

What About ... How Are You Doing With the Lord?

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In the Psalm 73, Asaph wrote: *But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling. My steps had almost slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant, as I saw the prosperity of the wicked ... When I pondered to understand this, it was troublesome in my sight. Until I came into the sanctuary of God; then I perceived their end* (Psalm 73:2-3, 16-17).

Asaph came to a crisis in his relationship with God. [Relationship may not be the best word to describe our oneness with God, but we'll go with it here.] He understood one of God's attributes was justice. God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked. So why was Asaph poor and many wicked people rich? For example, we could think of wicked politicians who



fly around in personal jet airplanes, have drivers, servants, and staff, paid for by our tax dollars, while they destroy our country, passing immoral laws. Asaph was so bothered by this, he almost gave up his faith in God—until he looked more closely at God. When he came into the sanctuary of God, he realized (or remembered) that God was not only **just**, He was also **eternal**. Then he perceived their end. When he looked at the wicked eternally, they

didn't look so prosperous. But Asaph could not grow in his relationship with God until he got a more accurate theology (who God is and what He does). The **quantity** of his faith in God may have been great. But the **quality** of his faith depended upon his understanding of who God is and what He does (Matthew 13:23, the *good soil ... understands*).

The answer to the question: "How are you doing with the Lord?" depends on what you know about the Lord (who He is and what He does). For most of us, that knowledge develops over time. And sometimes we have to come to a crisis, like Asaph did, before we are willing to seek out a more accurate understanding of God—without which the **quality** of our faith cannot grow.

Suppose you had a friendship with a certain teacher, political figure, or employer, and then found out they were not the person you thought you knew. They may be better or worse, deeper or shallower, stronger or weaker. So you had a relationship without understanding or without much understanding. You imagined a relationship in your mind with a person who never actually existed. The interesting question is: How does your relationship change when you learn more about that person? For many people, God is a nice old grandfather, or a tolerant friend, or a genie in a bottle. But what happens if they begin to realize God is sovereign, all knowing, all powerful, a God of love, but also a God of truth, holiness, justice and

wrath, who does not change, the beginning of wisdom and knowledge.

In the Psalm 73, Asaph thought God always rewarded the righteous with wealth and the wicked with poverty—here on earth. When he learned that was not so, he had an opportunity to grow in his relationship with God. The **quality** of his faith grew because his understanding of God changed. The same sort of thing happened to Job, Jacob, Joshua, Jonah, and the apostles. What made Moses more of a man of God than the other Israelites? He knew more about the ways of God than they did (Psalms 103:7; Hebrews 3:10). Why was David God's favorite king? David understood more about the heart of God and the will of God than the other kings (Acts 13:22; 1 Samuel 13:14).

So: "How are you doing with the Lord?" Obviously, this is a real broad question which involves all kinds of things. But all of it depends on your theology, your knowledge of who God is and what He does. If your knowledge of God is faulty, then so is the **quality** of your faith, even if you have a lot of it.

As an exercise, I suggest:

- Every time you read the Bible ask:**
- **What did I learn about God?**
 - **What did I learn about what God does?**
 - **How can I improve my understanding of God?**

