

DISCUSSING AND PRAYING PSALM 16

Use these prayer prompts for discussion and prayer, taken from my book, God's Prayer Book. They are based on the New Living Translation, but they apply easily to any translation.

This psalm is the prayer of a single-minded man who declared, *I said to the Lord, "You are my Master! Every good thing I have comes from you."* (1). God alone is his inheritance and his cup of blessing. God is at his right hand and he will not be shaken. The pleasure of God's company is the only path of freedom and life.

- **Keep me safe, O God, for I have come to you for refuge.** (1)

Pray for protection – you need it. Your enemies may be people, or disease; but more likely they are the, “evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world [and].... evil spirits in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12) -- what classic Christian theology has called the devil, the world and your own sinfulness.

- **Every good thing I have comes from you.** (2)

Think of all you love; open a photo album, walk around your home, or stroll in a park, make a list and say of each, “*Every good thing I have comes from you.*”

Then, to add to your joy, thank God for being the kind of God who gives such good gifts. He is better than the good things he gives. So pray,

- **Lord, you alone are my inheritance, my cup of blessing. You guard all that is mine. The land you have given me is a pleasant land. What a wonderful inheritance!** (5,6)
- **The godly people in the land are my true heroes! I take pleasure in them!** (3)

Can you pray this with a full heart? You can't love God truly unless you love those he loves. Thank God for the people of God. Ask him to increase your love and appreciation for the church.

- **Troubles multiply for those who chase after other gods. I will not take part in their sacrifices of blood or even speak the names of their gods.** (4)

Renounce any of the other gods that compete for your loyalty. Do the things you own really own you? Do the things you desire, that occupy your imagination lead you away, or toward the Lord?

- ***I will bless the Lord who guides me; even at night my heart instructs me. (7)***

David is so confident of God's guidance, that even at night his heart -- his inner being -- ponders what it means. David speaks to David about the Lord as he sleeps. Pray that your heart will have such a deep resonance with God's voice that as you rest your heart speaks about the Lord.

- ***My body rests in safety. For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave. You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever. (9b-11)***

Death, the last enemy and the thing we most fear, was conquered by Jesus. Use these words to pray your thanks to God, who raised Jesus from the dead. If you belong to Christ, his victory is your victory too.ⁱ

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ⁱ Peter quoted this passage in his Pentecost sermon and saw in it a prophecy of Christ's resurrection (Acts 2:25-31).