

Psalm 16: Refuge
Ronnie Morris, Worship Minister
Lord's Day, July 31, 2016

I. Seek Refuge in God Alone (vv. 1-2)

“Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge. I say to the LORD, ‘You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.’”

- David knew the desperate state of mankind
 - “They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.” ~ Psalm 14:3
 - “Thus says the LORD: ‘Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.’” ~ Jer. 17:5-6
 - “We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.” ~ Is. 64:6
- David knew the dependent and fallen state of the world
 - i. God made the world and is sovereign over it.
 - “The heavens are yours; the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it, you have founded them” ~ Ps. 89:11.
 - “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” ~ James 1:17
 - ii. The world is cursed and is fading away.

II. Live Out Your Refuge in God (vv. 3-8)

1. Delight in God's People (v. 3)

“As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones; in whom is all my delight.”

- a. If we delight in God, we will delight in his people, for God delights in his people.

“The believer . . . lauds the Creator, the Redeemer, God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for the bodily presence of a brother. The prisoner, the sick person, the Christian in exile sees in the companionship of a fellow Christian a physical sign of the gracious presence of the triune God. Visitor and visited in loneliness recognize in each other the Christ who is present in the body; they receive and meet each other as one meets the Lord, in reverence, humility, and joy. They receive each other's benedictions as the benediction of the Lord Jesus Christ. But if there is so much blessing and joy even in a single encounter of brother with brother, how inexhaustible are the riches that open up for those who by God's will are privileged to live in the daily fellowship of life with other Christians!”
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer , *Life Together*

- b. It is among God's people that we experience the full display of God's refuge and better live for His glory.
Among God's people we...
- Find greater protection from the evil one
 - Experience the accountability, wisdom, guidance, and comfort of speaking the truth to one another in love
 - Are able to serve one another in the name of Jesus for his glory

- Have the ability to confess sin to each other and experience in a tangible way the grace of God through the forgiveness of a brother or sister
- Have a greater capacity for accomplishing our mission.
- Are able to better represent the communal, triune God who made us in his image.

Ultimately, it is among God's people that we "grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love." (Eph. 4:15-16).

"If we do not give thanks daily for the Christian fellowship in which we have been placed, even where there is no great experience, no discoverable riches, but much weakness, small faith, and difficulty; if on the contrary, we only keep complaining to God that everything is so paltry and petty, so far from what we expected, then we hinder God from letting our fellowship grow according to the measure and riches which are there for us all in Jesus Christ." – Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

2. Despise Idolatry (v. 4)

"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."

Idols are powerless representations of man's efforts to find refuge apart from God.

a. Idolatry only Destroys

- The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but do not speak; they have eyes, but do not see; they have ears, but do not hear, nor is there any breath in their mouths. Those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them" (Psalm 135:15-18).

b. Idolatry incurs God's judgment

- "Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen" (Romans 1:24-25).

3. Find Satisfaction in God Alone (vv. 5-6)

"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."

a. When we are satisfied in God alone, we will not give in to the temptation of idolatry.

"This passage teaches us, that none are taught aright in true godliness but those who reckon God alone sufficient for their happiness. David, by calling God *the portion of his lot*, and *his inheritance*, and *his cup*, protests that he is so fully satisfied with him alone, as neither to covet any thing besides him, nor to be excited by any depraved desires. Let us therefore learn, when God offers himself to us, to embrace him with the whole heart, and to seek in him only all the ingredients and the fullness of our happiness." – John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries*

b. When we are satisfied in God alone, we are able to rest in his sovereign appointments in life.

- “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified” (Romans 8:28-29).

4. Find Rest in Relationship with God (vv. 7-8)

“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 is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.”

- a. David found rest in his relationship with God through his Word.
- b. David found rest in his relationship with God through practicing his presence at all times.

III. **Rejoice in Your Eternal Refuge in God (vv. 9-11)**

“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; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

- a. In Jesus Christ, we have refuge beyond the grave (vv. 9-10)
 - “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. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his 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 all are witnesses” (Acts 2:29-32).
 - “For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, but he whom God raised up did not see corruption. Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:36-39)
- b. In Jesus Christ we experience fullness of joy and unending pleasure in the presence of God (v. 11).
 - “This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3).

We have no good apart from God, and we need refuge. Therefore God delights in rescuing his people, calling us out of idolatry, that we may instead be satisfied in him alone through an intimate relationship with him that is unending and intended for our fullness of joy and his maximum glory!

Psalm 16 is the gospel! And it is the pattern of God’s refuge for our lives here and now and on into eternity.