

Focus

Psalm 73:1-28 Where will your focus be today? Here the psalmist looks at the people around him. He compares himself with those who are ungodly and realizes they seem to be better off than he is. He reminds God of how he has cleansed his own heart, but he cannot see the benefits of living a righteous life. His complaint to God is the same as that of many Christians today: "What's the use in trying to be good and going God's way when nothing is working out?" But then he goes into the sanctuary and draws near to God. He realizes that the wicked will eventually perish, but he will not. He thanks God for His faithfulness in holding his hand through hard times, for His guidance, counsel and strength. Then he shares this wonderful statement: "It is good to draw near to God; to put our trust in Him and to declare His works." The psalmist first sees only the people who are close to him and the circumstances around him. At the end of this psalm, he is given a supernatural pair of glasses to see beyond those things he is experiencing. He focuses on the God who is in control of all things. To receive healing for his eyesight, however, he had to go into the sanctuary and draw near to God. He had to retreat from his circumstances and the people who surrounded him and get alone with God. In the sanctuary there were no distractions and his attention was focused only on God.

Several years ago, I visited a monastery where the monks belonged to an order that required a vow of silence. They passed one another without greeting and spent most of their time in prayer. You may be thinking, If I could only live in a monastery, then I would have no trouble drawing near to God. This world is too filled with distractions, and I'm not able to focus. We listened to one of the monks who had permission to talk since he daily went into town to purchase things. He exclaimed, "It is extremely difficult to be shut in with God

twenty-four hours a day without any communication with others except God. There is no escape." Restricting your communication with others is unnatural. My husband tried a vow of silence for one day, and he broke it within one hour.

God desires fellowship with us continually, no matter what our day holds, but He also designed us to fellowship with others. Granted we live in a world where it is difficult to have constant communion with God because of the distractions around us. Another monk found the secret to keeping his eyes focused on the Lord. His name was Brother Lawrence, and he wrote a book called Practicing the Presence of God. He shares in his book how he used his everyday tasks and people he saw to remind him of God and His love. As he washed dishes, he thought about the cleansing of Jesus' blood and the water of His Word. When he saw different people during the day, he would quietly pray for them. I challenge you today to practice the presence of God and then declare to others God's works. When you do this, you will always be in the sanctuary. I guarantee you will have a good day, because your focus will be on a good God. HAVE A GOOD DAY!!

**READ: Deuteronomy 18:1-20:20; Luke 9:28-50; Psalm 73:1-28;
Proverbs 12:10**