

# BELPRES CHURCH

## **Sermon Title: From Heartbreak to Hope**

**Opening Question:** Looking back to last week's sermon and scripture... How did you live differently or practice what we talked about in your life this week? What did you do and how did it go?

### **This week's scripture:**

#### **Psalm 73 (selected verses used in the sermon)**

Surely God is good to Israel,  
to those who are pure in heart.  
<sup>2</sup> But as for me, my feet had almost slipped;  
I had nearly lost my foothold.  
<sup>3</sup> For I envied the arrogant  
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.  
<sup>4</sup> They have no struggles;  
their bodies are healthy and strong.  
<sup>5</sup> They are free from common human burdens;  
they are not plagued by human ills.  
<sup>6</sup> Therefore pride is their necklace;  
they clothe themselves with violence.  
<sup>7</sup> From their callous hearts comes iniquity;  
their evil imaginations have no limits.  
<sup>8</sup> They scoff, and speak with malice;  
with arrogance they threaten oppression.  
<sup>9</sup> Their mouths lay claim to heaven,  
and their tongues take possession of the earth.  
<sup>10</sup> Therefore their people turn to them  
and drink up waters in abundance.  
<sup>11</sup> They say, "How would God know?  
Does the Most High know anything?"  
<sup>12</sup> This is what the wicked are like—  
always free of care, they go on amassing wealth.

<sup>13</sup> Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure  
and have washed my hands in innocence.  
<sup>14</sup> All day long I have been afflicted,  
and every morning brings new punishments.  
<sup>15</sup> If I had spoken out like that,  
I would have betrayed your children.  
<sup>16</sup> When I tried to understand all this,  
it troubled me deeply  
<sup>17</sup> till I entered the sanctuary of God;  
then I understood their final destiny.  
<sup>18</sup> Surely you place them on slippery ground;  
you cast them down to ruin.  
<sup>19</sup> How suddenly are they destroyed,  
completely swept away by terrors!  
<sup>20</sup> They are like a dream when one awakes;  
when you arise, Lord,  
you will despise them as fantasies.  
<sup>21</sup> When my heart was grieved  
and my spirit embittered,  
<sup>22</sup> I was senseless and ignorant;  
I was a brute beast before you.  
<sup>23</sup> Yet I am always with you;  
you hold me by my right hand.  
<sup>24</sup> You guide me with your counsel,  
and afterward you will take me into glory.  
<sup>25</sup> Whom have I in heaven but you?  
And earth has nothing I desire besides you.  
<sup>26</sup> My flesh and my heart may fail,  
but God is the strength of my heart  
and my portion forever.  
<sup>27</sup> Those who are far from you will perish;  
you destroy all who are unfaithful to you.  
<sup>28</sup> But as for me, it is good to be near God.  
I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge;  
I will tell of all your deeds.

**Scripture Reflection Questions:** Read this week's scripture together and discuss the following:

- What do we learn about God (e.g., traits, personality, what matters, priorities) in this passage?

- What do we learn about people, and ourselves in particular, this week?

**Sermon Reflection Questions:** Reflecting on this week's sermon, discuss the following:

- Describe a time when you found it difficult to pray because you were suffering or grieving. What were the circumstances or the reason you had a hard time praying?
- What is one thing about lament that stood out for you in this sermon? How would you like to apply that to your prayer life now?

**Closing Question and Application:** Given what we've discussed together today, how might God want you to apply these learnings to your life or in the life of your community this next week? Who might you share this with?

**Closing group prayer:** Spend a few minutes together in your group sharing prayer requests and then praying together for each other. Thank God for the time together, the conversation shared, the other people in the group, and for encouragement in the week ahead.