

Bible Readings

Psalm 16

A miktam of David.

- ¹ Keep me safe, my God,
for in you I take refuge.
- ² I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord;
apart from you I have no good thing."
- ³ I say of the holy people who are in the land,
"They are the noble ones in whom is all my delight."
- ⁴ Those who run after other gods will suffer more and more.
I will not pour out libations of blood to such gods
or take up their names on my lips.
- ⁵ LORD, you alone are my portion and my cup;
you make my lot secure.
- ⁶ The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
surely, I have a delightful inheritance.
- ⁷ I will praise the LORD, who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.
- ⁸ I keep my eyes always on the LORD.
With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.
- ⁹ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest secure,
- ¹⁰ because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
nor will you let your faithful one see decay.
- ¹¹ You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Acts 2:22-32

²² "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. ²⁵ David said about him:

"I saw the Lord always before me.
Because he is at my right hand,
I will not be shaken.

²⁶ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest in hope,

²⁷ because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
you will not let your holy one see decay.

²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence.'

²⁹ "Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰ But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.

Sermon

17-Jan-21

Present Faith, Future Hope (Psalm 16:1-11 and Acts 2:22-32)

We're continuing our **summer series of Psalms** - looking at **Psalms** that **point to Jesus, the Messiah.**

Outline available.

Let me **pray** before we begin...

Intro/Context

When Jesus said goodbye to his disciples just before His death

In **John 14 - He said** - in vv1-3

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ² My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

What **Jesus** was actually doing was **giving His mates** - 2 foundational truths about **being** a follower of Jesus

He was saying your faith now - will give you hope for the future

It's **this present faith** and **future hope** that **makes believers in Jesus** different to non-believers in the world.

King David the writer of our Psalm this morning - as we learnt last year - had times when he was on the run from King Saul - and other enemies - and it would have been easy for him to give up - life was all too hard - everything was against him - what's the point of going on - why not end it all - what's the point of living?

I'm sure many people have felt like this - even people here today - I'm sure many are feeling like this in the world right now - as this pandemic doesn't seem to be losing momentum at all.

Sometimes people feel like giving up because they put so much in to so little - and so little appears to be so much.

For example - a Uni student might think passing an exam is so important that the thought of failing becomes so strong - they can't face life anymore - and give up!

In Durham University in the UK - they close the high tower of Durham Cathedral at exam time - already have 2 successful suicides and several failed attempts.

We hear of high-school shootings in America. Where a high school student - who is bullied - can't see how this bullying can ever end - they take the lives of the

bullies and others who laughed at them or didn't help them - and then turn the gun on themselves.

Many others may question - what's the point of living this life - only to face death and nothingness at the end of it. Surely there's got to be more to life than just marking time until we die day. To these people it doesn't make sense that we just cruise towards non-existence. So, they might cling to the idea of reincarnation from Hinduism and Buddhism.

They are right - it doesn't make sense that life is just about heading towards death.

Praise God - that in Psalm 16 - David expresses his present faith - and his future hope - and shares it with us

He answers those feelings of despair that many might be feeling - and he answers what lies beyond death.

The Psalm can be broken in to two parts

Present Faith - verses 1 to 6

And Future Hope - verses 7 to 11

So, what can we learn from King David's present faith - that we can apply to our lives - and **help us to not feel like giving up?**

Present Faith (Psalm 16:1-6)

[PowerPoint 1-Personal relationship]

1. 1st - Present faith has a personal relationship with the One True Living God

- David doesn't put his **faith** in a **program** - nor in a **philosophy** - but puts his **faith in God** - see v2 - *You are MY Lord*. It's **personal** - David has a **personal relationship with God**. We all must have that - and put our faith in the one true living God.
- **Remember** the song by **George Harrison** - My Sweet Lord - *My sweet Lord, I really wanna be with You, I'd like to see You, Lord, - but it takes so long!* [But he's singing about the Hindu God, Krishna!]. It's **important we have faith in the one True God**, - not the false gods David mentions in v4. There is the **danger of following the wrong gods** - Hindu gods, Buddha, or gods like **wealth, success, sport, entertainment and pleasure** - and these gods are not gods at all - because there is **only one true God** - the **God and Father of our Lord Jesus**.
- **David gets his life in perspective** and says his **present faith** is a **personal relationship** with the one True Living God

[PowerPoint 2-Refuge]

2. 2nd - Present faith finds its refuge in God alone.

- **Refuge** is - a position of safety or protection. See v1 - keep me safe
O God, for in you I take refuge.
- **David can say this because the Bible is full of promises** that God will be with us and help us
- Like Isa 41:10 which says: *So, do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*
- AND promises like **Isaiah 46:4** which says: *Even to your old age and grey hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.*
- What wonderful promises from God? When I look in the **mirror** these days, I **see a lot of grey hair**. Actually, as I look at our church family - I **see a lot of grey hair too**. Isn't it great to know that even as we get older, God still cares about us?
- To illustrate how God is our refuge: *There's the story of a minister moving house [Douglas Macmillan] - As he moved in and carried his books up to the second floor - his 4-year-old son wanted to help - so he gave his son some papers and magazines to carry. After a while he found the boy crying - and struggling up the stairs with this huge Bible commentary book. The minister said to his son 'I never gave you this to struggle with, why didn't you take what I gave you'. How often do we*

struggle with what God never gave us? How often do we take it upon ourselves to worry and stress and fret about stuff that God is more than capable of taking care of for us and He never gave it to us in the first place? The minister picked up the boy and picked up what he was struggling with and carried the boy upstairs. This is what God does for us - He picks us up and picks up our problem and carries us. God is our refuge. In Him alone we can find refuge.

- *If we are trusting in any other thing but the Lord alone - then ultimately, we're not trusting in the Lord alone.*

[PowerPoint 3-Everything]

3. 3rd - Present faith says even though I might not possess many earthly things, when I trust in the Lord, I have everything.
- See v2 - apart from you I have no good thing.
 - Do we have any good things in our lives? Of course, we do! **I know I have** my wife, Heather, my children: Chris, Bryony, Jen and Sam, and my grandchildren. I treasure these people - they are **good things**. I also have a nice home and some nice possessions.
 - But - sometimes it takes one of our loved ones to get really sick or one of our loved ones to pass away - to realize what we really have. When we have a loved one sick or pass away - what car we have - or how big our house is - or how fancy our lounge is - **doesn't matter does it?**

- In those moments we realize that God is really all we have and apart from God we have no good thing. Nothing that can replace Him or alleviate the burden.
- Until we come to this realization that apart from God, we have nothing - we will always be trying to fill our lives with things. We have to come to the realization that all I have is God.
- When we sit down for dinner - we need to realize we only have food on the table because God provided the means for that food.
- When we walk out of the door - with health and strength to walk - it's only because God makes it possible.
- When this truth [apart from God I have no good thing] dawned on Saul of Tarsus (later to become the Apostle Paul) - Saul's life was transformed - it took an encounter with our Lord Jesus for him to realize this truth
- **Saul had a great upbringing: he was rich, well educated, successful, prominent, and an expert in the OT law, and very proud & arrogant about it. Yet he was dead spiritually - he didn't know Jesus.**
- **Look what he says - after he became a believer in Jesus in Phil 3:7-8**
 - ⁷ But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ.

- Have we reached this point?
- What it means is - is that our present faith alters our value system - so we reach the point that whatever good things we have in life - in comparison to knowing and loving Jesus - these good things are trivial [or as Paul said rubbish] in comparison to Jesus.
- We have to get to the realization - that when we follow Jesus - it doesn't matter how much money we have, or how successful we are or how big our house is - or how flash our car is - what matters to us most is Jesus!
- Present faith shows me that what I have is really not that much - and shows me that when I have Christ, I have everything I need.
- Present faith also determines relationships. Notice who David delights in - in v3 - he delights in the holy people in the land - the fellow believers in God. And he doesn't delight in the ones who run after other gods in v4.
- What we need to realize is as Christians we are part of the body of Christ - we have unity and the common bond of Christ - our age, wealth, race, health - don't matter - just our faith in Jesus.
- Present faith radically changes our relationships - so David realizes he can't run with the ones who chase after false gods - but instead he delights in those who love the Lord.

- What David is saying is - **not to get sucked into what the world of unbelievers tempts us with** - we are to remember our priority is Jesus - **our citizenship is in Heaven** - not in this world.

[PowerPoint 4-provision]

4. 4th - **Present Faith is always content with the provision of God -**

- see v5-6 - *Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely, I have a delightful inheritance.*
- That's **easy to say when things are going well**, when we got **promoted**, or got a **new job** or **new house**, or **something happened that made us feel really good**. But what about when things are really bad - **can we still be content with God's provision through the tough times** and accept them as **God's will?**
- For an example - *a widow, a wife of a missionary, was on her death bed - and a minister visited her. She never once talked about herself and her illness - she asked all about the church, the ministries in church, the church family and asked about the mission work? She lived out Psalm 16 even to her death - her present faith said - Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup, you make my lot secure... She was able to say that because Jesus is all she needed - can we say that?*
- The Apostle Paul puts it this way in Phil 4:12-13: *I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well*

fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

- Can we join the Apostle Paul and say we are content in every situation?
It's a big challenge isn't it?

The present faith that David describes in this Psalm

- The present faith that has a **personal relationship with the one true living God**
- The present faith that **finds refuge in God alone**
- The present faith that says **when I trust in the Lord, I have everything**
- The present faith that says **I am always content with the provision of God**

David says - Brings future hope

David describes this future hope in verses 7 to 11 of this Psalm

Future Hope (Psalm 16:7-11)

David says he finds hope

[PowerPoint 5-counsellor]

1. 1st - **In knowing that God is his counsellor - see v7.**
 - It's very trendy these days to have a mentor or a counsellor. And there's no doubt that **other people and their advice and counsel can help us.**

- But David receives his counselling, his therapy, his advice from God.
Where do we go for our counselling? David goes to God.
- Remember David is from a pretty dysfunctional family and he's been messed up a fair bit by the circumstances he's faced. Where does he go? To God, the rock - for advice?
- Where are we going? If we are going to human counsel - are they counselling us from God's Word or their own ideas? The Bible has every life situation - and the Bible has - no mistakes in it.
- Do we ever lie awake in the middle of the night worrying? David says - v7 - God even instructs David's heart in the middle of the night! God is a 24-hour counsellor - according to Psalm 121 God neither slumbers or sleeps - He's available to us all the time.

[PowerPoint 6-right hand]

2. 2nd - future hope - In knowing that God is at His right hand - see v8 - so David will not be shaken.
 - Like a child crossing a busy main road - holding on to his Dad's hand; that's how David feels with God - His present faith - means He has the future hope that God is right beside him all the time.
 - As Psalm 34:18 says - God is close to the broken-hearted and saves those crushed in Spirit.

[PowerPoint 7-no fear of death]

3. 3rd - future hope - In knowing he doesn't have to fear death - see v9-11.

- In the path of life David is on, he is so confident - his heart is glad - his tongue rejoices - and his body will rest secure.
- And v10 - tells us why David can rejoice - because God will not abandon him to the realm of the dead.
- Now David could just be saying whilst I'm on the run from my enemies - my present faith leads to the future hope that I won't die at the hand of those enemies. God will protect me from those enemies - I won't die at their hands.
- But David is actually talking about Jesus here
- In our NT reading from Acts 2:22-32. The **Apostle Peter** - speaking to the people of Jerusalem - talks to them about Jesus - how Jesus was killed by wicked men - and how God raised Jesus from the dead - because it was impossible for death to have a hold on Jesus (v24).
- And then Peter quotes Psalm 16 - and Peter says when David wrote Psalm 16 - he was actually talking about Jesus - it was Jesus that God the father would not abandon to the realm of the dead - it was Jesus - God's holy one - whom the father would not let decay in the grave.
- Why did God raise Jesus? To fulfil the promise of Psalm 16 - and so that all who faith in Jesus - do not have to fear dying.

- Instead for all believers in Jesus - the Psalm promises in v11 - a path of life - where we are filled with joy in God's presence - and enjoy eternal (forever) pleasures at God's right hand.
- This promised joy and eternal pleasures - is far beyond anything we can experience here on this Earth.
- David is saying there is a path of life - which leads to the certain hope of Heaven - in the presence of God forever - where there is joy and peace and eternal pleasures.
- Are we on that path?
- Do we have present faith - that leads to - future hope?

Let's pray...