changing secular world is faith in God through our Savior Jesus Christ. Verse 24 of the Book of Jude declares that God's grace and power can keep us from falling.

I am reminded of two things from my childhood as I close. First, when a decaying smoke house, a weather-worn she shed, or an old outhouse began to lean after a storm, men would place poles on the leaning side until they had the time or materials for the needed repair. Then they would pray on Sunday, "Lord, prop us up on every weak and leaning side." This became a common prayer phrase in our oral traditional church culture. Secondly, I remember the words of a traditional song:

"So many falling by the wayside, Lord, help me to stand.
So many falling by the wayside, Lord, help me to stand.
So many falling by the wayside, Lord, help me to stand.
Take me by my hand and lead me on."

Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

**Copyright © 2021 by James C. Ward
All Rights Reserved**