

20-0209p Transcript

20-0209p - *Faith, Justice, and Life's True Inheritance*, Steve Cain

Bible Reading: Not recorded

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Trusting in God's Justice and Provision: Reflections on Righteousness and Eternal Life

Transcript (1:16 - 27:21)

Scripture Reading

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Not recorded.

Transcript

Preacher: Steve Cain

(0:02) Good evening. (1:16) This evening is going to be a little bit (1:18) on the morbid side.

(1:26) The James Passage that I wanted to (1:29) share with you is a prelude to (1:33) the psalmist, Psalm 37. (1:37) And that's another psalm that (1:39) I read this week (1:42) with the exercise of (1:44) reading one proverb and five (1:46) psalms a day. (1:49) And of course, (1:51) Psalm 37 is the one that (1:53) came to my mind.

(1:56) And it brings out (1:57) a morbid thought (1:58) in a way. (2:00) But it tries to put us (2:01) in (2:03) the right mind and attitude (2:06) about what life is (2:07) and what life is about. (2:10) And how that it is not about us.

(2:13) But it is about (2:15) trying to live a life (2:17) that is pleasing to God and being balanced. (2:20) I haven't heard that word in a long time. (2:24) Trying to live a balanced life.

(2:27) And that was a theme (2:29) for several years back when (2:31) I was younger. (2:33) Jesus lived a balanced life. (2:35) And so we were (2:36) trying to emulate Jesus with a (2:39) balanced life.

(2:41) A balanced life? (2:43) What is a balanced life? (2:45) One recognizes the fact (2:47) that you're here today and gone tomorrow. (2:50) And that the things (2:51) that you do today (2:52) will have little or no (2:56) consequences on (2:57) things that will happen (2:58) a hundred years from now. (3:00) And that was another statement that used to be said.

(3:02) A hundred years from now, who will care? (3:05) And so as we (3:06) reflect upon it, James points (3:08) that out just a little bit for us. (3:11) When you look at (3:12) James the first chapter starting with verse (3:14) nine. (3:17) And this is one of the reasons why I had (3:20) Mike (3:21) read this for us.

(3:24) The brother (3:25) in humble circumstances ought to take pride (3:27) in his high position. (3:29) But the one who is rich should take pride (3:31) in his low position. (3:32) Because he will (3:34) pass away (3:36) like a wild flower.

(3:38) Here today, gone tomorrow. (3:41) And Psalm 37 is going (3:43) to amplify that. (3:45) And as we reflect upon it.

(3:47) But he will (3:49) pass away like a wild flower. (3:50) For the sun rises with scorching (3:52) heat and withers the plant. (3:54) Its blossom falls and its (3:56) beauty is destroyed.

In the same (3:58) way the rich man will fade away (4:00) even while he goes (4:02) about his (4:04) business. (4:06) And of course you can get several lessons out of (4:08) that particular passage. (4:10) The one that comes to my mind (4:12) is the fact that we (4:14) have a tendency to (4:18) live (4:18) by class.

(4:20) The rich man and the poor man. (4:23) And so the rich (4:24) man might highly (4:26) esteem himself in value. (4:28) And the poor man may have very (4:30) little self esteem for himself.

(4:33) And so (4:34) the scriptures are pointing out to us and James (4:36) wants us to know that God (4:38) raises the poor man. (4:41) God has great value (4:43) for the poor man. In fact if you're (4:44) reading the Psalms and especially the (4:46) Psalms this week (4:48) that God says (4:50) that (4:52) or the Psalmist says that God (4:55) gives (4:56) great emphasis to (4:58) benevolence.

And the person (5:00) who takes (5:02) concern about the poor man (5:04) and helps the poor individual (5:06) that God blesses them (5:08) more than anybody (5:10) else. And so (5:12) this implies that there's (5:14) two classes. (5:16) And that generally we have (5:18) a tendency to (5:20) fall in one of those classes (5:22) and we self denigrate (5:24) ourselves.

(5:25) And so I'm not worthy (5:28) of this or I'm not worthy of that. (5:31) So (5:32) James is telling me that if I'm (5:34) self denigrating myself (5:36) then I should (5:39) take consideration (5:40) about this. Brother in (5:42) humble circumstances ought to take (5:44) pride in his high position.

(5:47) God is placing (5:48) me in his family and (5:50) God is putting me there (5:52) in a way in which (5:53) it is an enviable position (5:56) much more than any (5:58) other position in life. (6:00) And so I need (6:02) to rely on the fact that (6:04) this is an enviable position to be (6:06) a child of God. (6:08) But one who is rich should take (6:10) pride in his low position because (6:12) he will pass away like a wild (6:14) flower.

For the sun rises (6:16) with scorching heat and withers (6:18) the plant. Its blossom falls (6:20) and its beauty is destroyed. In the (6:22) same way the rich man will (6:24) fade away even while he goes about (6:26) his business.

In other words (6:27) God has a way of putting a rich (6:30) man in his place. (6:32) And (6:33) where do I fall? I suppose (6:36) I could classify myself rich. (6:38) And (6:39) as a rich man I need to (6:42) be put in my place.

(6:43) And I don't know about you (6:46) but I recognize the (6:48) fact that I am rich. (6:50) I may not have (6:51) all the money that I want. I may not have (6:54) everything that I need but (6:56) I have what (6:58) I need.

I'm a child of God. (7:00) And so I'm (7:02) rich. (7:04) Rich in many ways.

(7:05) Let's take a look at (7:07) Psalm 37. (7:09) And it's a take off from this (7:11) morning. The way in which I'm going to be delivering (7:13) this particular lesson and message tonight (7:16) is going to be pretty (7:17) much in a similar way.

(7:19) And then after we have finished with Psalm (7:21) 37 the (7:23) evening will be yours. (7:29) Let's go to our (7:30) Heavenly Father in prayer. (7:34) Most (7:34) gracious Heavenly Father we come (7:36) to you at this time thanking you so much (7:38) for the opportunity again to be together (7:40) with our (7:42) brothers and sisters.

(7:45) Few there may be but we (7:46) know that those who are not with us (7:48) this evening perhaps are (7:50) being hindered by the fear (7:52) of the threatening weather and so on. (7:55) We do not know why they're not here (7:56) and it's not for us to (7:58) try to surmise or (8:00) guess. But we pray that you'll (8:02) be with them and protect them and that they (8:04) will be healthy and (8:06) that their safety is (8:08) utmost important to us.

(8:11) We pray that you (8:12) be with those of us who are here this evening (8:14) and that the things that we look (8:16) at in your word and we know that (8:18) you're jealous of your word and you (8:20) desire for us to covet your word (8:22) and go over (8:24) it and (8:26) mull about it and (8:28) really (8:30) study your word and get the richness (8:32) out of it for you have such (8:34) great meaning for us. (8:36) And we pray that you will help us (8:38) do that very thing this evening. (8:40) This is a prayer up in Jesus' name.

(8:43) Amen. (8:47) David (8:48) starts out by saying (8:50) and I'm reading again from the New International (8:52) Version. (8:53) Do not fret because (8:56) of evil men (8:57) or be envious of those (9:00) who do wrong (9:02) for like the (9:03) grass they will soon wither (9:05) like green plants (9:07) they will soon (9:09) die away.

(9:11) Notice what he's saying here. He's pointing out (9:13) to us the brevity of life (9:15) and we need to recognize (9:17) that life is (9:18) brief even though we have (9:21) individuals who are living to be 96, (9:24) 98, 100, (9:25) 105 (9:27) and we have a lot of people who (9:29) aren't coming anywhere close to reaching (9:31) that age. And life (9:33) is brief no matter how long you live.

(9:36) And he's going to point out (9:37) here that you (9:38) will be looking for them (9:40) and you won't be able to find them. (9:43) Why? Because they're dead. (9:45) They're no longer existing.

(9:47) You try to find them. (9:49) Where are they? (9:51) It's about like these (9:53) buildings that are being torn down. (9:55) I don't know about you but (9:56) every day I see (9:58) a house that (10:00) is no longer useful to anybody.

(10:03) It's decrepit. (10:04) It's torn and they come in (10:06) and in one day (10:09) they sweep it away. (10:11) They bring in a crane (10:12) or a shovel and then they just (10:14) dump it into one thing (10:16) and they come and it's gone.

(10:18) It's literally gone in one (10:21) day. (10:22) And you come back. They got that hole (10:24) filled with dirt and they got (10:26) straw and grass starting to grow on it (10:29) and it's as if (10:30) there was nothing there.

(10:34) And that's (10:35) what we need to (10:36) recognize the fact that (10:38) that's soon. (10:40) And I reflect upon (10:42) my parents (10:44) and I reflect upon how often (10:46) do I think about them. (10:48) And my grandfather and my grandmother (10:51) seldom ever.

(10:53) And when was the last time (10:55) I even went and paid any (10:56) attention to my grandmother and my (10:58) grandfather's grave. (11:02) That's life. (11:05) And that's why we need to be waking (11:06) up and we need to be waking (11:08) up to the reality of facts (11:10) that we need to be taking care of our (11:12) soul salvation (11:15) while the day is called today.

(11:17) And that's what (11:19) David was saying. (11:21) So he's saying (11:22) here, don't get (11:24) worked up over somebody who's (11:26) making all kinds of money (11:28) because of (11:30) ill gain. They're cheating.

(11:32) They're stealing. (11:33) They're taking money from (11:36) other people. (11:38) He says, do not fret (11:40) because of evil men or be (11:42) envious of those who do wrong (11:44) for like the grass (11:45) they soon (11:48) will wither.

(11:49) Like green plants (11:51) they will soon die (11:53) away. Trust (11:55) in the Lord and do good. (11:58) Dwell in the land (11:59) and enjoy safe (12:01) pasture.

Delight (12:03) yourself in the Lord and he (12:05) will give you the desires of your (12:07) heart. Isn't that what (12:09) Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount? (12:12) When he's talking about (12:13) which one of us can (12:16) add stature (12:17) to our lives. (12:19) Why fret about what we're going to wear (12:21) and what we're going to eat? The Lord (12:23) knows what we need before we even ask (12:25) of it.

He will (12:26) take care of us. (12:30) And so David is (12:31) saying to the very same (12:33) thing. Trust in (12:35) the Lord and do good.

(12:37) And he'll see to it that you will have what (12:39) you need. He'll see to it (12:41) that you will not go (12:43) with want. (12:46) And so he goes (12:47) on in verse 5. (12:49) Commit your way to the Lord.

Trust (12:51) in him and he will do this. (12:53) He will make your righteousness (12:55) shine like (12:57) the dawn. Righteousness? (13:00) Yes.

(13:01) You and I try our level (13:03) best to do (13:05) what God wants us to do and to live a (13:07) life that is pleasing to God. (13:09) That's righteousness. (13:09) That is righteousness.

(13:14) And your righteousness (13:15) will shine like the (13:17) dawn. (13:19) Believe it or not, your co-workers (13:21) know whether you're Christians or not. (13:23) They know whether you're living like a (13:24) Christian or not.

(13:26) And when they know that (13:28) you are a Christian and you live like (13:30) a Christian, they honor you. (13:33) They respect you. (13:36) At least that's (13:37) what I experience.

(13:39) In my walk of life. (13:41) So he's pointing out to us (13:43) that our righteousness (13:45) will shine like the dawn. (13:47) The justice of our cause (13:48) like the noonday sun.

(13:52) And so then he's saying (13:54) be still (13:55) before the Lord (13:56) and wait patiently for him. (14:00) Do not fret (14:01) when men succeed in their (14:03) ways, when they (14:05) carry out their wicked (14:07) schemes. (14:09) God knows (14:11) in their lives are going (14:13) to pay for it.

(14:15) Then he goes on and he says (14:17) refrain from (14:19) anger and turn (14:20) from wrath. Do not (14:23) fret. It leads (14:25) only to evil.

(14:28) For evil (14:29) men will be cut off (14:30) but those who hope in the Lord (14:33) will inherit (14:34) the land. (14:38) So he's trying to encourage us. (14:40) Trying to help us to appreciate the fact (14:42) that we're doing right.

(14:46) He's (14:46) trying to comfort us. (14:49) He is (14:50) in a way that I came up with this word (14:52) coming into town. (14:54) He coddles us.

(14:56) He's trying to help us to appreciate (14:58) these things. (15:01) And he's helping us. (15:02) Refrain from anger (15:04) and turn from wrath.

(15:06) Do not fret. (15:08) It leads only to evil. (15:11) For evil men will be (15:12) cut off but those (15:14) who hope in the Lord (15:16) will inherit the land.

(15:19) A little while (15:20) and the wicked will be (15:22) no more. Though you look (15:24) for them they will not be found (15:26) but the meek will (15:28) inherit the land and enjoy (15:30) great peace. And that's the passage (15:32) that I was alluding to.

(15:34) That's what, when you (15:36) start looking for these individuals (15:38) sooner or later they're going to (15:40) pass. And sooner or later (15:43) there's going to be (15:44) nothing that even reminds you that they (15:46) even existed on the face of the earth. (15:50) You'll be looking for them.

(15:52) You'll be looking for evidence of them (15:54) and you won't be able to find them. (15:56) Just like that house (15:57) that has been torn down (16:01) and no longer (16:02) exists. (16:04) So (16:05) the meek will inherit the land (16:07) and enjoy great peace.

(16:09) The wicked plot against the (16:11) righteous and gnash their (16:13) teeth at them. (16:15) But the Lord laughs at the wicked (16:17) for he knows (16:19) their day is coming. (16:23) And so we know (16:25) that judgment day (16:27) and we refer to that (16:29) often times.

There is (16:31) a judgment day. (16:33) The wicked draw the sword and bend (16:35) the bow to bring down the (16:37) poor and the needy. (16:39) To slay those whose ways are (16:41) upright.

But their (16:43) swords will pierce their own hearts (16:45) and their bows will be (16:47) broken. We may say (16:49) to ourselves, where is (16:51) justice? Where's our (16:53) people? Where's (16:55) our judges? Who's (16:57) taking them into an account? (16:59) Here on the earth while they still are living. (17:02) And chances are (17:03) they're getting away with it.

(17:06) But we know they're not. (17:08) Because God is going to be (17:09) taking care of them. (17:12) So then (17:14) David goes on (17:15) and makes this judgment (17:17) or this (17:21) comment.

(17:24) Better the little (17:25) that the righteous have (17:26) than the wealth of (17:29) many wicked. (17:31) For the power of the wicked (17:32) will be broken. (17:35) But the Lord upholds (17:36) the righteous.

(17:38) In other words, (17:40) be happy or do with (17:42) what you have. (17:44) God is looking after you (17:45) and he's providing for you. (17:48) The days of the (17:49) blameless are known to the (17:51) Lord and their inheritance (17:53) will endure forever.

(17:56) In other words, when (17:57) judgment comes. (18:00) In times of disaster (18:01) they will not (18:03) wither. In days of famine (18:05) they will enjoy plenty.

(18:08) But the wicked (18:09) will perish. (18:12) The Lord's enemies will be like (18:13) the beauty of the fields. (18:15) They will vanish, vanish (18:17) like smoke.

(18:20) And that's (18:21) reiterating what James says. (18:24) We're like the flowers. (18:27) The wicked (18:28) borrow and do not repay.

(18:30) But the righteous (18:31) give generously. Notice here, (18:33) this is the comments and this is (18:35) the thoughts that I was giving. (18:38) The wicked borrow (18:39) and do not repay.

But the righteous (18:41) give generously. (18:43) Those the Lord blesses (18:45) will inherit the land. (18:47) But those he curses will be cut off.

(18:50) If the Lord delights (18:51) in a man's way, he makes his (18:53) steps firm. Though (18:55) he stumble, he will not fall. (18:58) For the Lord upholds him (18:59) with his hand.

(19:04) Then David reflects, (19:06) I was young and (19:07) now I am old. (19:08) Yet I have (19:10) never seen the righteous (19:12) forsaken or their children (19:14) begging bread. (19:16) They are always generous (19:18) and lend freely.

(19:21) Their children will be blessed. (19:24) I don't need to (19:26) to (19:28) build on that. You know (19:30) what he's saying and you know he's (19:32) right.

(19:34) Turn from evil and do good. (19:36) Then you will dwell in the land (19:38) forever. For the Lord loves (19:40) the just and will not (19:42) forsake his faithful ones.

(19:44) They will be protected forever. (19:47) But the offspring of (19:48) the wicked will be cut off. (19:50) The righteous will inherit (19:52) the land and dwell in it (19:54) forever.

I was looking for (19:56) the passage that said that (19:59) the wealth of (20:00) the person when he dies (20:02) will be frittered away (20:04) by someone else. He has no (20:06) control over (20:08) who gets that money and is (20:10) blessed with it. (20:12) Eventually it will (20:14) go to where God wants it to go.

(20:18) The mouth of the righteous man utters (20:20) wisdom and his (20:22) tongue speaks what is just. (20:26) The law of his God is in his (20:28) heart. His feet do not (20:30) slip.

So he's (20:32) identifying you and me. (20:34) He's identifying (20:36) the life and that which God (20:39) takes great delight in. (20:42) The wicked lie and wait for (20:44) the righteous, seeking their (20:46) very lives.

But the Lord (20:48) will not leave them in their (20:50) power. (20:52) He's talking about the righteous. The Lord will not (20:54) leave the righteous in their power (20:56) or let them be condemned (20:58) when brought to trial.

(21:00) Wait for the (21:01) Lord and keep his way. (21:03) He will exalt you to (21:05) inherit the land. When the wicked (21:07) are cut off, you will see it.

(21:09) And I love that phrase (21:11) because he's used it a couple times already. (21:14) Wait on the Lord. (21:16) Wait (21:17) on the Lord.

Don't take matters (21:19) in your own hands. Don't (21:21) use your own (21:22) initiatives. Wait on the (21:25) Lord.

Because oftentimes (21:27) when we take matters (21:29) into our own hands, that's when we (21:31) get into trouble. (21:34) Oftentimes (21:35) we'll go out and perhaps borrow (21:37) money when God (21:39) has a solution coming (21:42) without anybody (21:43) borrowing any money. (21:47) So he goes on.

He says (21:49) the wicked borrow and do not repay, (21:51) but the righteous give generously. (21:53) If the Lord delights (21:55) in a man's way, he makes (21:57) a step firm. (21:59) I guess I've already read that.

(22:02) Turn from (22:03) evil and do good. (22:05) Then you will dwell in the land forever (22:07) for the Lord loves the just and (22:09) will not forsake his faithful ones. (22:11) They will be protected forever (22:13) but the offspring of the wicked (22:14) will be cut off.

The righteous (22:17) will inherit the land and (22:19) dwell in it forever. (22:21) The mouth of the (22:23) righteous man utters wisdom (22:25) and his tongue (22:26) speaks what is just. (22:29) The law of his (22:30) God is in his heart.

(22:33) His feet do not slip. (22:35) The wicked lie and wait (22:36) for the righteous, seeking (22:38) the very lives but the Lord (22:40) will not leave them in their power. (22:42) I've already read that.

I guess I (22:44) lost track of where I was. (22:47) So once again, (22:48) wait for the Lord and keep his way. (22:51) He will exalt you to (22:52) inherit the land.

(22:54) When the wicked are cut off, (22:57) you will see it. (22:59) I have seen the wicked (23:00) and the ruthless man. (23:03) I've seen him flourishing (23:04) like green tree in its (23:06) native soil but he soon (23:08) passed away (23:10) and was no more.

(23:13) Though I looked for him, (23:15) he could not be (23:16) found. (23:19) There again, (23:20) what was the state of the (23:22) man? What did he gain? (23:24) What happened to it? (23:25) I think about that all the time. (23:29) When I broke up (23:30) housekeeping, (23:32) what did I get? (23:34) What did I come away with? (23:37) Nothing.

(23:39) Just a few things. (23:41) Some furniture. (23:42) Just a couple items.

(23:44) Some clothes. (23:47) What did I have? (23:48) When Mary passed (23:49) away, my (23:52) kids came down and got everything that I (23:53) owned. (23:57) Moved in with Sandy.

(24:02) But I had nothing. (24:06) Nothing. (24:08) And when I die, (24:10) what will I have? (24:12) Have you ever seen, (24:14) as they say, (24:16) a moving truck following a (24:18) funeral? (24:21) I've never (24:22) seen a moving truck following a (24:24) funeral.

What are they (24:25) going to do with it? Of course, the (24:27) Egyptians, they built the pyramids and put (24:29) everything in there that the Pharaoh (24:31) owned and even killed (24:34) the (24:37) servants (24:37) to make sure that they were there (24:39) when he, the life (24:41) after death. (24:44) But consider that. (24:48) Consider (24:49) the blameless.

Observe (24:51) the upright. There is (24:53) a future for the man of peace. (24:56) But all sinners (24:57) will be destroyed.

(24:59) The future of the wicked (25:01) will be cut off. (25:04) Salvation of the (25:05) righteous comes from the (25:07) Lord. He (25:09) is their stronghold in time (25:11) of trouble.

(25:12) The Lord helps them and delivers (25:15) them. He delivers them (25:17) from the wicked and saves them (25:19) because they (25:21) take refuge (25:23) in him. (25:27) So the brevity of life and what (25:29) life is all about, (25:31) we have to wake up to reality.

(25:33) We have to know that (25:35) just because we're caught up (25:37) and that's the (25:39) thing about (25:40) Boston. (25:43) About life. (25:46) You're fooled into thinking you got tomorrow.

(25:51) Life makes you think that. (25:54) And I think that's (25:55) the reason why God created us with (25:56) eternal life because (25:58) we do have tomorrow. (26:02) We can be with him eternally (26:04) in heaven.

(26:08) We may not have (26:09) tomorrow here, (26:10) but we do have tomorrow. (26:14) And are we prepared (26:15) for it? (26:17) Have we been, (26:20) as the song says, (26:21) to Jesus for the cleansing power? (26:23) Have we been washed in the blood of the Lamb? (26:25) What's the name of the song (26:27) that we're going to sing? (26:29) There's a fountain free. (26:32) There's a fountain (26:33) free.

And it is. (26:37) All we (26:37) got to do is to (26:39) cling to it and go to it (26:42) and to respond (26:43) to the invitation that Jesus gives to (26:45) us. It is (26:47) a fountain free.

(26:50) To be (26:51) prepared for it. (26:54) Are you (26:55) prepared? I look around here and I believe (26:57) you are. I don't see anybody (26:59) who isn't.

(27:03) Thank God that he's given us (27:05) the opportunity to be prepared (27:06) and to be reconciled to him. (27:09) If there's anything that you need, (27:11) do you need a prayer? Do you need (27:14) encouragement in any (27:15) way in your life? I'd like to extend to you (27:16) the opportunity to make that known. (27:19) Altogether we stand and sing the song (27:20) Encouragement.