

Psalm 16: Path Of Everlasting Pleasure

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[0 : 00] If you have your own Bible with you, then I invite you to turn in your copy of the Scriptures to the book of Psalms.

We're going to spend this morning meditating upon the Psalms. So turn to Psalm 16. If you don't have your own copy of the Scriptures with you, then you can simply turn to page 453 in one of our pew Bibles that are scattered around in the chairs there with you.

So just grab one of those and turn to page 453. Otherwise, turn to the book of Psalms in your own copy of the Scriptures. Just kind of open your Bible, let it fall to the middle. And if you land in Job, keep turning a little bit until you get to the Psalms.

This morning, Psalm 16. We've been spending so much time in the book of Romans lately. Now, for months and months we've been in Romans, that we're going to step out of there for a bit and turn to the Psalms.

So this morning, as we think about what we read here, as we meditate on God's Word, we're also going to try to do what the Psalms press us to do. And that is to not only think God's thoughts after Him, but also to feel the way that we ought to feel as we read through the Psalm.

[1 : 17] To respond rightly to the truths that the psalmist is going to celebrate here in Psalm 16. Now, this particular Psalm that we're going to look at this morning is written by David.

In fact, you can see at the very beginning of the Psalm, right before verse 1, in most of your Bibles, you will have this as sort of a superscription just above that. It'll say something like, A miktom of David.

Now, if you're sitting there thinking, I have no idea what a miktom is, then you're not alone because nobody really knows for certain what that term is. It's probably some sort of musical term.

We're not exactly sure what it means. But what's important about that phrase is it tells us that this is a miktom of David. So that David is the writer of this Psalm. And not only do we learn that there, but as we'll see later when you turn to the New Testament, the New Testament apostles, both Peter and Paul, attribute this Psalm to David himself, so we can rest secure this morning that what we are reading here are the words of King David himself.

And so as we read these words this morning, I want to invite you all to stand to your feet in honor of God's Word together. And we will begin here at the beginning. David, a miktom of David, Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

[2 : 32] I say to the Lord, you are my Lord. I have no good apart from you. As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight.

The sorrows of those who run after another God shall multiply. Their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips. The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup.

You hold my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places. Indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. I bless the Lord who gives me counsel.

In the night also my heart instructs me. I have set the Lord always before me. Because He has at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad and my whole being rejoices.

My flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol or let your Holy One see corruption. You make known to me the path of life.

[3 : 33] In your presence there is fullness of joy. At your right hand are pleasures forevermore. We give you thanks, Father, that through the hand of David, your Spirit brings us these words.

That you inspired him to write for us this great psalm to direct us to the true source of ultimate pleasure, joy, happiness, and satisfaction in life.

So help us to see clearly and respond rightly to the great truths in your word this morning. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

You guys take a seat. Before we dive into some of the details of this particular psalm, I want to try to sketch out for you right from the beginning kind of a broad overview of the psalm.

Just a general outline here of what this psalm is about because there are a number of details contained in the text that we could get hung up on and want to spend all of our time thinking about.

[4 : 44] And then we would miss the beauty of the forest that lies before us in Psalm 16. Because we're so fascinated by a few of the individual trees and perhaps even by some of the branches on some of those individual trees.

So before we dive in here, I want you to be able to see clearly as you look in your Bibles, I want you to see clearly how this psalm sort of lays out and is divided in this outline for us.

And it's actually very, very simple. We can divide it into two very clear parts, I think. The first one, of course, begins in verse 1 where David calls out and says to God, Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

So the first half of this psalm is really beginning with a plea, a petition by David saying, God, save me, rescue me, deliver me, keep me, guard me, keep me safe, protect me from the things that surround me.

Preserve me. Preserve me. I need you, O Lord, to be my great protector. So this is David pleading. This is David asking God specifically for his help, for his protection, and for his salvation.

[5 : 59] Preserve me, O God, David cries out. And then as you begin to follow along in verses 2 through 7, David is going to lay out for us what it looks like to be the kind of person who actually takes refuge in God and trusts in God to answer that kind of a prayer.

But then when we hit verse 8, we enter into what I'm going to call the second part of the psalm, the second half of this psalm, in which David switches from petition to confidence that God is actually going to do what he's asking him to do.

So David is no longer simply asking in verses 8 and following. In the rest of the verses of this psalm, David is expressing his confidence. He is now certain that God is going to do what he has been asking him to do for the first seven verses of this particular psalm.

Take a look down there in verse 8, if you will, real quickly. He says, I have set the Lord always before me. Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

Underline those words. I shall not be shaken. That's David's confidence. He said, preserve me, rescue me, keep me, deliver me. And now he says, with confidence, feet firmly planted, that I will not be shaken.

[7 : 22] Why? Because he knows that God is at His right hand. He knows that God is always with him, always before him. So the first half of the psalm begins by saying, preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

And now the second half of the psalm begins by saying, because I take refuge in you, because I am with you, I am fully confident that I'm not going to be shaken, that you are in fact going to preserve me, rescue me, and keep me safe.

So I think that the big question that we need to ask as we approach this psalm is not about all of the little details of the psalm, but the question we need to ask this morning is, how does David move from a petition transition to such bold confidence in God's power to do what He's asking Him to do?

How does David transition from asking to declaring? How does he move from save me to I shall be saved?

How does he move from deliver me to I shall not be destroyed? How does he make that transition? And how can we follow David as he walks down that path from petition to certainty of the answer of his prayer?

[8 : 42] How does he do that? Well, if you remain focused only on the words of the psalm itself, it can be a bit difficult to see the ultimate final ground of what David is saying here.

We can see in verses 2 through 7 and even in verses 10 and 11, we can see a lot of the reasons behind David's confidence. We can see some of those, but we can't see the ultimate reason, the ultimate ground that underlies all of that, the ground upon which David actually stands so sure-footedly.

We can't really see that clearly just in the psalm itself, although there is a massive, massive hint here in the psalm as to where David's confidence is actually founded.

So I want to start here looking at the psalm by looking at this massive hint so that we can have the foundation under our feet and then we'll turn and we'll say, okay, now what does David say about the person who trusts in the God who provides this kind of certainty?

What does it actually look like for us to trust in this God who gives David such certainty? But first we need to see where the certainty comes from. So look back at verse 8 again and we're going to walk down through a couple of verses here.

[9 : 58] Look at verse 8 again where David says, I have set the Lord always before me because He is at my right hand. I shall not be shaken. There's that great confidence. Therefore, my heart is glad and my whole being rejoices.

My flesh also dwells secure for you will not abandon my soul to Sheol or let your Holy One see corruption.

There's the hint at the end of verse 9 in all of verse 10. David says, My flesh, that is my body, my physical body is secure and safe.

It dwells securely because you're not going to abandon me to Sheol, which is just another term for the grave. You're not going to leave me in the grave. I'm not going to remain there.

And then he goes on to say, and you're not going to let your Holy One see corruption. But that's confusing if you know the story of David. That's confusing because David already knows that he is in fact destined to die and stay dead for quite some time.

[11 : 09] He knows that that is going to happen. And yet here he's expressing confidence. I'm not, God's not going to let me go into the grave and just stay there and rot and become corrupt like everybody else does.

And yet David knows that that is his destiny. How does he know that? I want you to hold your place here in Psalm 16. And if you can, turn back in your Bibles, go backwards and find the book of 2 Samuel.

2 Samuel, 2 Samuel chapter 7, which is probably in the entire story of the life of David that we have recorded for us in the Old Testament.

2 Samuel chapter 7 is probably the most significant event in all of David's life. And it's in this event, it's in this chapter that Nathan the prophet comes to speak to David and that David receives the promises of God concerning his throne and his kingdom.

But look how it starts. Look at verse 12. It says that Nathan is speaking, God speaking through Nathan to David. He says to David, when your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your father.

[12 : 21] So pause right there. So David has been told by God, through God's prophet, no less, that there is coming a time in the future when your days will come to an end.

You are going to die. And not only that, you're going to be buried just like your father and your grandfather and your great-grandfather and your great-great-grandfather. Just like they all died and they were all put in a tomb and they're all still buried to this day.

You're going to experience the same thing, David. Your life is going to come to an end just like them. You will be put to rest just like them. So when David in Psalm 16 expresses this hope, and hope, by the way, that is inspired by the Spirit as he writes scriptural words, why does David, how can David say such things?

How can David, knowing his destiny is to die and be buried just like his father's? How can he say, I'm not going to be abandoned in the grave, and I'm not, this body, this flesh of mine is not going to see corruption.

He can't speak that of himself. Not in its fullest sense, not in the most literal sense in which we read the words of this psalm. Which is why I don't believe that David is strictly speaking of himself in these verses in Psalm 16.

[13 : 44] I believe that David is looking ahead to the promise that God gives him right after he tells him in 2 Samuel 7 that he's going to die.

Look back down at 2 Samuel 7. We need to keep reading in verse 12. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring, or literally your seed.

I will raise up your seed after you who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Forever. An everlasting throne for the seed of David. David, you're going to die, but I'm going to raise up from your body itself.

I'm going to raise up from among your descendants. I'm going to raise up one who will sit on the throne forever. An everlasting throne.

[14 : 48] And not merely through the succession of kings, sons, born one after another down through the centuries. No, that's not the promise. The promise here is that this one descendant, he will sit on your throne.

He will sit, and he will remain there, and this throne will last forever. It's not going away. It's not going away. Coming seed, who for decades, centuries, millennia even, for all time, will sit on a throne.

His dominion will last forever, therefore his life will endure forever. So as David speaks in Psalm 16, and as he speaks confidence in the face of death, I believe that the promises of God through Nathan the prophet must be ringing in his ears.

He cannot be speaking in a very limited, narrow way of himself. He must be speaking of one descended from him. the promised one who really and surely will not be left in the grave to rot, whose body will really and surely not see corruption, but who will, in fact, conquer death, reign in victory over death, and therefore provide the path to David's certainty, to his safety and his security, to his confidence that God will, in fact, preserve him.

And we know, of course, as those who have the entire Bible before us, as new covenant believers, we know that that great seed of David, that great conqueror of death who did not see corruption in the grave, but rose again three days later, we know that that is Jesus Christ himself who is declared at the very beginning of the New Testament to be the son of David.

[16 : 53] We know that, though, not just because we know the general story about Jesus. We know that because that is exactly how the apostles themselves, as they read Psalm 16, that is exactly how they interpret these verses.

You can let go of 2 Samuel, but continue to hold Psalm 16, and now turn all the way in your New Testaments to the book of Acts, because I want you to see this as clearly as you can. Turn all the way to Acts chapter 2, if you're using a pew Bible, it's page 910.

So Acts chapter 2, we are in the midst of Peter's great Pentecost sermon on the day of Pentecost as he's standing in the city of Jerusalem proclaiming the Christ, the Messiah, proclaiming Jesus to the Jewish people there in Jerusalem.

Peter, in the middle of that sermon, says, we're going to jump in in verse 23, which really is in the middle of it. He's speaking of Jesus to the Jewish leaders and he says, this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death because it was not possible for him to be held by it. That makes sense. If he's going to rule forever, he can't be dead forever.

[18 : 09] He can't stay dead. If his kingdom is going to endure, it's impossible for him to be bound and held by the cords of death. It cannot happen. Peter says, it's not possible for David says concerning him and now he's going to begin to quote Psalm 16, verses 8 down to the middle of verse 11.

Notice though how Peter introduces this before we even read it. He says, David says concerning him. So in Peter's eyes, in Psalm 16, beginning in verse 8, David is talking about Jesus specifically and directly.

He says, concerning him with reference to him. And now the quotation, I saw the Lord always before me for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken.

Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced. My flesh also will dwell in hope for you will not abandon my soul to Hades, which is just another word for the grave, for the place of the dead.

It's a substitute for Sheol. You will not abandon my soul to Hades or let your Holy One see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence.

[19 : 22] Now listen to Peter's interpretation. Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried and his tomb is with us to this day. That's exactly what we were saying based upon 2 Samuel 7.

He died, he was buried, at least for Peter. Peter could look and say, we all know where his tomb is. There's a place marked the tomb of David in Jerusalem today, but it's certainly not the place where David was actually laid to rest.

But in Peter's time, it may very well have been the place recognized as the site of David's burial probably was. And Peter was able to say, there's a well-known spot, not far, just walk over that way. And we know that that's where David's body is.

That's where David was buried. There's dust in there because he corrupted, he decayed. That's what's left in that grave after all these hundreds of years. We know that about David. And so Peter says these words, it cannot be about him.

Verse 30, being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne. There's 2 Samuel chapter 7.

[20 : 25] That's why I think it's ringing in David's ears because Peter says when David writes this, he knows that God has sworn an oath to him. He's promised that one of his descendants, that his seed, will sit on a throne that will last forever.

Being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on the throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

This Jesus, God raised up and of that we are all witnesses. So David, in speaking of his great confidence before God, shows us what the foundation is or at least he points us in that direction and Peter helps us to see it much more clearly.

That there was a coming one for David who would come and he would not be left in the grave, he would not see corruption, he would defeat death and because he has gone before us and defeated death, there is now a pathway for all of us to follow to ultimate victory over death, over sin, and over all of the things of life that weigh us down.

There is a path to pleasure in God's presence that lasts forever, but that path goes through trusting in the seed of David just as David did.

[21 : 47] That path goes through trusting in Christ who not only bears our sins, but he shows us the way to life.

The secret to having the kind of confidence that David has is to trust in the promises of God and now we know that they center upon Christ himself and all that he did for us and in our place and before us as he leads us and guides us in the paths to everlasting pleasure in the presence of God himself.

So the second question we need to ask, now that we've answered the question, how can David have this confidence? How can he move from asking to standing confidently?

We know the answer is that he's trusted in God's promises. Second question we're going to answer this morning from Psalm 16 is, so what does it look like to be a person like David who takes refuge in God, who trusts in God and all of his promises?

Because you're going to need to know what this looks like. You're going to need to know practically how do I go about exhibiting this kind of trust? Because things are going to happen to you in life that leave you desperate and clinging and saying, preserve me, save me, rescue me, God, I'm sinking.

[23 : 13] What do I do now? You're going to find yourself in the kinds of places that David finds himself as he pens a number of these Psalms where you just say, you just cry out for help, rescue me, and you will only have the hope to know that he will rescue you if you're taking refuge in him.

So we need to know what does that look like? What does it look like to take refuge in God when you find out that you have cancer? What does it look like? How do you walk through that?

How do you go to all of those doctor's appointments and hear all of the reports up and down and all the things that you hear? What does it look like to trust in God in the midst of something like that? Or when you're struggling in your marriage and there are days when you think, I don't know if this is going to last the way it's supposed to last.

How do you cling to the promises of God? How do you hope in him in the midst of that? In all of life's trials and life's losses, how can we be like David and not only say, rescue me, but then stand as one who confidently trusts and knows that God is there to rescue and save and deliver.

Let me just encourage you with five quick things. I'm going to spend a lot of time on any of these. I want to encourage you with five quick things that I see in this psalm, descriptions of what it looks like for David and I believe for us as well to take refuge in God and therefore be able to stand sure-footedly on the ground of confidence that David stands on.

[24 : 43] So look back toward the beginning of the psalm. To where David begins with his cry, Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

And here's the first thing in verse 2 that I want us to mark down. He says, I say to the Lord, you are my Lord, I have no good apart from you.

What's significant here and what you really need to notice is the exact way in which this is written. In your English Bible you will notice it says, I say to the Lord all capital letters.

So we know of course, I've said before when we've been in the Old Testament that anytime you see the word Lord with all capital letters, not just a capital L, but all capital letters, that is the personal covenant name of God, Yahweh, that He reveals to His people.

So He says, I will say to you, I will say to Yahweh, you are my Lord. And now only the L is capitalized, so it's a different word in the original Hebrew.

[25 : 42] And the word here is the word Adonai, which means sovereign one, Lord, King, Master. And so the first thing that we need to do if we're going to trust fully in God and be taken through all of our trials to the place of confidence is that we need to believe and rely upon and lean upon God's sovereignty.

We need to trust that He's actually in control of all the events that unfold around us. The terrible ones and the triumphant ones, all of them are under the sovereign control of His hand.

We see this a couple of other places in the psalm. Look down at verse 5, where at the end of verse 5, He simply says, You hold my lot.

You hold my lot. Of course, He's drawing on the imagery here of the casting of lots. Now, we sometimes find that silly. Who would ever make a decision by a roll of the dice?

It wasn't actually something different, but it was similar. Who would try to discover God's will or who would try to make major life decisions by the rolling of the dice?

[26 : 51] We wouldn't do that today, okay? And there are good biblical reasons for not doing that today. But prior to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, it was a common way of trying to determine what was God's will, which way did He want us to go when there was sort of an utter loss and an utter confusion because we learn in the Scriptures that God controls the lots.

He's sovereign over all things. Therefore, He controls what comes up when you cast the lots out. He's sovereign even over those little details. So even when you get to a point where you're so frazzled and lost that you don't know what to do, that you're ready to just roll the dice and see what comes up, we know from God's Word that God is sovereign even over those things.

That's what David is expressing here. He's expressing once again, you hold my lot, you determine my destiny, you determine what's coming up around the corner, you already know it, you've already decided it, and so I just need to trust confidently in you.

And it's expressed again in the very next line something very similar. He says in verse 6, The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places. The lines have fallen for me.

The word lines here is a word that means the boundaries. And it's used actually to describe earlier in the Old Testament the dividing up of the land of Israel among the tribes of Israel.

[28 : 12] When they were dividing up of the land, they made boundaries. And they said, here are where the lines fall for all the peoples of Israel. This tribe can live within these boundaries.

This tribe can live within these boundaries. And they cast lots often to determine where the boundaries were going to be. And so it's the same kind of imagery. Just as God determined the boundaries of the people of Israel and all the tribes, so also David's saying, You have caused my life, you've caused the boundaries of my life to line up in pleasant places.

We'll talk about pleasant places in a little bit. But the point that David is confessing here is that God is the one directing the course of his life. He knows that. He's confident of that.

God is, in fact, his Adonai, his sovereign. And so if we're going to trust the way that David trusts, the first thing that we need to do is we need to believe that God is sovereign in the way that David believes that God is sovereign.

And we need to lean on his sovereignty, trust in his sovereignty. Because trust me, there are days coming when they will be so dark and painful you will not be able to see what's next.

[29 : 18] you will not want to think about what comes next. You will not want to imagine what the next step is. You will not want to get out of bed on that morning because it's just, you don't want to have to face the day because it's too crushing in light of the events that have happened in your life.

And it is very helpful to have tucked away in the back of your brain in those moments, the Lord controls my lot. He determines the boundaries.

He's in control in even those moments. First thing we need to do is lean upon God's sovereignty. And secondly, not only are we going to lean on God as our sovereign, but we need to delight in God as our supreme treasure.

Look down in verse 5 again. First half of verse 5 says this, The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup.

God is Himself my chosen portion and my cup. Now jump down to verse 9. He says, My heart is glad. My whole being rejoices.

[30 : 27] So there's a kind of rejoicing. There's a kind of delighting in God that characterizes those who really trust in Him. So that when I say things like trust that God is sovereign, I don't mean sort of a begrudging, sort of just admitting it, going, Ah, fine, He's sovereign.

So He's in control. That's okay. No. What I mean is that we ought to be delighting in this God who is sovereign over all things. He ought to be the supreme source of all of our happiness, of all of our delight.

In fact, we're going to spend several weeks, most of the summer, as I'm preaching. I'll be preaching through a series on spiritual disciplines.

So looking at the things that we need to be actually practicing and doing in our Christian lives so that we're faithful followers of Christ. Christ. But our focus throughout that series is not going to be on doing the disciplines because we're supposed to do them and they're our duty.

We're going to focus upon how can these spiritual disciplines maximize our enjoyment of the presence of God? How can following after these things like reading and studying our Bible, like praying and fasting and the other spiritual disciplines, how can they actually help us to arrive at real, genuine, lasting happiness in the Lord?

[32 : 00] But for us to even be pointed in that direction, we need to first recognize that He is to be the supreme source of our happiness.

He should be the treasure of our hearts, our great delight. delight. The sovereign one who rules over all things is also the one who satisfies our souls.

And then because we delight in Him, there is something that we find in this psalm that almost seems out of place at first until you begin to think about it more. But because we are delighting in Him, the third thing that we should display if we're trusting in God is a companion piece to that and that is a delight in God's people.

So that we're not only delighting in God, but we're also delighting in others who delight themselves in God. I'll show you where it is in the text. Right here, verse 3. As for the saints in the land or as for the holy ones in the land, now that might be confusing to you if you have a Roman Catholic background and you think of the saints as being sort of the supremely holy ones amongst all those who are believers, but that's not the biblical meaning at all.

Certainly not the meaning in the New Testament because Paul refers to all believers as saints, but it's also not the meaning here in Psalm 16. Here, it means just as it does in the New Testament, it just refers to fellow believers, the people of God.

[33 : 35] So David says, as for the people of God, the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight. Now that, of course, does not mean that he delights in them to the exclusion of delighting in God because he expresses over and over in this Psalm that God is his treasure.

God is the source of all of his pleasure and happiness. I take this to mean that the people of God are his delight because by delighting in them, that is a delighting in God himself.

We ought to have a great love for our fellow believers, for other followers of Christ. We ought to have that kind of love because that love for others who love him flows naturally from our love for God.

It's no accident that the two greatest commandments, according to Jesus and the apostles, and even as the law is summarized in the Old Testament, the two greatest commandments are to love God and to love your neighbor because the second naturally flows out of the first.

If we love God, we cannot but help to love others who love him. And so David is able to say, not only is God my portion, not only is God the source of my pleasure, but all my delight is in those who delight in him, who love him, the saints who are in the land.

[35 : 04] So we recognize God as sovereign, we exult in that sovereign God, and then we couple that with rejoicing in others who are exulting in that sovereign God.

And so that's three of the five things we need to see. Glance down and we will begin to see numbers four and five. David is so clear here.

He is so, he is so honest with us in what we need that he shows us not only this is what you need, but this is how to arrive there.

Look down in verse seven. I think David is aware that everything he has said so far, or at least the way that we've summed it up as trusting in God's sovereignty, delighting in God's presence, delighting in God's people.

I think David is aware that that's not natural for fallen sinful people. That it has to be a product of God's work within us. And so he says in verse seven, I bless the Lord who gives me counsel in the night also my heart instructs me.

[36 : 16] Now I take this to be David saying I desperately need God's counsel. I need I need his input. I need him to tell me.

I need him to show me. I need him to reveal to me who he is and what he requires of me. And then even in the night, even as I sleep, my heart will continue to instruct me and change me in the light of the things that God has counseled me about.

God has got to teach me. He's got to show me this stuff. He's got to show me the way and that he does such a supernatural work that my heart continues on with that work as I meditate on the instruction and counsel of the Lord.

And so the fourth thing that we need if we're going to really trust in God is we need to receive his counsel. We need that. We need it.

And it comes to us most clearly and fully in the written word of God. The Holy Spirit takes this book that he has inspired and he teaches us. He shows us the way and then he plants that word in our hearts and it begins to do such a work in us that we find that our faith grows.

[37 : 25] We find that our delight in the Lord grows. We find that our delight in God's people begins to grow. Those things happen as we receive God's counsel, God's word and it begins to do something inside of our hearts.

So if we're going to be the kind of people who take refuge in God and are able to walk this path to pleasure even while pain is coming at us, if we're going to be those kinds of people, then we need to be supported with the only source of strength that David indicates here, the counsel of God himself.

We need that desperate. And the last thing, the fifth thing, the fifth encouragement I want to give you that you need to focus upon is you need to focus upon the end result. the path is taking you somewhere and you need to know where it's headed.

You need to know where you're going. You need to know what you're aiming at because whatever will be our vocation throughout all eternity, that ought to be our obsession in this life.

Whatever it is that God says, you're going to do this forever in my presence, we ought to aim in everything we're doing now to accomplish that as much as possible in this life.

[38 : 39] look down towards the end of the psalm. Verse 11 says, you make known to me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy.

At your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Forevermore. He's not just talking about temporary relief in this life. That's not what he's talking about.

He's not just talking about the occasional relief that God sometimes gives us from the burdens that we bear here. That's not what he's talking about. He's talking about everlasting joy in the presence of God.

He's talking about where the path is headed. He's talking about the goal. He speaks of it a little bit earlier as an inheritance. At the end of verse 6 he says, indeed I have a beautiful inheritance.

In other words, David recognizes there's something else up ahead and the something else that is in fact up ahead is pleasures forevermore. He mentioned earlier pleasant places.

[39 : 36] I said we'd come back to that. coming back to it just quickly because it's the same word that we're finding here in verse 11. It's not actually pleasant places. That's not what the text really says in the original language.

It's kind of awkward. It doesn't translate well into English. It's just the lines have fallen for me in pleasures. That's strange. That doesn't make sense to us until we get to verse 11.

And so we see that the boundaries that God is setting, in other words, the direction that He's pointing our life is toward this great inheritance which is in fact the enjoyment of God Himself in Christ who makes it possible for us to enjoy all these things.

The Christian life is not a life of trudging duty. It is. It's just not. Christianity is not a religion of rules and do this step and then do that step try to accomplish this and then move on to the next stage.

That is not what Christianity is. Every other religion in the world consists basically of that. They all have different goals. Some of them are trying to get their adherence to experience life forever in paradise with 70 virgins.

[40 : 52] Some of them are trying to get them to experience one with the cosmos. Some of them are trying to get them to experience the absence of any personal presence or being at all. All the religions of the world are aiming at various things.

That's why it's never made sense to me when people say oh all roads lead to heaven. They don't because most of them aren't even aiming at heaven. But the worst thing about them is all of them consist of do this and don't do this.

Take this step and then take that step. So do your duty. Get your prize. Move on. And that's not Christianity.

Christianity is delight yourself in the Lord now because infinite pleasure in His presence awaits you in the future. The Christian life is not a life of duty.

If there is a duty it is a duty to delight yourself in the Lord. David commands us elsewhere in the Psalms delight yourself in the Lord. Why would we do that?

[41 : 52] Because that's our ultimate destiny. That's what you're going to do forever. You're not going to sit on a cloud and strum a harp forever. You don't get to sit on a cloud. You don't get a harp.

You get to be on a new heavens and new earth in a real physical body and you know what you're going to do? You're going to do everything for the glory of God unencumbered by sin. You're going to sing praises to Him. You're going to worship Him with everything that you are forever.

So what are you going to do now if you trust in Him? You're going to fight against sin and sickness and death and disease and all the other fallen aspects of this world.

You're going to fight to delight yourself in the Lord and taste what awaits you. But that only awaits you and the fighting and the delighting are only possible if you stand on the sure foundation that David stands upon.

Christ crucified for your sins defeater of death victor risen from the dead walking ahead of us along the pathway to eternal pleasures.

[43 : 08] Let's pray.