

How the Wicked Seem to Prosper

by Chuck Smith

The wicked may seem to prosper, but ultimately they will face destruction and judgment, and it is worth trying to live a righteous life because God is with us and will bring us through trials and tribulations.

Duration: 25:04

Scripture: Job 21:7, Psalm 34:19, Proverbs 22:6, Luke 2:1, Romans 8:37, Ephesians 3:16, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Wicked"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the common struggle of believers when they see the wicked prospering while the righteous suffer. He emphasizes the importance of maintaining an eternal perspective and not being swayed by the apparent unfairness of life. Pastor Chuck reminds the listeners that God sees and knows all, and that the wicked will ultimately face judgment. He encourages believers to find strength and power through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, trusting in God's eternal plans for their lives.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
When we are tempted to evaluate life And we begin to look around And we see the wicked prospering
And we see the righteous sometimes suffering Then we are prone to carry the pendulum to the opposite extreme
And we're saying, you know, the rich never have any problems You know, they just, they blaspheme God, they're horribly wicked
And yet, you know, everything just seems to fall into their laps And that's not realistic either
What is realism is that everybody has problems Whether you're wicked or righteous That righteousness does not give me immunity
I will have problems If I'm wicked, I will have problems It is true that if I'm wicked, Satan doesn't pick on me so much
If you try to live a righteous life, it's true that Satan is going to be an adversary to you But the truth is this
When I walk with God, He walks with me all the way He is with me in the times of testing, trial, tribulation
If I'm walking without God, I'm walking without God all the way And I have to go through those testings and trials and problems on my own
With no hope of coming out When God is walking with me, there is always that hope God is going to bring me through
And though there may be affliction for a time, for a season God is going to bring me through victorious
And Job, in the midst of the darkness, cried, I know that my Redeemer lives He's going to bring me out
There is a day coming in which I'm going to be delivered from my calamities And that is always the hope of that one who walks with God
There's an old spiritual used to sing, I'm so glad that trouble don't

last always God's going to bring me through It reminds me of a story I heard of this lady who lived in Chicago Was extremely poor Had one problem heaped upon another Until it was almost more than anybody could bear And she got up one night in church and began to testify Of how things were just going so bad And she went home and she was so discouraged and just thought This is it Lord, I can't take anymore And she said, I just said, Lord you've got to speak to me out of the scriptures And I opened the Bible and it came open to the gospel of Luke chapter 2 verse 1 And she said, oh bless God how he ministered to me And oh glory, oh I praise the Lord And she went on praising the Lord for chapter 2 verse 1 of the gospel of Luke And the pastor said, well now wait a minute sister I don't quite understand Because he knew that the verse said And it came to pass in those days that there went forth a decree From Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed And how in the world can she get victory and comfort and rejoicing Out of that passage of scripture And so he said, just a minute sister I'd like to get a clarification here You say Luke 2 verse 1?

She said, oh yes bless God, hallelujah He said, but just how did God speak to you out of Luke 2 verse 1? She said, well I just read and it came to pass And she said, oh thank God It didn't come to stay, it come to pass And that's always the hope of the righteous It hasn't come to stay, it's come to pass God is going to bring me out God is going to bring me through But when we get our eyes upon these things The seeming inequities of the world And Satan starts playing mind games with us We're prone as I say to go to the other extreme And Job here begins to go to the other extreme As is often the case as he begins to talk about the wicked Why do the wicked live and become old And are mighty in power Their children, their seed is established in their sight with them They have their offspring before their eyes Their houses are safe from fear Neither is the rod of God upon them The wicked That's not so, you just drive down through Newport Beach And notice all of the protected by silent alarms And you know by the securities, I mean they're fearful But yet as you start playing with these things You think they don't have any fears, God's rod is not upon them Their bull gendereth and faileth not Their cows calve and cast not off her calf They send forth their little ones like a flock And their children dance They take the timbrel, the harp And they rejoice at the sound of the organ They spend their days in wealth And in a moment they go down to the grave They don't go through the misery like I'm going through Slow torturous death You know they just live life to the full And boom they're gone The wicked have it made Therefore they say to God, depart from us For we don't really desire the knowledge of your ways We're happy the way we are Happy living after our flesh And they say, what is the almighty that we should serve him?

And what profit should we have if we pray unto him? Lo, their good is not in their hand The counsel of the wicked is far from me Now this is the same kind of thing that we find in the 73rd Psalm The Psalm of Asaph When he was going through some real trials Personal trials in his own life And he was observing also the wicked around him And he said, now I know that the Lord is good I know this, God is good Unto Israel and unto all that seek him But as for me, my foot almost slipped I was well nigh gone When I saw the prosperity of the wicked For there seems to be no pangs in their death They have more than their hearts could desire They are not in trouble as other men And yet their eyes bulge out with fatness They seem to have a full cup wrung out unto them And they blaspheme God They say, you know, who is God that we should serve him?

And here they are blasphemous and all And yet they seem to be prospering and so happy And here Job says their children are dancing And it seems like, you know, the good life And so Asaph was observing the same kind of thing From his position of testings and trials And it led him to a false conclusion And of course this is the purpose of Satan When he begins to play with your mind To bring you to a false

conclusion And Asaph said that when I sought to know this It was really too painful for me For I said, I have washed my hands in innocency Basically it doesn't really pay to try to serve God For I've been plagued all day long It doesn't really pay to try to live the right kind of a life To do the right thing And when I sought to understand these things He said it was just really too painful for me Until I went into the sanctuary of God And then I saw their end It's getting the long-term perspective It's seeing things in the light of the eternal And rather than envying the wicked When you see them in the light of the eternal Then there is great pity for the wicked Surely thou hast set them in slippery places They go down into the pit in a moment It's over Cast off forever But Lord, you hold me with my right hand Or by my right hand You guide me with your counsels And afterwards you're going to receive me into everlasting glory And when you see the eternal perspective And that's what is so important for us And this is what should transpire every time we come into the house of God This should be a place of the correcting of perspective And sometimes, you know, we've been battered out there by the world We've looked around and things are not fair We try to do the right thing, we get in trouble The guy who's lying, stealing, cheating He gets the promotion Because he faked the reports and he lied about the whole thing He gets promoted and we stay at the same level I mean, it's just not fair It doesn't pay to try and do the right thing You know, if you're going to survive in business You've got to be a cheat and dishonest like the rest of them Or else you just aren't going to survive I've heard that conclusion being drawn And when you're out there mixing it with that lying, stealing, wicked crowd It does seem that you're at a definite disadvantage And sometimes with ASAP you become envious and jealous And you conclude it doesn't pay to just be honest and to do the right thing But when you come into the sanctuary of God Then you get the corrective perspective From the short-sightedness unto the eternal view And what a change of attitude that makes In my observations as I observe the wicked Rather than envying now I feel sorry for them Man, you're about wiped out and you don't even know it Down to destruction, into the pit So Job is pretty much making the same kind of observations That Asaph made concerning the wicked They say to God, depart from us We don't desire the knowledge of your ways Who is God that we should serve Him?

What profit if we pray unto Him? You've heard these things from the wicked around you But he said the counsel of the wicked is far from me You accuse me of wickedness, hey man I'm not of that attitude The wicked say who is God that we should pray? I know who God is You're accusing me of being a wicked man But I'm far from a wicked man But then he said how often is the candle of the wicked put out? How often comes their destruction upon them? God distributes sorrows in His anger And they are as stubble before the wind And chaff that the storm carrieth away As you read through Job, which of course Antedates the Psalms by many centuries You find that many of the things that are in the book of Job Are picked up in the book of Psalms The wicked are as the stubble before the wind As the chaff that the storm carrieth away In the threshing of their wheat They would put it out on this stone Usually on the top of the hill, a flat stone They would put out their wheat and then they would Walk on it and all to separate the little hull From the kernel of wheat And as they would work the thing over Separating this hull which is unpalatable It won't cook even after you boil it It's still hard and will choke you So they've got to get rid of that husk And so they take and rub the wheat well upon the rock And then as the wind is blowing They'll take and just throw the wheat up into the air And all of the hull, which is very light, blows away And the wheat falls back down on the rock itself And so after this process of throwing the wheat in the air The chaff is driven away by the wind And that's what they're talking about The wicked are like chaff, it's driven away God lays up his iniquity for his children He rewards him and he shall know it His eyes shall see the destruction And he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty Don't envy the wicked They are going to drink of the wrath of the Almighty For what pleasure hath he in his house after him When the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

Shall any teach God knowledge Seeing he judges those that are on high? Now there are those who presume to teach God knowledge I find great difficulty in the concept of God that is being espoused by some of the well-known ministers of this day and age In Paul Yung-gi Cho's book, The Fourth Dimension I have great difficulty with his prayer for a bicycle And after continued prayer for over a prolonged period of time And no bicycle was forthcoming When he questioned God and said Why haven't you answered my prayer and given me a bicycle?

God said, well, I didn't know what kind you wanted You didn't tell me what kind I have a little problem with that A God who is so impotent that he doesn't know what kind of a bicycle to give me And can't give me a bicycle until I specify a Schwinn cruiser And then still after no bicycle and another question You didn't say what color Poor God Shall any teach God knowledge Does God need my advice or my directions? No, I need his advice and his directions Seeing he judges those that are on high One dies in his full strength being holy at ease and quiet His breasts are full of milk, his bones are moistened with marrow Another dies in bitterness of his soul and never eats with pleasure And we see it, this is life, this is reality Job is facing reality Some people die, you know Full strength and all right up until death and others just slowly Fade out But they both shall lie down alike in the dust And the worms shall devour both of them Now behold, I know your thoughts And the devices which you wrongfully imagine against me Your thoughts concerning me are wrong You're making a wrong analysis For you say, where is the house of the prince?

And where are the dwelling places of the wicked? Have you not asked them that go by the way? Do you not know their tokens? That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction They shall be brought forth to the day of wrath And who shall declare his way to his face? And who shall repay him for what he has done? Yet shall he be brought down to the grave and shall remain in the tomb And the clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him And every man shall draw after him as there are innumerable before him How then do you comfort me in vain Seeing that in your answers There's the inconsistencies, there's the fallacies There are the falsehoods How do you hope to comfort me with these vain philosophies That are not real You're not facing realities, fellows And so Job can't be comforted By the words of these men But these guys are stubborn They don't give up easily And next we'll find Eliphaz laying the same kind of trip on Job again He's gonna go at it for the third time And sort of give Job the same treatment And so we'll look at that as we move along in the book of Job We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse venture through the Bible In our next lesson As we once again look at the exhortation of Eliphaz And we do hope you'll make plans to join us But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you missed any part of today's message Or perhaps you'd like to order a copy for that special friend or loved one You can do so by simply contacting one of our customer service representatives And they'd be more than happy to assist you with the ordering details Simply call 1-800-272-WORD And phone orders can be taken Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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And now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck Smith With today's closing comments May the Lord be with you and give you a blessed week As you live and walk in fellowship with God May you be strengthened by His Spirit in your inner man So that you might be more than a conqueror through His love And through the difficulties, the trials May we keep the perspective Of God working out His eternal plans in our life For our eternal good May you come to that place of strength, power Through the ministry of the Spirit to your heart As He works in your life effectually In Jesus' name Kids, I've got some exciting news Pastor Chuck has written a book just for you Called The Story of David and Goliath And just listen Smells delicious David had many older brothers His brothers were big and strong And tough enough to fight in a battle It's so much fun to read along with Pastor Chuck And learn about God's Word God helped me to slay the lion and the bear So God will help me to slay this giant Lions?

Bears? Goliath? Oh my! And parents, it's never too early to start reading to your children These timeless Bible stories taught by Pastor Chuck Imprint God's Word upon their little hearts As you read these stories over and over again And as a gift, each book contains an audio CD of Pastor Chuck Actually reading the story of David and Goliath So your kids can read along To order your copy, call The Word for Today at 800-272-WORD Or see a sneak preview of The Story of David and Goliath Visit us online at thewordfortoday.org This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today In Costa Mesa, California

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