

Psalm 16

Introduction

1. Over my 35 years as a Christian I have meet some of the most confident and joyous Christians and some of the most pessimistic and miserable
2. There are those who seem to radiate joy and confidence no matter what the situation or circumstance

Lynn in college—always smiling, almost over the top, even when walking down the hill to confess to stealing sun glasses

3. Then are those who seem to ooze pessimism and misery no matter the situation, even finding things to complain about even when things couldn't be better!

Eyore Video (already downloaded in folder)

4. So what's the secret to being the former rather than the latter?
5. Our psalm today is classified as a psalm of confidence and the theme is the confidence and joy we should have in the LORD
6. And, it provides some clues to how we can experience these things ourselves

A. Structure and Poetic Elements

1. Structure:
 - a. Introduction (1)
 - b. David's Convictions About the LORD (2-6)
 - c. David's Commitment to the LORD (7-8)
 - d. David's Confidence in the LORD (9-11)
2. Poetic Elements:
 - a. Parallelism:
 - 1) Synthetic (second stich embellishes or adds to the first)—almost every verse
 - 2) Synonymous (second stich repeats first but in different words)—11b,c
 - b. Metonymy (a figure of speech that replaces one noun with another that is closely related to it; e.g. "count heads" rather than "count people" or "lend me your ears" rather than "listen to me"):
 - 1) V. 4: "**nor will I take their name upon my lips**" (where lips refers to speech)
 - 2) V. 5: "**You support my lot**" (where lot refers to future)
 - c. Metaphor (comparing two things of unlike nature yet have something in common): "**The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup**" (5)
 - d. Personification (attributing human qualities to objects):
 - 1) V. 7: "**My mind instructs me**"
 - 2) V. 9: "**my heart is glad and my glory rejoices**"

- e. Word pictures:
 - 1) V. 4: pouring out drink offerings (represents idolatry)
 - 2) V. 6: boundary lines falling in pleasant places (represents abundance)
 - 3) V. 8: the LORD being at his right hand (represents guidance)
 - 4) V. 10: Sheol and undergoing decay (represents death)

B. Teaching

1. Introduction (1):
 - a. David begins with a plea: **“Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in You.”**
 - 1) This is the only place in the psalm where David directly addresses the LORD and it’s a plea/prayer for the LORD to **“preserve”** him
 - 2) The Hebrew word David uses here has at least seven different usages in the OT, such as guarding, protecting, preserving, being careful, etc.
 - 3) These are all nuances of the most basic meaning of the word which is to exercise great care over something or someone
 - 4) So, the obvious is, in what sense is David using this word?
 - a) Some commentators believe he is asking the LORD for protection or preservation from his enemies, but there’s nothing in the context to suggest this
 - b) However, David writes about his relationship with the LORD throughout the psalm which suggests that his plea has something to do with that relationship
 - c) In other words, David is asking the LORD to watch over him and protect or preserve his relationship with the LORD
 - d) In other words, it’s similar to what we find in Psalm 51:11-12: **“Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit.”**
 - 5) David’s plea is predicated on the fact that he has placed his trust in the LORD: **“for I take refuge in You”**
 - a) Based on the perfect tense, this is more literally **“I have taken refuge in You”**
 - b) This is a declaration of confidence and trust
 - c) He knows the LORD will answer his plea because he has placed his trust in the LORD
 - b. The rest of this psalm is actually an expression and reflection of David’s confidence that the LORD will actually do what he asks:
 - 1) This is where we will see some clues as to how we as believers can experience the same joy and confidence that David did
 - 2) We first look at David’s CONVICTIONS (what he believed about God), then his COMMITMENTS (his actions toward God), and finally his CONFIDENCE and COUNTENANCE (which are the results of these two things)
2. David’s CONVICTIONS About the LORD (2-6)—there are three:
 - a. David’s first conviction is that his well-being was completely dependent on serving the LORD (2-3):
 - 1) He starts in v. 2 by declaring, **“I said to the LORD, ‘You are my Lord; I have no good besides You.’”**

- a) To call someone your lord implies that you are his servant, and that is exactly what David does here
 - b) The Hebrew in the second half of this verse is difficult to translated (which is indicated by the different English translations), but the general idea is that as a servant, David was totally dependent on the LORD for his well-being:
 - The NAU reads, **“I have no good besides You”**
 - But, the NET seems to capture it best: **“You are my Lord, my only source of well-being”**
- 2) In verse 2 we also see that David was delighted to be counted among God’s servants (2): **“As for the saints who are in the earth, They are the majestic ones in whom is all my delight.”**
- b. David’s second conviction is that serving other things leads to sorrow (4a): **“The sorrows of those who have bartered for (e.g. purchased) another god will be multiplied;”**
 - 1) Other translations refer to hurrying or running after other gods
 - 2) Either way, David is saying that serving anything other than God (be it idols in David’s case or possessions, etc. in our case) always leads to trouble—the opposite of joy and confidence
 - 3) For this reason, David refused to serve anything other than God (4b): **“I shall not pour out their drink offerings of blood, Nor will I take their names upon my lips.”** (Here is the first metonym-“upon my lips” replaces speech)
 - c. David’s third and final conviction is that the LORD is his greatest possession (5-6): **“The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You support my lot. 6 The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me.”**
 - 1) Look at the word pictures David uses here:
 - a) The word translated inheritance is literally a tract of land
 - b) Cup represents provision and abundance
 - c) Lot (e.g. casting lot) represents the future—another metonym (“lot” replaces future)
 - d) Lines falling in pleasant places and a beautiful heritage refers vast property
 - 2) He’s not talking about word-faith theology or literal possessions/material wealth here, but rather using them as a metaphor to describe the incomparable possession he has in the LORD
 - d. So, the first clue to joy and confidence is that it starts with what we believe about the LORD:
 - 1) Do we believe that our well-being is totally and completely dependent on serving the LORD, or do we believe pursuing other things will lead to confidence and joy?
 - 2) Do we believe that what we have in the LORD is our greatest possession, or do we value other worldly things more than we do the LORD?
3. David’s COMMITMENT to the LORD (7-8)—what we believe drives our actions; and in this case David’s convictions about the LORD led to at least two commitments to the LORD:
- a. He was committed to thanking and praising the LORD for His counsel (7): **“I will bless the LORD who has counseled me; Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night.”**

- 1) To bless the LORD means to recognize who He is and what He has done and praise and thank Him for it (READ Deuteronomy 8:10; Psalm 96:2-3; 103:2; 104:1)
 - 2) David was committed to blessing the LORD because of guidance the LORD provided for his life—to counsel means to provide advice, give direction
 - 3) Here David uses some personification and describes the LORD’s counsel as his mind instructing him at night—likely a reference to meditating on the things of God much like we read in Psalm 63:6: **“When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches.”** And Psalm 1:2: **“But his delight is in the law of the LORD and in His law he meditates day and night.”**
- b. He was committed to trusting the LORD (8): **“I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.”**
- 1) This is basically David’s way of saying he would trust the LORD and this is captured in how some of the other translations render this verse
 - a) NIV: **“I will keep my eyes always on the LORD”**
 - b) NET: **“I constantly trust the LORD”**
 - c) SCB: **“I always let the LORD guide me”**
- To get toddlers to trust me when they were afraid as I took them out into the water I would look at them and keep telling them, “Keep your eyes on me. Look right here at me”
- 2) David was committed to trusting the LORD because he knew that God would be right there beside him, at his **“right hand”**: **“because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken”**
 - a) With the LORD by his side, leading and guiding him, David knew he could not be shaken
 - b) Asaph, another psalmist wrote something similar in Psalm 73:23-24 (READ)
- c. So, the second clue to confidence and joy lies in our commitments to the LORD:
- 1) What are you committed to?
 - 2) How often do you seek out God’s counsel and then thank and praise Him or it (e.g. bless Him as David wrote)?
 - 3) Are you committed to completely trusting the LORD as David did in every area of life?
4. David’s CONFIDENCE in the LORD (9-11):
- a. We’ve seen David’s convictions about God and his commitments to God, and now we see the results of these two things: His confidence in God (READ 9-11)
 - b. Look at the confident declarations David makes here:
 - 1) He would dwell in security (9b)
 - 2) The LORD would not abandon him to Sheol or let his body decay in the grave (10)
 - 3) The LORD would reveal to him the **“path of life”**
 - c. But there’s something else that goes hand in hand with confidence—joy:
 - 1) **“Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices”** (9)
 - 2) **“In your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever”**
 - d. When one is confident in the LORD, it’s hard not to have joy

