

Fullness Of Joy

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[0 : 00] We'll be reading from Psalm chapter 16, and God's Word reads as such.

Mictem of David, 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.

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.

[0 : 59] 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.

Therefore, my heart is glad and my whole being rejoices. My flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to shame 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.

This is the word of the Lord. You may be seated. Well, it is certainly a privilege to be here with you. And I was greatly surprised that some of you remember the last time I was here.

And Jonathan introduced me and prayed for the church that we had intended to plant in Somerville. And so I am thankful for this congregation, this church here.

[2 : 10] This morning I am here just to give you a preview of what Jonathan will look like in another 25 to 30 years. But let's go ahead and get into God's word.

In 1985, Bruce Springsteen released the single Glory Days. The song reached number 5 on the Billboard Hot 100.

And it was the 5th of a record-tying 7 top 10 singles to be released from the album Born in the USA. Here are some of the lyrics from the song.

I had a friend who was a big baseball player back in high school. He could throw that speedball by you, make you look like a fool boy.

Saw him the other night at his roadside bar. I was walking in. He was walking out. We went back inside, sat down. I had a few drinks.

[3 : 15] But all he kept talking about was, glory days will pass you by. Glory days in the wink of a young girl's eye. Glory days, glory days.

Now I think I'm going down to the well tonight, and I'm going to drink till I get my fill. And I hope when I get old, I don't sit around thinking about it, but I probably will.

Yeah, just sitting back, trying to recapture a little of the glory of, well, time slips away and leaves you with nothing, mister, but boring stories of glory days.

Bruce Springsteen, 1985. So what about your glory days? What time in your life, if you could hold on to it and keep it and have it forevermore, what would that be for you?

Would it be maybe back in high school? If you were playing sports, involved in other activities?

Well, for some of you, you may look back, just like in the song, and say, yeah, I wish I could go back to that day.

[4 : 27] And I wish I could go back to that time and have that forever. For some of you, your glory days might be right now. You're like, oh, man, this is the best time in life.

If I could just stay like this and have this time forever, that would be wonderful. And for some of you young people, maybe you're looking ahead to glory days. Oh, this, if I could have this in life, and I could have this position, and if I could be with this person, oh, I would just want to hold on to that,

and that would last forever.

This psalm, Psalm 16, is both a prayer and a testimony of David, as many of the psalms are. And in this psalm, we see David explaining what his greatest glory is now in life for him, and that greatest glory that he wants to hold on to forever.

So this psalm, which is a song, has both a temporal presence to it, but it also has an eternal presence to it, both now and forever.

For David, what was his greatest glory? Was it when he defeated Goliath? Was it being a great warrior and defeating the Philistines time and time again?

[5 : 59] Or was it being a great king? Or did he simply want to go back to the simple days of being a young shepherd boy? Well, as we will see, David's greatest good and greatest glory is not a time in his life or an event in his life.

It's not a position or a possession, but rather as a person in his life, the person of God. That's David's glory days.

The glory days that he experienced and wanted to hold on to forever. The main point of this psalm is experiencing God as your greatest good, both now and forevermore through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, through the gospel.

I have outlined the psalm into two sections. Verses 1 through 6 describe why God is David's greatest good and glory.

And verses 7 through 11 tell about David's response of joy to having God as his greatest good, both now and forevermore. And both of these sections are dependent on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[7 : 26] Take away the gospel. Take away the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. David truly has no good that he can experience both in his life then and forevermore.

Now this psalm contains many references to the promised land of Israel and points its readers to a greater eternal land of promise where God's people will dwell with him and enjoy him forever.

So here in verse 1 we see David start off and he's praying to God and he's asking God to preserve him. He says, preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

So the question that should come to our mind when we see that is, what is he asking God to preserve him from or to preserve him for?

Well, as we read through the psalm, it's not outwardly obvious what David is asking God to preserve him from or for. But as we go through the psalm, we'll see that the answer is right there.

[8 : 42] And we'll get there and we'll talk about that. David says here, preserve me, O God. Keep me, O God. Either from something or for something.

And then he says, in you, in you, God, I take refuge. As I said, there's many references to the Israelites going into the promised land.

And we see that God gave the Israelites in the promised land cities of refuge. Places where they could go and they could be safe.

If someone had unintentionally killed another person, they could run to the city of refuge. And they could find safety and protection from the avenger of blood, as the Bible talks about it.

David states here, it wasn't a city that he was looking for refuge in to find safety and protection.

[9 : 48] His refuge is God. God is the one that he can turn to for his safety, for his protection, for his wellness in life.

Verse 2 says, I say to the Lord, You are my Lord. I have no good apart from you. Can you imagine that?

Can you imagine no good apart from God? Many of us, if not all of us, are very blessed to live here in the United States.

For many years, I was a missions pastor. I had to travel around the world multiple times to many other places. Where they didn't have life nearly as good as we have it here.

So we have a lot of good in life. Each and every one of us. But David says here, that apart from God, he has no good.

[10 : 59] How is it that David can say that? How can God be his only source of good? Well, that's one of the keys to understanding this psalm here. And we'll talk about that a little bit more.

There in verse 2, it says, I say to the Lord, if you pay attention, you look at your Bibles, you'll see that that word Lord there is in all caps. L-O-R-D are all capitalized.

Then you are my Lord, where the L is capitalized, and the O-R-D is in smaller case, lower case letters. So the first word Lord, which is in all caps, is the word Elohim. And it gives reference to God, as Elohim, as the one who is creator and ruler of all things. And then the second word used for Lord there, with the capital L, and the lower case O-R-D, is the word Adonai.

And that gives reference to the sovereignty of God. God as master over his subjects. So here, David's saying, I have no good apart from you.

[12:17] Because God, you are my creator, you are my ruler, you are my master. And David sees that as good.

So my question for us is, do we see that as good, that God is our creator, God is our ruler, God is our master, to whom we are to obey?

Do we see that as good in our lives? If so, why is it that we so often try and take God's place? Why is it that we so often want to be master of our own lives?

Why is it that we want to have control over our lives so often? David sees this as good. This is God, my creator, the one who rules over me, my master, the one who I am to obey.

David says, this is part of what it means that he has no good apart from God. Now this saying, I have no good apart from you, God, flies right in the face of our Western American culture.

[13:44] The advertising agency, the marketing agencies, want to tell you how you can have a good life. And we can't avoid it. TV, radio, billboards, everywhere you look, there are these messages coming at us all day long that we can't avoid.

Saying, buy this, have this, do this, be in this place so that you can have good in your life. This message here that David has in verse 2, I have no good apart from God, flies right in the face of our culture.

And we need to be aware of that. What if we don't have all that these companies are trying to sell us? What if we don't have the right house, the right car?

What if we don't have the right relationship with the right person? And we could go on and on. But all we had is God.

Would we still say, God, I have no good apart from you when we want all these things? That's pretty tough.

[15:05] But that's what David is saying. David was king of Israel. David had a lot of good in his life. He wanted to build a house for God, a temple for God.

And God said, no, but I will build you a home. And David had this magnificent palace that he lived in. Riches beyond anything we can imagine.

But ultimately, none of that mattered to David. He says, God, I have no good apart from you. As we go on, take a look here at verse 3.

David says, as for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight. These are another reference to the land here.

Remember, I said there's going to be a lot of references to the promised land. He says, as for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones in whom David delights.

[16:20] Why is it that David delights in the saints? By the word saints, some of the translations say holy ones. He's talking about other believers.

Now, not all of the nation of Israel had a saving faith in the promised one that God would send. But there were some.

The remnant that God preserved. And those are the saints that David is talking about. And why is it he's saying they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight?

Well, it's because other believers were around David to encourage him to continue living his life for God.

He saw these other believers as those who God not only chose but those but those who God himself delighted in.

[17:28] And so David says I'm going to delight in what God delights in. And what God delighted in was those he had chose to be his followers amongst the nation of Israel.

And so David says as for the saints in the land they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight. And then in verse 4 we get a contrast to the saints in the land.

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.

This is a reference to those who are not worshiping the one true God Elohim Adonai as we saw but they are worshiping idols.

They're worshiping little g gods false gods. It says the sorrows of those who run after another God little g God shall multiply.

[18 : 38] They think they're doing the right thing. They're worshiping these little g gods these false gods these idols and David says I want nothing to do with that.

I will not take part in the sacrifices they're offering their drink offerings of blood because for David it was only the blood of the Savior to come that mattered to him not the offerings of blood and sacrifices to these false gods.

he goes as far as saying I will not even take the names of these false gods on my lips. And so we see David praising and finding delight in the saints in the land and then as to the culture and the people around him who weren't following God who weren't truly believers in the promised redeemer because at this point Jesus Christ hadn't come in history he said I don't want anything to do with their worship in our culture even as we referenced earlier where it says I have no good apart from you in our culture we have worship of false idols all around us as we were driving here from Somerville there was somebody in a brand new Land Rover Defender that passed by us I'm like man that's a nice car

I would love to have one of those and then my wife said well that's probably about 80,000 which is probably about 80,000 more than I have and so what did I do I got on Siri well the base price was 46,000 maybe doable in another lifetime 80,000 not at all and although that sounds funny the culture around us worships false idols false gods and it's so subtle we are not to get caught up in that David says I want nothing to do with what the culture around me is worshiping if it's not the one true God I need other believers around me I need Christian friendships to encourage me to remind me to help me along the way to continue to worship the one true God

I have no good apart from that God David says why would I want to go to these other things which are temporal that may bring pleasure for a time although 80,000 driving it around may bring pleasure guess what you got to make that payment every month after month and what do you have to do to make that payment you have to work hour after hour and so there's a price to pay what seems like a great pleasure comes at a great cost I have no good apart from God David says I'm not going to chase after false idols false gods I'm going to be encouraged by the believers around me then here in verse five

[22 : 27] David says the lord is my chosen portion and my cup you hold my lot another reference to the Israelites going into the promised land the lord is my chosen portion and my cup for the twelve tribes of Israel actually eleven of those tribes excluding the tribe of Levi God gave them each places in the promised land that they were to live but the Levites they did not get a place a portion of land that they could call their own and I remember as a younger believer reading that in the Old Testament and saying gosh they got the raw end of the deal all these other tribes they get this wonderful land promised land full of milk and honey but the

Levites they didn't get any of the land what's up with that God but you see the Levites got something even better they got God as their portion while these other 11 tribes got a portion of land the Levites got God himself as their portion if you had a choice between taking a portion of land and there's some great land around here if you had a choice between taking a portion of land that God would give you and say this is yours you could live on it enjoy it do with it what you want or having God himself land is valuable it's becoming much more valuable all throughout South Carolina I'm sure you've seen that as your property taxes have gone up but as valuable and as great and as wonderful as owning a plot of land is having

God as your portion is so much better if you didn't have the land but you had God would that be good see David is describing how he has no good apart from God if I don't have the land but I have God that's good David came from Bethlehem Bethlehem was known as the city of David he could have claimed that he could have said that's my good I have my own city it's named after me the city of David Bethlehem but that's not David's portion he's saying God is his portion and he sees that as good and then it says the Lord is my portion and my cup you hold my lot well my wife reminded me as we were driving here this morning that there's a saying that we use quite a bit my lot in life what does that mean my wife hasn't been feeling well for most of her life and she says

I guess this is just my lot in life that I wake up every day and I don't feel good and I don't feel right and I just have to go through life we use that term what is my lot in life well back in the Old

Testament Deuteronomy we see that there were these small pebbles or stones that the Israelites used to determine God's will and God's destiny or fate for them and so this word lot we could substitute the word fate or destiny and he says here the Lord is my chosen portion and my cup you hold my lot God you hold my destiny God you hold my fate God you hold the lot for my life once again this is another reference to the Israelites going into the promised land remember I told you that the

Levites they didn't get an inheritance of land they didn't get a portion of land that they could call their own they got God as their portion well God did make allowance for them to have a place to live because they had to live and serve as priests and so what God did was he said for each of those other 11 tribes that did get an inheritance of land they were to set aside cities where the Levites could live and to give them pasture land where they could raise their livestock so although the Levites did not get a portion of land they were given a place to live in the places of the other 11 tribes and as we look at the Levites they were divided into different clans and it was by lot by [28 : 14] God's determination by God determining for them which of these cities they were to live in and they could raise their livestock in and so going through that study of the Old Testament seeing that God did provide a place for the Levites to live in these cities that belong to the other 11 tribes it was by lot that each clan of the Levites then had had a place where they could live and raise their livestock and I say this because David here is saying it's good that God holds my lot it's good that God holds my destiny my fate what's going to happen to me in life so my question for us is do we see that as good that God holds our lot that

God holds our destiny that God holds our fate do we really see that as good do you want another destiny in life is there something else you'd rather be doing something that you thought man if I could do this if God just had this for me my life would be good but God had something else for you are you willing to look at that other thing that God had for you and say this is good this is right this is what God has and I will find joy and pleasure in it rather than what you wanted for your own life that's something that we all have to struggle with on a daily basis now I love living here in South Carolina I was raised in Southern California and San Diego and lived there half of my life and I wouldn't mind having that back but God says my lot my destiny my fate is living in Somerville that's a good place to live I'm not complaining I'll take that any day over many other places in the United States and many other places in the world that I've been to so I'm not complaining but if I could just be back in San Diego living in at the beach be a pastor of one of those congregations that meets at the beach and there are those places there in San Diego man that would be a cool destiny but that's not what God has for me and I have to be willing to say God your destiny for me your fate your lot for me in life God that is good it's better than what I even wanted for myself that's what David's saying here God holds his lot and it is good for David and I'm hoping that we can say God holds our lot and it's good for us verse six David explains why it's good that God holds his lot he says the lines have fallen for me in pleasant places once again reference to the Israelites going into the promised land the lines the boundaries that God set up for those eleven tribes the lines have fallen for me David says in pleasant places God's given me a good place but it wasn't really a place it was a person it was God right the lines have fallen for me in pleasant places indeed I have a beautiful inheritance what was David's inheritance what was David's portion it was God himself Ephesians chapter one verse eleven says this is apostle Paul talking about Jesus Christ says in him in Christ Jesus we have obtained an inheritance having been predestined according to the purpose of him God who works all things according to the counsel of his will for us as believers if you are truly a follower of Jesus Christ we have an inheritance in the kingdom of God and God predetermined that predestined that for us according to the purpose of him who works out everything according to his will according to God's lot our inheritance is in a place is in a position doesn't involve possessions it involves our being brought into the kingdom of God where we get to dwell with God and enjoy him forever and we're going to get to that but that's what verse [33 : 55] Ephesians 1 11 says David sees that as good I get God as my inheritance verse 7 I bless the Lord who gives me counsel in the night also my heart instructs me that word bless how do you bless the Lord you praise him you worship him and here it says I bless the Lord who gives me counsel God had given his word to David through the prophet Samuel he was anointed as king David had access to the Old Testament scripture up to this point and David sees it as good that God is counseling him through his words to David we have God's word do we see it as good that God counsels us through his word

God gives us instruction that we're called to live by to obey do we see that as good David says I have no good apart from you God and included in that is his counsel his instruction his words to David we need to take that at heart for ourselves as well verse 8 David says I have set the Lord always before me because he is at my right hand I shall not be shaken I set the Lord always before me he says I always have the Lord in mind it's like he's always looking at the Lord he's always right there before me I can see him I dwell in his presence and because I'm in his presence always I shall not be shaken he's at my right hand he's right there next to me do we live our lives with God always set before us what is it that shakes our lives the things we can't get the things we don't have growing old not being able to do the things we used to do what is it that shakes our lives well if we have

God there with us in our presence if he's at our right hand we can say like David I have no good apart from God I shall not be shaken that's what David is saying here as a result of God as a result of what he said here in verse eight I have set the Lord always before me because he's at my right hand I shall not be shaken so as a result of that David says my heart is glad and my whole being rejoices my flesh also dwells secure as a result of always having God before him as a result of having God at his right hand not being shaken in life can you imagine what life would look like if we weren't shook up by the experiences of life for some people it's the loss of loved ones maybe the loss of a job maybe it's sickness or disease that shakes us up in life but

David here says I have God before me always he's at my right hand I'm dwelling in his presence and therefore I shall not be shaken and as a result of that then my heart is glad and my whole being rejoices my flesh also dwells secure David sees God as his not only his refuge his only good but as his security I can live well because I'm living in God's presence now verses 8 through 11 from Psalm 16 were actually read as part of the scripture reading earlier verses 8 through 11 are referenced in Acts chapter 2 Peter presenting this sermon when all the Jews gather for the day of Pentecost Christ and the apostle Peter there interprets what David is written here in verses 8 through 11 as referencing the resurrection of Jesus Christ time won't allow us to go back and look at those verses Acts 2 25 through 28 talk about the resurrection of Jesus Christ so what David wrote here is he's writing about his experience but what the Holy Spirit is doing is using this to point us to Jesus Christ Psalm 16 10 is also quoted in Acts chapter 13 verse 35 by the apostle Paul once again saying this is talking about the resurrection of Jesus

[40 : 12] Christ so let me go ahead and finish out the rest of this Psalm 16 and we're going to talk about the resurrection of Jesus Christ I don't want to keep you all too long here this morning verse 10 for you will not abandon my soul to shale 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 remember I said David is praying about something or for something preserve me oh God preserve me from something or for something or maybe both what is David praying for God to preserve him from David sees God as his only good he doesn't want to lose that he sees

God as his only good while he's dwelling on earth but David's also looking ahead to all of eternity and he wants God to continue to be his only good both now and forever more remember I said the main point of this psalm is experiencing God as our greatest good our only good both now and forever more that's what David is talking about here he sees God as his only good now he's saying I want to hold on to God I want to hold on to him tightly and never lose him as my greatest good and so he references here the resurrection of Jesus Christ well what does the resurrection of Jesus Christ have to do with David having God as his greatest good for all of eternity once again time won't allow but if we were to turn to

Romans chapter 6 in Romans chapter 6 Paul talks about how we are identified we as believers as followers of Jesus Christ are identified with Jesus we're identified with him by God this is God identifying us as believers with Christ in his death in his burial but also in his resurrection 1st Samuel 16 talks about how David when he was anointed as king Saul was the present king David is anointed by Samuel through God's doing as king says the Holy Spirit rushed upon him never to leave him from that day going on so

David has the Holy Spirit in him and the Holy Spirit is working in David saying there will be a day when you die physically yet you will continue on in life and David sees Christ's resurrection as the key to that Paul as I said in Romans chapter 6 says we are identified with Jesus in his death burial and resurrection what that means for us is that because Christ was resurrected because Christ came back from the dead that we too will come back from the dead because of Christ's resurrection

1 Corinthians 15 Paul talks about Christ's resurrection being the first fruits of those to follow all those who believe in

Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and so David through the Holy Spirit has insight into this saying this is how I get to hold on to God as my only good not only now here on earth but I get to hold on to God as my greatest good forever and ever forever more it's because of Christ's resurrection and the only reason we have Christ's resurrection is because Christ was crucified on the cross so the key through all of this is the gospel it's the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ David sees that that is how God can be his greatest good it's only through the gospel of Jesus Christ these words here at the end verse 11 you make known to me the path of life in your presence there is fullness of joy at your right hand

[45 : 33] God are pleasures forever more that's what we all get to experience because of Christ's resurrection because of God's plan there's so much more we could say about this but this is the point and I hope you get it that because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ we too can say that God is our only good both here on earth on life right now and we look forward we long for that day where we get to dwell in God's presence not in a way like we do now where we can't see him but where we can see him and experience him in a much greater way and we can say that in your presence God there's fullness of joy I hope we can say that now but we will say it in a more wonderful way at a day in the future that in your presence

God there is fullness of joy and at your right hand are pleasures forever more who doesn't want pleasures forever more there's not one of us that woke up this morning I hope there's not one of us that woke up this morning that said I hope today is kind of a crummy day I hope today is a bad day I nothing works out today I think we probably had some days like that but I don't think we anticipated that and looked forward to that but there will be a time where that won't be an issue ever again but in God's presence we'll experience pleasures forever more how beautiful and wonderful is that well we get to live like that now and I know I've gone a little bit over my time and I'm going to stop here but I hope you get the point we get to experience God as our greatest good both now and we will experience

God as our greatest good forevermore because of the death and burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ that is the gospel if you're here this morning and you don't know the truth of the gospel Jonathan myself others here would be glad to share that with you so that you too can come to that point where you can say God is my only good let us pray father God we thank you we thank you for your word we thank you for your spirit that takes your word and reveals to you reveals to us yourself what who you are and what you've done through Jesus Christ may we see the gospel may we see the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the key for us to say both in life now and in life forever more that you

God are our greatest good so we worship you we praise you for who you are and what you've done through Jesus all all this in the name of our precious Savior Jesus we pray amen