



YOUng & GODLY

BATTLES OF THE HEART

PART 2

BY MAURICE GRAHAM

CHALLENGE

Study the Sanctuary:

1. Find anything inspiring?
2. Share what you find with a friend.

Study Galatians 5:25-26:

1. Does Social Media make this more difficult?
2. How can utilize the positives of Social Media while avoiding the pitfalls?

Read 4SP 283.1 by EGW • Gather friends and pray for our leaders and our Church.

In Battles of The Heart Part One, the young Psalmist Asaph wrote a song that allowed us to peer into his inner world. His struggle with doubt, envy and loneliness almost consumed him. He had experienced the goodness of God, but now, with eyes blinded by #emotions and feet wearied by trials, he found himself in a battle to hold on to faith that God was still with him. Though he was well versed in scripture and a gifted leader, like the rest of us he was not immune to life's challenges and personal discouragements. #discouragement.

As the words flowed from his heart, Asaph probably did not realize they would become a source of encouragement and inspiration down through the ages. Only in heaven will we understand the impact of the testimonies we share and why at times God allows us to endure the fires of affliction.

His song began with the words, "Truly **God is good** to Israel, to such as

are pure in heart." But the tone quickly changed, "...**But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped**" Psalm 73:1-2. His plea was, God how come you seem to be blessing everyone but me? If you are struggling, it may be comforting to know that people who were used by God in biblical times also had their moments of wrestling with challenging feelings. We are about to discover that while difficulty can sometimes shake our foundation, complete emotional and spiritual recovery is #possible with #Jesus.

When in despair, our perception of God and of people can become skewed. When this happens, making accurate judgements can be difficult. It is wise to avoid making major decision when in that place. Despair caused Asaph to compare himself to the people around him which impacted his experience and view of God negatively. Some of us may make the same mistake today. In the

midst of trials, we should look up, not out! #lookupnotout

By the third verse in Psalm 73, Asaph was comparing himself not only to people in Israel, but also to a group he called "the ungodly." That mistake can have eternal consequences, knowing that by beholding we become changed (2 Cor. 3:18). Before long, Asaph exclaimed, "Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain..." vs 13. Taking time to observe the lives of the ungodly, especially when facing difficulty, can lead to a devaluing of the work that God has been doing and wants to continue in our hearts. It heightens our desire to explore the things of the world. Hebrews 11:25 reminds us that the pleasures of sin lasts for a short time. The apparent ease and pleasure of "the ungodly" that Asaph envied is attained at a cost.

So Asaph, seemingly #alone and apparently unsure of the future, made a decision that altered his course this time for the better. Psalm 73:16-17 says, "When I thought to know this, It was too [#painful] for me; Until I went into the [#sanctuary] of God..."

In the sanctuary, he found something practical and life changing! It inspired faith, cleared his foggy #perception, and suddenly he knew that God was and had been with him. **God never left; He was on the sunny side of a passing cloud!** His view and experience changed though his circumstance seemed unchanged. What a powerful reminder that our

circumstance does not have to determine our experience.

In verses 22 and 28 the Psalmist said, "So foolish was I, and ignorant... Thou hast **holden** me by my right hand...there is none upon earth that I **desire** beside thee...it is **good** for me to draw **near** to God..."

So here we are standing on the cuffs of eternity, some of us #discouraged. It's time to take our eyes off circumstances, personal difficulties, Facebook, Instagram, and look up for our redemption draweth nigh!

Later in his experience, Asaph wrote these words, "**Thy way, O God is in the sanctuary.** Who is so great a God as our God?" Psalm 77:13. Asaph found much more than a head knowledge, more than articles of furniture. He found the living Jesus. If you desire to share in the joy Asaph found, I encourage you to study the Sanctuary beginning with John 14:6.

BONUS:

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