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Sermon Notes

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The Resurrection of Christ: Power for Eternal Pleasures

Psalm 16

I. A Passion for Pleasure and Power

A. What the world wants the most

Not only do we constantly yearn for pleasure, so also the human drive for power is insatiable, and has shaped all of world history

1. The thirst for power:

- a. empires rise and fall
- b. Presidential candidates

Illus. Aide to Jimmy Carter during Iran hostage crisis... "No longer cleared for that information, sir."

- c. Bill Gates, Microsoft anti-trust hearings

All human power is temporary!!

2. The yearning for pleasure:

- a. ice cream melts on the tongue... EVERY EARTHLY PLEASURE IS TEMPORARY
- b. the couple sits on the top of Cadillac Mountain, Acadia National Park in Maine... EVERY EARTHLY PLEASURE IS TEMPORARY
- c. grandma reached for her grandbaby with a contented laugh: EVERY EARTHLY PLEASURE IS TEMPORARY

3. Death the great mocker

- a. mocks earthly power... no matter how powerful, you still go naked to the grave

b. mocks earthly pleasure: “Eat drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.”

B. Psalm 16: Temporal earthly pleasures give way to eternal spiritual pleasures

1. Incredible power in Christ’s resurrection and elevation

a. shatters death, our final enemy

b. elevated to the highest place

2. Result: Eternal pleasure at God’s right hand

II. David’s Circumstances

A. David’s Security: God Alone (vs. 1)

1. Life itself insecure

2. Especially the life of a King... enemies all around

3. Picture: God a strong refuge, a place of safety

Illus. Medieval castles... science of protection

B. David’s Pleasure: God Himself (vs. 2-7)

1. The Pleasure of Fellowship with God

“I said to the LORD, ‘You are my Lord...’”

a. speaking directly to God

b. deep joy... the very thing we were created for

c. communication with God the highest pleasure in this world and the next

2. Apart from you I have no good thing

a. all good things come from God

James 1:17 “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”

b. good things are nothing compared to the goodness of God Himself

c. “Apart from God...” the very picture of hell itself

Matthew 25:41 “Depart FROM ME, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”

- d. what goodness can come to us “apart from God?”
- e. BUT if we have God, what else could we possibly want?

Psalm 73:25 “Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.”

- 3. God’s generosity on earth
 - a. Godly companions

vs. 3 “As for the saints who are in the land, they are the glorious ones in whom is all my delight.”

- b. Freedom from the sorrow of sin

vs. 4 “The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods. I will not pour out their libations of blood, nor take their names on my lips.”

David absolutely refuses fellowship with pagans who worship false Gods... NOT “inclusivism” here... no “tolerance”... David would not fit in to our modern pluralistic society with its “Truth for you, truth for me” approach

- c. Pleasant earthly situation (vs. 5-6)
 - i) David’s earthly situation a gift from God... not chance throwing of the lot
 - ii) lots = Joshua’s division of the land
 - iii) Western land rush... a plot with a river running through it and a beautiful, lush, verdant green hillside

vs. 6 “The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance.”

Can you say this to God? This is the gift of deep contentment in providence of God

- d. Constant counsel and guidance
 - i) God never leaves David alone

ii) David constantly in fellowship with God... counsel and guidance

Illus. Freud and counselors... God was David's counselor... right from within His own heart!

Summary: what a blessed life!! Constant pleasure in God's friendship, fellowship with other believers, freedom from the sorrow of sinful paganism, a delightful earthly lot straight from God's hand, and constant wisdom and counsel, even at night!!

C. Result: Total Security and Pleasure, Even in Death!

1. The Lord set before him... never swerving to the right or the left

vs. 8 *"I have set the Lord always before me..."*

2. Unshakable security: I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN!!

- a. word means trembling, knocked over by events or enemies
- b. rock-solid foundation
- c. Why? Because God is at his right hand!!!

3. Joy and gladness even in the face of death

vs. 9 *"Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices."*

- a. David sings and is confident
- b. unshakable joy in God... even in the face of death!!

4. Confidence in resurrection

- a. "flesh" will find a secure dwelling place
- b. not "abandoned" to grave
- c. not given finally to corruption

5. Ultimately eternal pleasure at God's right hand

III. Peter's Pentecostal Insight; Paul's Pisidian Preaching

A. The Promise of the Text

vs. 9-11 *“Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.”*

1. Not abandoned to the grave

a. focus: the body

“my body also will dwell securely [in hope]...”

b. very strong Hebrew word... means “flesh”... like “flesh of bulls and goats”

c. David says: “flesh dwells in hope”

This means the flesh will have a permanent resting place, where it will live securely with nothing to make it afraid, no threat hanging over it

d. not left in the tomb: the flesh will not remain in Sheol

No permanent resting place in Sheol... the flesh has no home there

2. Not given to corruption

“Nor will you let your Holy One see decay”

a. “Holy One” ... one set apart for God

b. no decay

- Hebrew noun means “pit”, “ditch”... refers to the grave

- HOWEVER... verb root mean destruction

Jeremiah 13:7 *So I went to Perath and dug up the belt and took it from the place where I had hidden it, but now it was rotted and completely useless.*

3. Corruption in the grave: immediate effect in Palestine

Mary, Lazarus’s sister: *“Lord, there is a bad odor, for by now he has been dead four days.”*

4. Life after the grave: Coming into the very presence of God

vs.11 *“You have made known to me the path of life...”*

Garden of Eden: tree of life forbidden, way blocked by an angel with a flashing sword

- a. resurrection: life after Sheol!!
- b. entering the very presence of God
- c. “eternal pleasures at your right hand...” = heaven

B. Peter’s argument at Pentecost: This CAN’T be David

Act2 2:29-31 “Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died, and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendents on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his holy one see decay. God has raised this Jesus to live and we are witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the Holy Spirit.”

C. Paul’s argument in Pisidian Antioch: exactly the same

Acts 13:32-38 “We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers³³ he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: “You are my Son; today I have become your Father. ³⁴ The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: “I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David. ³⁵ So it is stated elsewhere: “You will not let your Holy One see decay. ³⁶ “For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed. ³⁷ But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay. ³⁸ “Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.

- 1. David served God’s purpose in his own generation
- 2. He died, he was buried, his body decayed
- 3. David’s decay proves this promise was not fulfilled in him

1 Kings 2:1-2 When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son. ² “I am about to go the way of all the earth,” he said.

“The way of all the earth” is death and decay in the grave

3. BUT Jesus rose from the dead... His body never decayed

C. Greatest historical evidences of the truth of Christianity:

1) the prophecies of Scripture, and 2) the resurrection of Jesus Christ

IV. Christ’s Resurrection in Prophetic Perspective

A. Modern Scholarship: “No resurrection described in the Old Testament”

B. Resurrection for the Christ

Isaiah 53

Isaiah 53:10-12 Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. ¹¹ After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

C. Resurrection for Us

1. Job: “I know that my Redeemer lives”

Job 19:25-27 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. ²⁶ And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; ²⁷ I myself will see him with my own eyes--I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

2. Isaiah 25: The Shroud Destroyed Forever

3. Isaiah 26:19 Resurrection for the Dead

V. Eternal Pleasure at God’s Right Hand

A. Christ’s Eternal Pleasure in God’s Presence

1. Christ’s eternal face to face fellowship with His Father: His greatest delight

2. The Father's greatest pleasure: fellowship with His Son

3. Resurrection: the presence of God restored

John 17:5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

John 17:11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you.

John 17:13 I am coming to you now

Luke 23:46 Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

Jesus' greatest joy was to be back in heaven in His full glory in the eternal face to face fellowship He'd enjoyed with His Father from before the world began. This is what He loved the most, and He delighted to have it back!

What is more, He came to earth to win for us the right to enjoy it too!!

B. David's Eternal Pleasure in God's Presence

1. David's first body saw corruption in the grave... Peter and Paul were right

2. BUT that's not the end of the story... Psalm 16's resurrection victory becomes David's as well

John 14:19 "Because I live, you also will live."

3. Jesus is merely the "firstfruits" of resurrection... David is among the "other fruits"

1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

4. WHEN? "When He comes..."

1 Corinthians 15:23 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

There is a path for David... there will be a path for us as well!

vs. 11 You have made known to me the path of life

John 14:5 “You know the way to the place where I am going.”

John 14:6 “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

C. Our Eternal Pleasure in God’s Presence

John Piper’s Insight: Christian Hedonism

1. “Unblushing promises” of happiness and pleasure: Psalm 16 the clearest

“Eternal pleasures at your right hand.”

What are they?? C. S. Lewis lists them under five heads:

- 1) we shall be with Christ... face to face
- 2) we shall be like Christ
- 3) we shall be glorious
- 4) we shall in some sense be fed, feasted, or entertained with heavenly pleasures
- 5) we shall have some sort of official position in the universe: ruling with Christ

2. BUT should we want these pleasures? Isn’t it evil to yearn for pleasure for ourselves?

Blaise Pascal: “All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war and of others avoiding it is the same desire in both, attended with different views. The will never takes the least step but to this object. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves.”

This is neither good nor bad... it just IS. What is good or bad is what we use to fill our quest for happiness.

C.S.Lewis, *The Weight of Glory* “If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

Pascal adds:

"There once was in man a true happiness of which now remain to him only the mark and empty trace, which he in vain tries to fill from all his surroundings, seeking from things absent the help he does not obtain in things present. But these are all inadequate, because the infinite abyss can only be filled with an infinite and immutable object, that is to say, only God Himself."

3. Coming together in this passage: God glorified in our eternal happiness IN HIM

a. "unblushing promises of reward"...

"fill me with joy" "eternal pleasures"

b. BUT these are all IN GOD HIMSELF!!

You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at you right hand

This Psalm not only speaks of the powerful resurrection of Jesus Christ, but also of the reward for His labor: eternal pleasures at God's right hand... the amazing portion is, "What's in it for me?" Jesus enters eternal pleasure at God's right hand, then extends His powerful right hand to take you up where He lives forever and ever. His eternal pleasure in God becomes yours as well!!

VI. Applications

1. Glory in fulfilled prophecy: 1000 years before Jesus was born, David prophesied His bodily resurrection from the grave
2. Rejoice that Jesus' resurrection victory is yours by faith in Christ

John 14:19 "Because I live, you also will live."

1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

3. BEWARE: don't invest in earthly pleasures which are temporary

Matthew 6:19-21 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Psalm 73:25 “Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.”