

Satisfied In The Lord
Psalm 16

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Satisfied In The Lord

Psalm 16:1-11

Introduction: 1) John Piper pastors Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I know of no one who has challenged us to be God-focused and God-centered in all that we do more than John. Again and again he reminds us, “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.”

2) Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), a major figure in the 1st Great Awakening and the first president of Princeton University saw things similarly. He said, “God is glorified not only by His glory’s being seen, but by it being rejoiced in. When those that see it delight in it, God is more glorified than if they only see it...”

3) These words capture the heart of King David in Psalm 16. He not only saw the Lord’s glory, he was satisfied in that glory. He delighted in the Lord. In a psalm of confidence, perhaps in the midst of danger and even a threat to his life, David focuses on all the blessings and benefits he has from God and says with a resounding confession, “I am satisfied in the Lord.” You are my refuge (v.1), you are my goodness (v.2), you are my inheritance and cup (v.5-6), you are my counsel (v.7), you are at my right hand (v.8), you are my hope (v.9), you are my guide (v.11), you are my fullness of joy (v.11), and you are pleasures forevermore (v.11). Yes! I am satisfied in the Lord.

Transition: David, from this list of bountiful blessings proclaims his confidence in his God (v.1), his *Adonai* (v.2), Yahweh (v.5), in 4 aspects or movements within the psalm. They highlight why he, why we, should forever be satisfied in the Lord.

I. We have the protection of the Lord. 16:1-4

Verses 1-4 look back to the prologue of the Psalter and psalm 1. There we see the stark contrast between the righteous man and the ungodly man. That same scenario is played out once again in these verses. The Godward life brings joy. The idolatrous life brings sorrow.

1) The wise man will run to God and find satisfaction. 16:1-3

- “Preserve me (*NIV*, “keep me safe”) O God, for in You I put my trust” (*ESV*, “For in you I take refuge”). “Preserve” could be rendered “watch over.” We can flee to God and ask, pray for Him to protect, and even deliver us.
- In. vs. 2 David address the Lord (*Adonai*) and exclaims:
 - a. You are my *Adonai*.
 - b. Apart from you I have no good thing. You are my good. The personal pronouns are not insignificant or unimportant.
- The sovereign Lord and Master of Creation is his good and apart from the Lord he has no good. God is his delight, his treasure, his refuge. To look for goodness, true goodness, elsewhere would be foolish. It would be idolatrous. It would mean pursuing another god, a false god. No, as James 1:17 reminds us, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above...”
- Now I understand why Jesus says to the Rich Young Ruler in Mark 10:18,

“Why do you call me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.”

- To see the wrong thing as good plunged the human race into sin. Adam and Eve convinced themselves they knew what good is better than God. How often and how foolish we are to follow in their footsteps.
 - I like the way Dr. David Nelson puts it, “When we determine to name what is good our confession is “I am my Lord, I have no good apart from me.”
- Verse 3 addresses one of the good things we receive from the Lord: brothers and sisters in Christ. David makes a distinction between the “holy ones” in the heavens, the angels, and the “holy ones” he has in view for he calls them “the qedosim who are on the earth.” Further he says of these holy ones, these saints, “they are the excellent (*NIV*, “glorious”) ones in whom is all my delight.”
David sees no contradiction in saying God is the only good he has and also affirming his delight in God’s people. Why? Simply this: when we delight in the fellowship of believers we do not take anything from God’s glory, because they are God’s good gift to us. You are God’s gift to me and I am God’s gift to you. We are God’s gift to one another. To delight in God’s people is to take delight in the Lord’s goodness. This is God’s plan for His people.

Application: We need the fellowship of God’s good gift.
We need the instruction of God’s good gift.
We need the accountability of God’s good gift.
We need the rebuke of God’s good gift.
We need the comfort of God’s good gift.
We need the love of God’s good gift.
We need the presence of God’s good gift.

Without it, we stumble and falter, grow cold and cynical, lose our passion and miss out on the blessings God provides in and through these excellent ones. Do you delight in the saints? Do you love and enjoy your brothers and sisters in Christ? We need to be around people who have been around God!

Transition: The wise man will run to God and find satisfaction.

2) **The unwise will run from God and find sorrow. 16:4**

- Those in verse 4 stand in stark contrast to those in vs. 1-3. They do not trust the Lord nor do they enjoy the community of believers. Rather, and tragically, they will have their sorrows multiplied. And why? Because they hasten after (*NIV*, “run after”) another god (the word “god” is implied not stated in the Hebrew text). Chasing after idols, false gods of the head and the heart, false gods of silver and gold, false gods of power and prestige, position and possessions, they multiply their sorrows. They chase after empty dreams, clouds without water, aspirations and goals that are a mirage, hopes will never be realized.
What they believe will bring joy will bring sorrow.

What they believe will bring happiness will bring sadness.

What they believe will bring gladness will bring disappointment.

- The theology of idolatry: It is when we love what we should not love, or when we love wrongly what we may love truly and rightly (See Augustine, *City of God*, 15.22).
- David says, as we should say, that he will have nothing to do with the works of those who do not love the Lord. He will not join them in pagan worship (“drink offerings of blood) nor will he allow the names of false gods to flow from his lips.
- “Offerings of blood” may refer to the actual drinking of pagan blood sacrifices, either animal or human. It may be a metaphor for guilt due to the bloodshed of the innocent. The shedding of the blood of the innocent for any reason will sear the conscience, scar the soul and increase sorrow and trouble without end. This is what the gods of this world have to offer. They make promises but never deliver.

Transition: Aren’t you glad we have the protection of the Lord.

II. We have the provisions of the Lord. 16:5-6

The message of verse 5-6 is short and concise. David now addresses God in terms of His covenant name *Yahweh* (Jehovah). Drawing on the language related to Joshua’s conquest of the Promise Land, David praises the Lord not so much for what he has done, but for who He is. The provision of the Lord is the Lord Himself.

1) The Lord is our sustenance. 16:5

God, the Lord, is described as our portion and cup. Refusing the cup that pours out drink offerings of blood (v.4) and the names of mere idols (v.4), David confessing *Yahweh* as his God, and the Lord as His portion and cup, a cup that Psalm 23:5 says “runs over.” What he needs for life is the Lord, not the things of the Lord, but the Lord. God is his drink and his food. The Lord is his nourishment. All he will ever need he finds in the Lord. Indeed we will find more than we can take in.

2) The Lord is our inheritance 16:5-6

The Lord is also his inheritance, an inheritance he says 1) is maintained (upheld, *NIV*, “secured”) by the Lord and 2) one whose boundary lines have fallen in pleasant or delightful places. What David has he has from the Lord. God gave it, he did not earn it or work for it. It is a safe and secure inheritance because it is protected by the Lord. It is, he says, a good inheritance, a delightful inheritance because it was marked out by the Lord. God gives Himself to us, his saints. He gives us that which is pleasant and good because it has its source and origin in Him. We can have the Lord. Why would we clamor for anything else?

III. We have the presence of the Lord. 16:7-8

David continues to meditate on the greatness and goodness of God. The God-centered, theo-centric focus is beautifully balanced with the personal response of

adoration and praise of a humble worshiper. Indeed it is our responsibility to approach the Lord in this same manner if we are to truly worship Him as we ought.

1) **The Lord counsels me.** 16:7

- We continue to live in the day of the counselor, psychiatrist, psychologist, psycho-analyst and therapist. Of course it was by means of a counselor that the world was ruined by sin. The serpent, a fitting metaphor for a psycho-analyst, got Eve involved in therapy, she got Adam to join group therapy, and they plunged the whole world into insanity.
- David says, the Lord is my counselor, indeed Isaiah tells us of a “wonderful counselor” (Is. 9:6). David blesses the Lord because of His counsel.
 - Proverbs 2:6-7 says, “For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright.
 - Proverbs 4:5 says, “Get wisdom! Get understanding!

David receives wisdom and direction from the Lord. How is such wisdom obtained?

- 1) The Word of God
- 2) Prayer
- 3) The excellent ones/saints (v.3)
- 4) Worship.

2) **The Lord comforts.** 16:7-8

Because the Lord fills his mind, the Lord also instructs his heart, his soul, his inward parts. The Lord guides his mind (how to think) and his heart (how to live). At night, when the mind can run wild his mind runs to the Lord. At night when the heart is easily troubled and worried, the Lord brings calm and gives him rest. In fact the believer, the disciple of Jesus, can say of this Marvelous Counselor and instructor, I have Him always before me. He is my constant companion, a friend who sticks closer than a brother, a Lord who may rule and run the universe, but the same Lord who is always before my face. I think of Him, I see Him, I love Him, I want Him. Indeed because He is at my right hand, I shall not “be moved,” or ‘I will not be shaken’ (NIV). I have the Lord’s presence. Why would I ever think of moving? Why would I let anything shake me from the joy I can find only in Him?

IV. **We have the promises of the Lord.** 16:9-11

David has put his trust in the Lord. God has sovereignly provided all that he needs and carefully mapped out his inheritance. He is his counselor and confidant, always in sight, ever at his side. Enemies may come against him and death may even threaten, but David can rest in the Lord in whom he is completely satisfied.

1) **We have His peace.** 16:9

- The Lord is always with us (v.8). Therefore like David, we can be glad in heart and our glory (our inner self, our very life) rejoices, and does so continually.
- But David not only rejoices inwardly, he rejoices outwardly. He has a

confidence about his body. Indeed he is able to make a remarkable statement: My flesh (Heb. *basar*), my body, it will also rest in hope (*NIV*, “rest secure”).

- David is secure in body and soul. His peace is inward and outward, spiritual and physical. He is whole in the Lord now and in the future. But how? How can David make such an incredible, yes to quote from “Princess Bride”(!), such an inconceivable claim?

2) We experience His power. **16:10**

- David now looks forward into the future. Though Old Testament eschatology was not highly developed at this point, already there are hints, an anticipation of an eternal existence in the presence of the Lord. Job 19:25-27 has already taught us, “For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”
- Scholars and there are many, who see nothing of belief in immortality or bodily resurrection in Psalm 16 under-read and inadequately interpret what is here. That David is confident of immediate divine intervention to preserve his life is no doubt true. However, there is much more here in this text than that. A look at the companion to this psalm, Psalm 17, will help clarify things. Listen to verse 13-15 that so clearly contrast the destiny of the wicked with that of the righteous. “Arise, O LORD, Confront him, cast him down; Deliver my life from the wicked with Your sword, With Your hand from men, O LORD, From men of the world who have their portion in this life, And whose belly You fill with Your hidden treasure. They are satisfied with children, And leave the rest of their possession for their babes. As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.” (echoes of 1 John 3:2!).
- David is confident that the Lord will not leave (*NIV*, “abandon”) his soul in Sheol, that is the grave, the place of the dead. Nor, David adds, will the Lord allow His Holy One to see (undergo) corruption (*NIV*, “decay”). I believe both the *NKJV* and *NIV* translations correctly capitalize “Holy One.” The Spirit of God moves David to now consider God’s plan and purpose for David’s great Son, the Lord’s Anointed in Psalm 2, the proto-typical Son of Man of Psalm 8, the Righteous Sufferer of Psalm 22 who indeed is saved from the power of the dog and the lion’s mouth in 22:20-21. David by the Spirit looks down the corridors of history and he sees Jesus, delivered out of the corruption of the grave through His glorious bodily resurrection!
- This is what Peter understood. Listen as he preaches on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:22-32. “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know- - Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. For David says concerning Him: I foresaw the LORD always before my face,

For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence. Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.”

- This also is what Paul understood. Listen as he preaches at Antioch in Pisidia in Acts 13:35-38. “Therefore He also says in another Psalm: You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption; but He whom God raised up saw no corruption. Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins...;”
- Yes, we have the experience of His power, a power that raised God’s Son, David’s Son, from the grave.

3. **We enjoy His presence.** **16:11**

David’s confidence in the Lord is perfect. His trust in a God who can bring life out of death complete. The God I can trust in the future is a God I can trust today, no matter what. Therefore I will make this my confession each and every day.

Lord:

- “You will show me the path of life.” You will determine the way, and I will walk in it. After all Proverbs 15:24 reminds us, “The path of life leads upward for the wise to keep him from going down to the grave.”
- “In your presence is fullness of joy.” Where? Your presence. What? Fullness of joy. Truly better is one day in your house than thousands elsewhere. But, I am not promised one day in your house. I am promised eternity in your house and in your presence. Inconceivable(!), and yet it is true.
- “At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” In verse 8 the Lord is at David’s right hand with His perfect presence. Now we are at His right hand with “eternal pleasures” (*NIV*). With all of this as mine through Messiah-Jesus, how can I not say, “I am satisfied in the Lord.”

Conclusion:

“The Day of Resurrection”

Now let the heav’ns by joyful! Let earth her song begin!
The world resound in triumph, And all that is there-in;

Let all things seen and unseen Their notes of gladness blend;
For Christ the Lord hath risen, Our Joy that hath no end.

Text: John of Damascus, 8th century; translated by John M. Neale