

Psalms

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 25 September 1966

Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

- [0 : 00] As the Lord should be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in Psalm 73, and the first half of the last verse.
- But it is good for me to draw near to God. Psalm 73, and the first half of the last verse.
- This is a word which brings before us a very desirable experience, and one which every sinner born again knows something about.
- And if you are indeed such a character, you do know something about it. It may be that you cannot say much about it, but you do know it is good to draw near to God.
- And when you are helped to do so, you feel as you want to feel. So, your heart is right with God, and you are favored to feel quietness of mind regarding his dealings with you.
- [1 : 48] You can understand a little of the why and wherefore of his dealings, that they are not in anger, but in his dear covenant love.
- And now, I want, as the Lord should help me, to look at the subject from three viewpoints of it, and I would look a little at the setting of it, because there is that which is very instructive.
- The psalm is a psalm of Asaph. And in the psalm itself, there is a setting for, of an experience that Asaph was the subject of, and which the Holy Spirit, in infinite wisdom, has recorded.
- Asaph was inspired to record the psalm, even though in doing so, he had to record his own wisdom in how he had looked out from whereabouts he lived upon the dealings of God and thought his own thoughts therein.
- And you and I have no stones whatever to throw at Asaph in doing that. You find that Asaph tells us, I was envious at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
- [3 : 38] Asaph looked at his own life and the life that he knew people taught of God round about were living. And he found that they had every day new straits attending them and their plans did not mature and their projects were crossed and they did not seem to be able to go along in life's journey smoothly.
- And then he looked at the wicked and he saw the life that they were living, the wicked doing wickedly. And yet they seemed to meet no letter check at the time but matters seemed to go well and they piled up LSD and lined their nest well with the things that this life affords time things.
- and Asaph felt in a wrong frame of mind about it and he puts his thoughts into words and then he found that as he went on contemplating the wicked that he was doing that which was very unwise and which was not allowed for godly people to be doing to contrast the life they were living with the life that the wicked live day by day.
- And he says here he comes to a conclusion when I thought to know this it was too painful for me margin it was labor in my eyes.
- The dear man could not understand it or get matters sorted out that things should be as they were with the wicked prospering and the godly ever going through much tribulation.

[5 : 52] but he tells us how matters did fall when I thought to know this it was too painful for me until I went into the sanctuary of god then understood I their end.

What he was doing he was looking at the wicked doing wickedly while they lived but as it were he looks again out of his window and he sees a funeral going by and it is the funeral of one who had lived a wicked life doing wickedly then understood I their end.

And now he comes right down to bedrock truth what the word of god declares he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption that is the life which the wicked live after the flesh the things of the flesh and however long they live they reap the consequences the harvest is in accordance with the seed which they have sown eh but there is another he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting and so Asaph is brought to a sweet blessed frame of mind and he declares thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory as though the dear man said

Lord whatever comes into my life of will or woe do guide me therein keep me in a right frame of mind that I may not utter words against thee or rebel against thy dealings but help me to realize thy ways O Lord with wise design are framed upon thy throne above and every darkened bending line meets in the center of thy love and then he declares but it is good for me to draw near to God if I can get near to God says Asaph I shall be in a right mind a right spirit something like the man in the gospel sitting at Jesus feet clothed and in a right mind and that is where you and I desire to be found as grace is given and now in this psalm where the subject is found you find that Asaph was looking out as I said he was looking out at the wicked doing wickedly and considering how matters fell out with them as they journeyed on through life and now you find the dear man penned another psalm godly Asaph seemed to be very subject to his frames and feelings you and I are likewise and too much so often times because whatever our frames and feelings may be if God has begun his good work in us our frames and feelings cannot alter how matters stand between our souls and God do remember that it is good to have comfortable frames comfortable feelings but when you have feelings otherwise and think your thoughts about what you feel it does not alter how matters are between your soul and God

God still says I have loved thee with an everlasting love therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee and now you find in this Psalm 77 he is falling a prey to doing what you have done and so have I too many times in the Psalm where the subject is he is looking out at other folks in Psalm 77 he is looking in he is pulling over matters as he feels them to be within and he says I remembered God and was troubled I complained and my spirit was overwhelmed and now dear friends I just make a comment there not to be too long on the opening up of the subject

[11 : 09] Asaph says I complained well I should like to know what you and I have got to complain about if you and I have some well grounded evidence that we are journeying through this time state to dwell at length in the rest that remaineth for the people of God what have you got to complain about there is only one thing you could have as a complaint and that is not always the complaint that you were making I'm not fitting any caps on think of what Cowper says Lord it is my chief complaint that my love is cold and faint yet I love thee and adore oh for grace to love thee more yes that is a legitimate complaint that you cannot walk with

God as you desire and that you need more grace and more everything to do with religion that God is the author of but any other complaints do remember what I have told you John Newton says in one of his beautiful letters and he says as a sinner I have no right to complain and as a believer here you must get down to bedrock truth as a believer I have no reason to do so neither of you or I whatever you may feel before God this Sabbath morn you ought not to be producing any complaints about God or his dealings with you for when all is said and done the word of God in Malachi is a sure word I am the Lord I change not therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed and says

Jeremiah wherefore should a living man complain a man for the punishment of his sins which is to say that if he is a sinner to whom God has granted life divine if he is a living man what has he got to complain about but now you see Asaph was doing it and his judgment was so warped as he seemed to reason about these things that he he says will the Lord cast off forever will he be favorable no more is his mercy clean gone forever doth his promise fail forever more hath God forgotten to be gracious hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies answer all these questions with yes and where will you be and I we should be without

God and without hope but then yes is not the answer whoever heard of God doing these things at any time is casting off a poor sinner forever and once he bestows his favor to be favorable no more and for his mercy to be clean gone and for his promise to fail and for God to forget to be gracious and to shut up in anger his tender mercies you and I must never think of God doing such things the thing is impossible and let it therefore be unthinkable however bad your behavior has been God may say to you say to me rebellious thou hast been and art rebellious still but since in love I took thee in my promise

I'll fulfill and now come back to Asaph looking in looking in on his dejected frame of mind and seeking to reason about what he sees and I said this is my infirmity and now he is telling the truth this is my infirmity one one writer says infirmities as means have taught my soul to see that not how fair it seems but Christ will do for me I must have Christ as all in all for sinking ruin guilt and thrall and now let us look at this subject having looked at the setting of it leaving Asaph I come to you as grace is given but it is good for me to draw near to God and now this subject is a vast one to contemplate and there are two things you must ask God to help you ponder in your heart and more than that to reduce it to practice when you were considered it the mercy of it and now think first of all of the possibility of a poor sinner being able to do it a sinner to draw near to

[17:10] God but then it is not only a possibility it is a privilege conferred in the word of God and God delights for poor sinners in their felt need of his divine aid to do it and if you get help from God to do it you will know how good it is you will realize what the hymn writer said nearer nearer to the clinging oh may my helpless soul be found but there is just one thought there I must put into words if you do say that to God I hope you will and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak nearer nearer to the clinging oh may my helpless soul be found and now that may not be done by drawing which is very blessed when it is when you are drawn but as a rule you are driven remember that and if you have got a concern in your heart to live nearer to God and you ask him to bring it about he may in infinite mercy draw you

I do hope he will for it is a very blessed experience draw me and we will run after thee but maybe you will find something coming into your life wherein you cannot do without God and now this will cause you to desire to draw near to God to see his divine aid his wisdom for you to deal with a matter which has arisen in your life could the creature help or ease us seldom should we think of prayer few if any come to Jesus till we do to self despair and the hymn writer says long we either slight or doubt him then when all the means we try find we cannot do without him then at last to him we cry and the wonderful thing to me is that when we do at last

God does not say what have you been doing hitherto for days seeking by some means of your own to do what you can in this trouble and now when you find you are at your wits end all your wisdom is swallowed up here you are coming to me at the last but then God does not say get you gone and reap the consequences of your behavior no no let it be his name he says him that cometh unto me I will in no ways cast out he makes you welcome he may chide you but still he will bless you and he will appear on your behalf and he will teach you at length it is good for me to draw near to God so then there are these two viewpoints of the subject the privilege of it the possibility and I must turn aside to say this privilege was only afforded us at a very great cost

God alone knows what the cost was the cost to him as the father God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life and the dear son of God he came down into this poor sin cursed earth to do love's redeeming work and when he had done it when he was on Calvary's cross what do we read the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom and at that time the high priest was carrying out that which had to be done at the time of the Passover and it must have been a matter of amazement to him and all the other priests in the temple could look into the holiest of all and see how matter stood there but then that was only to make it plain that the way is open for poor sinners to draw near to God as you read in the

Hebrews having therefore brethren boldness margin liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way which he hath consecrated new made margin for us through the veil that is to say his flesh and having a high priest over the house of God let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith the full assurance that him that cometh unto me I will never no never no never cast out and it is said to be a new and living way in old testament times under the law it was a dead way dead birds and beasts were sacrificed but this way is a new and living way

[23 : 47] I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh unto the father but by me and remember this way has not got old although hundreds of years have elapsed since Jesus died on Calvary's cross it is still a new and living way and the blood of Christ is as fresh in the realms of bliss as it was on the day when it was shed to atone for our sins our guiltiness before God its merit is infinite its efficacy is just the same as ever it was the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from all sin and that is how you and

I do find it to be good to draw near to God that rich atoning blood which sprinkled round I see provides for all who come to God and all prevail in faith but it is good for me to draw near to God and now in opening up this subject there are some thoughts I would like you to ponder in your hearts as grace is given first of all God has ordained it a door of mercy is opened in heaven the throne of grace is set up God reigns on it as the sinner's friend and the word of God tells us let us therefore come boldly margin with liberty you're welcome let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need and remember you will need to remember it ere you die the vilest sinner out of hell who lives to feel his need he's welcome to the throne of grace the saviour's blood to clean

I say God has ordained it when he Adam fall took place what really was the depth of it as it were if I can make it plain as God should help me sin entered into the world and death by sin and so death passed upon all men for that all of sin the Adam fall did take place but when when Adam and Eve were set in Eden's garden at the first the purpose of God was that they should find not their happiness in what Eden's garden afforded do listen but that they should find their happiness in him in who he was their creator the creature should find happiness complete in the creator there being nothing whatever to do with happiness but what the creator could communicate it to their hearts and they be happy in him and in him first of all last of all and that is just what you find when a sinner is born again that he cannot know happiness to the fool happiness worth a name until he finds it in

God and he finds it in God as his God his father and his friend happy art thou O Israel who is like unto thee O people saved by the Lord some of you dear people young and old how glad you would be this sabbath morn if you could realize you have a living interest in the salvation of God it would fill you with happiness unspeakable and full of glory because you would find your happiness centering in God and you would say my Lord and my God do remember that and when you draw near to God and get help to do it it gives you happiness gives you sweet relief of mind helps you sometimes to leave your matters before God with whom you have to do and realize that he will deal with those matters for your good and his glory then it is good to draw near to

God because it is the will of God that you and I should do it it is very solemn that you and I have had so many privileges so many opportunities to draw near to God and remember that is not only when you draw near to God to beg a blessing but when you were found in the attitude of worship you think how many hundreds and thousands of sermons you have heard you have heard the gospel preached and every time you have heard the gospel preached there was an opportunity for you to realize it is good for me to draw near to God that you have heard hundreds and thousands of sermons that you have forgotten all about them unless the pastor happens to take the text again and then you remember that some years ago you did hear a sermon from it but as to any good you got in listening you have not got that treasured up it is only a sermon here a sermon there along life's way but it is the will of God that whenever you are found in the attitude of worship whether in public or in private you should realize this great truth it is good for me to draw near to God you are welcome to do it and in doing it

[30 : 47] God is glorified in poor sinners worshiping him do remember that and now looking at the subject from another viewpoint ponder this thought dear friends God drew near to us that you and I might have this privilege and pleasure as it really is to draw near to him and find in him the sinner's friend I told you this privilege was afforded us at a very great cost no preacher can say very much about it only sets you thinking about it but you should think about it and you should say thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift whereby we find heaven comes down our souls to greet and glory crowns the mercy sea whereby we learn it is good for me to draw near to God yes it means when you draw near to God you draw near to God in our nature you do not draw near to God as he is revealed at

Sinai's mound there you only learn justice cries with frowning face this mountain is no hiding place all you learn at Sinai's mound is what God himself declared there cursed is the man that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them oh but dear friends when you are found at Calvary's cross when you behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world when you learn what is the essence of the gospel Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone which believeth then it is good to draw near to God draw near to him who said thy law is within my heart and that he kept it for poor sinners like you who have no righteousness of your own wherein to appear before

God there is one God one mediator between God and man the man Christ Jesus it is then to draw near to God and find that human heart he still retains though thrown in highest bliss and feels each tempted member's pains for our afflictions his it is good to draw near to God like that then it means and now think of your difficulties your duties and your needs think too of your soul salvation and then remember that in drawing near to God it is to draw near to him who is omnipotent incarnate and you can feel whatever your case and whatever you think about it does not alter the fact that the word of

God says is there anything too hard for the Lord and also the case that is too hard for thee bring it unto me and I will hear it oh you will find there is help in God hope in God and you in drawing near whoever cast down or tempted you may be will yet have a feeling who can tell but what God will be gracious unto me though by my sins deserving hell I will not despair for who can tell the word of God can tell you no sinner was ever yet empty sent back who came seeking mercy for Jesus sake and that should encourage you to draw near to God and then it means this to draw near to him who is the fountain head so often we're we're dealing with just the streams but there is this great mercy when you were helped to have to do with

God and wait upon him wait for him like the Selmist when he said my soul wait thou only upon God for my expectation is from him then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he saved them out of his distresses it is good for me to draw near to God but then when you draw near to God it means you draw near to him in all that he is it means that you draw near to his love you learn in drawing near to God God is love as you are helped to draw near he does not frown on you no he encourages you in coming he makes you welcome yes and thus you begin to learn we love him because he first loved us and remember none will draw near to

[37 : 00] God and be made welcome in doing so but those on whom he has set his everlasting love do remember that it should encourage you it means to draw near to God in his fullness and what a sweet experience that is the apostle John defines and of his fullness have all we received and grace for grace it means to draw near to God in his almighty power so that whatever your difficulties may be whatever mountains have arisen in life's way you can appeal to him as you read in Isaiah all that thou wouldest render heavens and come down that the mountains might flow down at thy presence but there is another thought here it is good for me to draw near to

God sometimes you have drawn near to man you have not always been favoured in doing that sometimes you have found man cannot understand the way you're going along the difficulties that you are meeting not only so he has got so much to do in his own life he has got very little time to give to listen to what you have got to tell as to how matters are between you and God it is good though when you can love us brethren and lend a listening ear to what your brother or sister in the Lord may have to say because you might be helped to speak a word in season and thereby bring glory to God and good to your brother or sister as the case may be do remember that share savior savior in going about when he dwelt on earth and wonderful was the sympathy that he manifested he ever had a listening ear to those who had got a tale to tell of need of his divine aid and he is Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever yes it means to draw near to him in his loving heart his sympathy which overflows and remember in drawing near to God he delighteth in mercy oh he delights to dispense it and there again who can tell but what

God will be gracious unto you the hymn writer says I'll to the gracious king approach who scepter pardon gives perhaps he will command my touch and then the suppleian lives but it is good for me to draw near to God and it means I can only say this as the time is going it means to draw near to God for everything and now that is very comprehensive there is nothing left outside so that in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God you dear young people even in your school life you can draw near to God and find he will help you even in your lessons and in your examinations and in those things that burden you wherein you feel to need wisdom as to know what is right to do even you can learn what the saviour said suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven you can draw near to God for help draw near to God for instruction draw near to God for comfort draw near to God for deliverance in any trouble that befalls you and do remember in drawing near to God you draw near to reality this is life eternal that they might know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent and remember the woman in the gospel she pressed through the crowds you will find crowds to press through but do press through like that woman if I may but touch the hem of his garment

I shall be healed she drew near to God when she did that she touched the hem of his garment and her faith was wonderfully confirmed but now coming to the amen let us look at this word good but it is good for me to draw near to God I might say in looking at that word good there is nothing else whatever you can do but do it it cannot be good for you to do otherwise God is our refuge and strength a very present help in trouble and you will find dear friends I wish I knew more about it and so do you it is good it is a present good a little talk with Jesus how it smooths life's rugged road how it cheers and helps me onward when I faint beneath my load it is good and this is the good you get that Christ is God

I can avouch and for his people cares since I have prayed to him as such and he has heard my prayers you get answers to prayer and Apsas brother Selmist David said blessed be God for he hath heard my prayer and turned away his mercy from me and you will say so too you will find it is good it is a present good to draw near to God and when you feel that you have laid your case at Jesus feet it will give you a sweet relief in your mind even though you have to learn it is well when at his feet they groan yet bring their wants away not only so it is not only a present good it is a protecting good once you have committed your way unto the Lord you can leave it the Lord will appear for you the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delighteth in his way and I might say this it is good for me to draw near to God and now it is also a prospective good do you remember how the

[45 : 26] Selmist as it were argue you can argue with God on a right basis a gospel basis Job said I would fill my mouth with arguments yes and here is an argument which you can use and it will be a very powerful argument to use before the throne of grace and God will take pleasure in you using it the Selmist said hide not thy face far from me put not thy servant away in anger thou hast been my help here is the argument Lord you have heard me in my bygone experiences you have made me welcome at the throne of grace you have done my soul good thou knowest I have got way marks set up in troubles not a few and now

Lord thou hast been my help leave me not neither forsake me O God of my salvation it is a prospective good you can argue with God thy love in times past forbids me to think thou wilt leave me at last in trouble to sink best of all it is good for me to draw near to God it is a permanent good whatever good God has wrought in your soul's experience as you were helped to wait upon him wait for him is how the good work begun in you is carried on and it is a permanent good they who once is kindness proved find it everlasting love but it is good for me to draw near to

God and now when you help to do this in the fullness of it as you journey through life you will find it to be a little bit of heaven on earth and when you get to the end of life's journey how good it will be to draw near to God comforts eternal they shall prove and dwell forever in his love amen and and .