



Promises, Not Promises
Part 4 – Immediate Justice vs Ultimate Justice
Adam Donyes

We've been in this series called *Promises, Not Promises*. Today, we are looking at *Immediate Justice vs Ultimate Justice*. The reason I bring up the superstitions is that God is sovereign and if God is sovereign, there is nothing you can do today that is going to change the outcome of the Chiefs winning or losing. Are there any 49ers fans in here this morning? Well shake your hand! There you go. Be bold, I love it. You're outnumbered, but I'm glad you're here. But there's nothing you can do to change the 49ers or the Chiefs winning today. God is sovereign.

Have you guys ever heard of a Jesus juke? Someone is going to be watching the Superbowl today like, "Man, I just can't wait one day to be at a live Superbowl to imagine all those people just cheering and roaring for their team." And then someone is going to be like, "Man, I can't imagine one day what it's going to be like in heaven when all those people are worshipping..." That's called a Jesus juke.

Here's the thing to think about as we get so excited about the Chiefs. And we should be. And we get so excited about the Superbowl. Why don't our passions for Jesus trump the passions of the Chiefs. How many of the conversations this week were centered around the Kansas City Chiefs, but no conversations about Jesus? Last time I checked, Patrick Mahomes, although he might win you a Superbowl, he's not getting you into heaven. And the same thing can be said of our political conversations. We'll die on a stake for the U.S. President before we'll even mention the name of Jesus. I don't care what train you're on, Trump ain't getting you into heaven. Mahomes ain't getting you into heaven. And we'll be more passionate and more adamant, and we'll talk more about these things than we will the one who actually died for us.

Last time I checked, our president didn't die on a cross. You're like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, why do you have to bring in politics and sports into one message today?" Because I'm passionate about Jesus in the songs we were just singing. Yes, it's all about him. And that's why you're here this morning, to worship him and talk about him and to get into his Word. Not just so the Chiefs will win. I hope they do. I'm a Chiefs fan. I was there two weeks ago. It was nuts; it was crazy. I Jesus juke some in the middle of Arrowhead. I couldn't even hear myself think. It was as loud as I have ever heard the place. I just think about Jesus.

So, when we talk about immediate justice vs ultimate justice... Why do bad things happen to good people? That's a flawed statement. First of all, there are no good people. This used to drive my mom nuts. She was like, "Son, you're just so good." "Mom, I'm not good." "No, you're doing so much for so many young people..." "Mom, there's nothing good in me outside of Jesus."

It would bother me so much. “Mom, I understand what you’re trying to say, but there is nothing good in me outside of Jesus. I need Jesus every day.” Lamentations 3: 22- 23 – I need his mercies new every single morning. I need his faithfulness and it’s great.

A couple of years later, my mom became a believer. She was enlightened to who Jesus is and now she’s like, “I get it. You’re not good.” “Thank you, Mom, you’re absolutely right; I’m not.” She finally understood her sin and her need for Jesus, not a quarterback or a president. She knew her need for Jesus. She’ll call me now and go, “How’s my not good son doing?” “Mom, I’m doing great. How’s my not good mom doing?” We both know that we need Jesus. So, that question is flawed: “Why do bad things happen to good people?” First of all, there are not good people.

The other side of that question that I want to talk about today is **Why do great or good or prosperous things happen to bad people or evil people?** Some of you have so much integrity in your job or your work place and you’ll do everything right and then you’ll see people cutting corners or cheating or lying and they get promoted or they save face or they tell their boss just what they want to hear even though you know they’re lying and their gossiping behind their boss’ back or whatever the case may be. You like, “That’s unbelievable. My integrity won’t allow me to do that, but they are prospering.” Are they really prospering?

We’re going to look mainly at one passage today. It’s crazy because Ted and I hadn’t even talked about this and he ended his message, as he exited you guys last week, with this Psalm and it was Psalm 73. We’re looking at Psalm 73 and we’re going to talk about that.

This is how it starts: **2 But as for me...** Who is the me in this passage? A lot of people think that Psalms was written predominantly written by David. That’s not true. There are multiple authors in the Book of Psalms and Psalms is a poetical book. If you want to saturate yourself with two books of the Bible, Proverbs will fill you up with wisdom, so much wisdom and so much discernment. So much of Proverbs is good guidelines on how to navigate relationships, how to navigate your tongue, how to navigate other women that aren’t your wife, how to navigate raising your children. Proverbs is going to give you so much wisdom and insight. Just meditate in that.

In March, it will be a 31-day month, so read a Proverb a day. On March 1, read Proverbs 1. On March 31, read Proverb 31. Again, Psalms is a poetical book written by a couple of people that are just crying out to God. If you ever wonder where to go to start reading your Bible or you just don’t even know how to pray, go to Psalms. It will guide you in your prayers like you wouldn’t believe. If you don’t know what to pray, open a book of the Psalms. I’m telling you that you can relate to the heartache, depression, absence or feeling lack of intimacy with God, distance, enemies ridiculing. You can jump into the Psalms and you are going to be able to relate.

In this passage, it’s actually not David that is speaking. It’s a man named Asaph. You wonder who Asaph was and why he’s writing this? We know Asaph from 1 Chronicles 25. He was committed to God’s Word. He could have been in the corporate world and climbed the business ladder and done trade and stuff in Jerusalem, but he wanted to be committed to God’s work. He takes care of the Temple and he takes care of the music and he does all of this inside the temple. He’s the manager and he leads the

people inside the Temple. So, he didn't make a lot of money. He wasn't bringing in a lot of revenue. He didn't get to go sit on the sidelines of the Superbowl. He had to see everything from afar because he just humbled himself before God's work while he was on earth, and he wasn't worried about accumulating a lot of wealth. But, in his honesty, in his raw transparency, he writes this Psalm and he wrestles with that idea that *I surrendered my life to serve God rather than chase the corporate ladder. Rather than chase what the American dream says I should chase: the white picket fence, the boat, the Dub Deuces on my truck, everything else... I gave that up to chase God, and now he's wrestling with that, he's having this inner turmoil of Why did I do that?*

Look at what he says in Psalms 73: **2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped. 3 For I was envious of the arrogant...** We can relate to that. Sometimes we look at people that are thriving and they're doing things the wrong way. They're not filing their taxes the right way. We're like, "Where's their justice. If they are getting away with it, I want to get away with it. I want what they have."

It's amazing, my five-year-old just played with one of his buddies this week that had a DS and all he could talk about all week was the Nintendo DS. I'm like, "Bro, you didn't even know they existed a week ago; you don't need this." We do the same thing as adults. We do the same things at 40, 50, 60, 70 years old. All of a sudden, we see something that somebody else has and we somehow believe that's going to bring us happiness. That's a lie. But it's a lie that Asaph, a godly man, is wrestling with too, so I found solace in the fact that I'm not the only one that wrestles with that. When I see somebody prospering, I'm like, *Man, that would be awesome to be able to go on a vacation to Hawaii. What if? Man, that would be awesome to be able to go to Tahiti.* Then I step back and I'm like, *hold on, I don't need what they have. I need what God has for me.*

3 For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4 For they have no pangs until death... We're going to talk about this here in a second. It seems like their whole life they didn't worship Jesus. They chased their own riches, they got everything they wanted, they never pursued God, and they had no pangs. *It seemed like they were smooth sailing, and here I am a believer in Jesus, suffering from Leukemia, my parents got divorced, I'm going through all this pain. I've got Parkinson's. I've got Alzheimer's, I've got all this pain and here's someone who never trusted God and never followed Jesus that seems is going through life smooth sailing. How is that fair, God? Tell me, how is that fair?*

We wrestle with that question and so does Asaph. He's wondering the same things. **...their bodies are fat and sleek.** *They are eating at the Nacho Bar all day at the Superbowl; they've got no problems. I have to go out and buy a \$10.00 hot dog and they are in the suites where the food just keeps coming and they don't have to pay a dime. How does that work?* He's wrestling with these questions. It seems they are so content without Jesus. What is going on?

He goes on to say, **5 They are not in trouble as others are...** They're not in trouble like those that are following God. It seems like we have more trouble than these people who don't even follow God and don't even have a relationship with Jesus. They seem to get away with everything. **...they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.**

It's important to note here that as we wrestle with this idea of envy and jealousy, you have to realize that **envy and jealousy blind and rob us from the blessings God has before us**. As a believer in Jesus, those of you who put your faith in Jesus Christ, he's got blessing for you. And those blessings aren't always monetary blessings. They are not always financial blessings. It's not if you tithe more, the Chiefs are going to win or if you tithe more, you'll get more money in return. No, this isn't a prosperity gospel at all. The blessings he has for you might not be in this lifetime, but when we are so focused on what others do have and what we don't have, we miss out on what God has actually placed before us now and what he is doing in us and through us. The most powerful thing to do is not look to the left or to the right at what other people are doing, but the most powerful thing to do is look straight ahead at the cross and realize what Christ is doing in us and wants to do through us.

Philippians 1: 6 says, **...being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ**. He's working in you, he's working through you, whether that be disease, trial, fired from you job, he's working something through you for his good purpose.

In Psalms 73, it goes on to say, **16 But when I thought how to understand this...** I've been there. I can relate. It's like *God, I don't understand. I'm pursuing you, I'm living for you, I've given up corporate jobs, I've given up higher paying jobs, because, Lord, I feel like I'm going right where you've called me to be and I don't understand that some people that aren't pursuing you are prospering. ...it seemed to me a wearisome task...* So, here's Asaph saying, "I'm trying to understand why bad people are prospering, why there is no justice for them."

Obviously, there is a big trial going on right now in the United States, right? Both sides want justice for somebody. Don't worry, I'm not going to jump on a side. There are some toxic, venomous, heated people in this trial going on. You don't know what to believe. You jump over to Fox News, there's a lot of good information. You jump over to CNN... Obviously, both sides are bias. But here's what I do know. Regardless of the truths or the lies or whatever it may be, ultimate justice, one day, will be served. Regardless of what side is right or wrong. Ultimate justice will be served. And every single person on both the Republican side, the middle, the democratic side, they will all meet their maker. All of us in this room will meet their maker. Patrick Mahomes will meet his maker. And far too soon, exactly a week ago today, Coby Bryant and eight other people met their maker. We will all one day meet our maker.

This is such a wearisome task; I'm wrestling with this... **17 until I went...** I love this. So, he's like, *I'm chasing God, I don't understand why the world is prospering...* but then look what happens. He says it all changed and everything shifted when he went **...into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end**. Wait a minute. So, he's wrestling with this entire idea. He says, "I go into the sanctuary of God and then I discern..."

Imagine with me for a second. I want you guys to think about this. This is really important. You have no idea where this rope I'm holding starts. For all we know this thing just keeps going and going and it goes out that door and out past Reeds Spring and out past Missouri into Oklahoma, toward California, to the Pacific Ocean... You don't know. You don't see where it begins and you don't know where it ends. As far as you know, this thing goes out towards the Carolinas and towards Africa and away from the

Coronavirus and it just keeps going. You have no idea of the beginning and you have no idea it's end. It's eternity. Think about that. That goes on forever and you have no idea where it starts and you have no idea where it ends; it just goes on forever. It goes out these Woodland Hills' doors backstage and it just goes on and on and on with no beginning and no end. Then this little black piece right here on this piece of rope, this tiny little black piece that is just sitting here, this is your life. Your little 80 or 90 years in life is right here. We're so consumed and so worried about these 90 years. Ninety years in the span of 1,000 years is only 9%. Ninety years in the span of a million years is .09%. Ninety years in the span of a billion is less than that. Ninety years in the span of eternity is a blink, a snap of the fingers.; that's it.

So, as we wrestle with *God if you're so good, why do I have cancer? God, if you're so good, why am I going through this trial? God, if you're so good, why am I broke? God if you're so good, why is everything so tough.* Guess what? That is so short term. Because for those who are in Jesus, you get eternity with him. This is a blink of an eye. There is no suffering I can encounter on this earth that would surpass the amazing place called heaven where there are no tears and no pain and more.

I wasn't a math major. I told you guys that from up here. I literally walked into my academic advisor and said, "What major requires the least amount of math?" and she said, "Communications." I said, "I'm a communication major, sigh me up." But I know this about math. The larger part of the rope is far greater than this little blip on the rope. So, if I'm going to invest my life on earth in what is going to have a good ROI (return on investment), it would make sense and it would have a lot of wisdom that I would invest into eternity and not this life on earth. You see, when we really start to think about ultimate justice, God's got our back. When we've lost a loved one to cancer, which I have... When you know they know Jesus, it's one of the most relieving seconds that takes place because you know who they're with. And that pain is gone and that discomfort is gone and they are no longer living in this and for eternity, they are in the presence of Jesus.

Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end. When we enter into God's presence, we're reminded of the things that truly matter. That's why it's so healthy for us to keep coming back to church every Sunday. Oh yeah, God's what matters, not the Chiefs. Oh yeah, God's what matters, not the impeachment trial. Oh yeah, God's what's most important.

Even in James 1, it says, ***2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.*** I can't tell you... One day I can ask God, but I can't tell you why evil people are prospering, why there seems to be no justice. I'm telling you one day there will be justice. Guess what? I've read the entire book and, spoiler alert, we win! I've read the end of this book and those that are in Jesus in the end win. Cancer doesn't win. Divorce doesn't win. Sin doesn't win. We, us in Jesus, we win. Regardless of what happens to the Chiefs today, we win for eternity.

Psalms 73 goes on to say, ***18 Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. 19 How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors!*** That's the eternal perspective. Whenever we are tempted to walk down the evil path, may we be reminded of the dead end to which it leads. Keep walking in integrity, my faithful friends. Keep pursuing Jesus. Keep knowing that there is a reward for you, a righteous crown waiting laid up for those who walk in integrity and follow Jesus all the

days of their life. And when he takes them, that eternity far surpasses any limited time we've spent here on earth.

20 Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms. 21 When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart, 22 I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast... He's literally saying his thoughts were like Lucifer's. When I'm focused on this world, that's a satanic thought. Like when I'm worried about what other people are doing rather than fixating my eyes on Him, I'm chasing the evil one. He's talking about the great beast. So, when we sit there and worry about evil prospering or worrying about whatever political party we disagree with, stop. Just keep your eyes on Jesus. Follow Jesus. Be more passionate about Jesus than anything else in this world. ***...toward you. 23 Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. 24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory.***

Pastor Francis Chan takes this passage... Mark 6: 36 says, **36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?"** Think about that. What if you have access to the Superbowl today? Sideline passes, your good to go to any field passes you want, backstage to George Strait, Garth Brooks, whatever your favorite artist, Lumineers, Coldplay. You have billions of dollars, you have access to the whole world. You like the sultan of UAE and you have access to everything for 80 years, 90 years.

Then you die and you have never given your life to Jesus. How long do you think it would take as you're in a burning lake of fire, to realize those 80 years of access to everything you ever wanted and everything you ever chased? *And if I just won the Powerball, everything would change.* Stop playing the Powerball. *If I just did this, then everything would change.* How long do you think it would take, after those 80 years of access to everything you've ever wanted, to realize none of it was worth it? Ten seconds? As that extreme heat begins to burn at the souls of your feet. How about 30 seconds? How about a minute? Do you think by a minute you would realize that those 80 years of living for yourself weren't worth it? What about two minutes? I'm pretty sure by five minutes, you would realize that those 80 years were meaningless because even Jesus asked, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?"

Video clip plays: *I want to open up with a quote from C.S. Lewis. He wrote this book called Mere Christianity. And in this book, he makes this statement. He said, "If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did the most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this one.*

I want to talk to you about having an eternal perspective. You know life is all about a perspective. I mean think about it. What we do with the cross does indeed determine where we're going to spend eternity. However, the way we live as believers determines how we're going to spend eternity. Now James and his little book, the 4th Chapter, 14th Verse makes a statement that says this life is a vapor. Now if James was alive today, he would have written this differently. He would have said this life is zero. How do I know that? Because we know something, through simple mathematics, that James didn't know and understand and that is this. Any finite number divided by infinity is equal to exactly zero.

So, if you live to be 80 years and you divide 80 years or compare 80 years to eternity, what do you get? Zero. Do you know what that tells us? What we do in this zero time determines how we're going to spend eternity.

Now let me help you understand the gravity of this. Suppose we could live in our bodies a little longer and a leader walks up here on this platform and looks at us and says, "Alright, the way you spend the next 24 hours, one day, is going to determine how you are going to spend the next thousand years on this earth." Now for reference, go back a thousand years. You go back a thousand years, no United States. No Christopher Columbus. He hasn't been born yet. No pilgrims. No King Louie The XIV of France. You're back in the Crusader time. That's a long time, but yet the job you do, the type of work you do, the people you work with, where you live, the house you live in, who your neighbors are, for the next thousand years, is going to be determined by how you live the next 24 hours. How would you live the next 24 hours? Would you live it with purpose? Or would you throw it to chance?

Adam Donyes: You know, I've heard a lot of people ask that had the Bryant family and the Altobelli family known last Saturday that the next day would be their last day on earth how would they have lived differently that Saturday. I've heard people want to say all week that Kobe and Gianna are in heaven. I genuinely hope that they are. I'm not judging; I don't sit on the throne. But they've thrown that out there because Kobe had said that he was a Catholic.

Let me make it crystal clear. Just because you are a Catholic or just because you're a Baptist or just because you're a Methodist, that doesn't mean you're going to heaven. Your denomination does not get you into heaven. Jesus makes it crystal clear. He says, "I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. No one shall come to the father except through me."

Your denomination, your works, and what you do doesn't get you into heaven. No one and nothing gets you to heaven except through the work of Jesus on the cross. So, it doesn't matter that Kobe is a Catholic. I've never once heard him mention Jesus. I hope maybe his faith was private and he did know Jesus. But Jesus gets you into heaven. So, I hope so; I really hope that he and his daughter are in heaven. But I know what the scripture says and how it's crystal clear on how we get into heaven and it's through Jesus and Jesus alone, and not our works and not our denomination and not the banners we wave and not our American flag and not our Chiefs flag. None of that gets us into heaven. It's Jesus and Jesus and alone.

Psalms 73 goes on to say, ***25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.*** May that be the prayer of our hearts. May that be our mantra that we sing that there is nothing else that we desire. ***26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. 27 For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. 28 But for me it is good to be near God...*** Nearer to him than any other thing we wave. ***...I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.***

What are you living for? What are you living for? Blink of an eye. Helicopter goes into a mountain. Car crash. Then what? We've invested everything we have in all our passions and all our fervor in sports and politics... What are you living for?

God, I pray that Woodland Hills would raise up a people that are more passionate about you than who their president is, more passionate than they are about their American flag, more passionate than their sports teams, and more passionate... That they would actually be passionate about the one who died on the cross for their souls so they can live in eternity with him.

Michael Houdmann says it best and I close with this quote. *"We need not concern ourselves when good things seem to happen to bad people. We only need to keep our focus on our creator and enter into his presence every day through the portal of His holy Word. There we will find truth, contentment, spiritual riches, and eternal joy."*

Father God, thank you so much that we're reminded how much of mist or vapor this life is. I pray, as we cheer on our beloved chiefs, that the passion we have for politics and the passion we have for sports would pale in comparison to the passion you ignite in our hearts for you and what you've done for us and what you are doing for us and what you are going to do for us. Thank you for that cross.

Thank you for this body. Keep them safe today. May you enrich their conversations and their fellowship as they do go and cheer about a team. We love you so much. It's in the mighty and matchless name of Jesus we pray. And all God's people said... Amen.