

# **A Picture of Satisfaction in God**

**Preached by: Brad White**

**Text: Psalm 16**

**Date: Saturday, April 24, 2010 – 5pm Service**

- I. Present Satisfaction in God VV1-8
- II. Future Satisfaction in God VV9-11

## **Introduction:**

Now I want to look at another Psalm; Psalm 16. The end of this Psalm is clearly Messianic in light of the way that it is used in the New Testament. However, James Montgomery Boice says that the entire Psalm should be understood in light of the life and times of David, because it is attributed to David.

So, in the second half of this Psalm, we have another case of what I mentioned last week. We have a case of a text that can and should be understood in its immediate context; in this case in the life of David. But, in this Psalm, the end of the text goes beyond David and finds its greater fulfillment in the Son of David, Jesus Christ.

For our purposes tonight, I think that it would be most profitable for us to first consider this Psalm in light of the life of David. Then, as we come to the part which is quoted in the New Testament we will also consider how it was applied to Christ.

## **Introduction: Theme:**

I have titled this study “A Picture of Satisfaction in God” because I believe that is what we see in this Psalm. We see this theme three times; in verses 2, 5, and 11. What I mean by satisfaction in God is that David found his greatest happiness and satisfaction in God himself. He understood that the greatest gift that God had given him, the greatest possession that he had was God and fellowship with him.

This is also the theme of my favorite book by John Piper; *God is the Gospel*. In that book Piper seeks to show that the whole reason for creation and redemption, the whole reason for the Gospel is that we might enjoy God.

You have probably heard someone say that we exist to worship God. It is not a contradiction to say that we exist to enjoy God. Piper reconciles these two things in a phrase that he uses repeatedly: “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.” The idea is that when we live to find our satisfaction and enjoyment in God we are showing that he is what we esteem as most valuable and as most satisfying. Consequently this exalts God and shows him to be glorious.

One of the things that Piper says in his book is that often we have stopped short of the final goal of God in the gospel. We have rejoiced rightly in things like regeneration (being born again), justification, sanctification, and glorification (the hope of the resurrection). These are all gifts of God and they are glorious and they are to be enjoyed and rejoiced in.

But, if we stop there, we have missed the point. God did not do all of these things for us just so that we might not go to hell. God did not even save us just so that we would go to heaven. God saved us to give us himself. The whole point of going to heaven is to be with God. He saved us so that we might know and delight in and be satisfied by him forever.

Let me quote Piper at this point and at the end of the quote, you will notice that he quotes this very Psalm: **“The best news of the Christian gospel is that the supremely glorious Creator of the universe has acted in Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection to remove every obstacle between us and himself so that we may find everlasting joy in seeing and savoring his infinite beauty. The saving love of God is his doing whatever must be done, at great cost to himself, and for the least deserving, so that he might enthrall them with what will make them supremely happy forever, namely, himself. Therefore the gospel of God and the love of God are expressed finally and fully in God’s gift of himself for our everlasting pleasure. “In your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Ps 16:11).”**

So, having established that David sought to find his satisfaction in God, what I want to do now, as we look at this Psalm, is to consider what it looks like when a person is living to find his satisfaction in God. We’ll see two aspects of this; we’ll see how David had satisfaction in God in the present and how he anticipated it in the future.

## **I. Present Satisfaction in God VV1-8**

### **1. Looks to God for refuge and finds security in him VV1,8**

Some have classified this Psalm as a “Psalm of Trust” (Holman Bible Handbook). It begins with a prayer in which David prays for his own preservation and he declares that God is his refuge.

What we see here, and in verse 8 is the idea that David’s security is found in his relationship to God.

Especially in these days when our economy and our world seem to be unstable, we should ask ourselves where we are looking for our security. What are you trusting in? Your retirement account? Your health? Our government? Our military?

We should follow the example of David seen here and we should heed the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:25-34. We should not be anxious, but rather we should put our trust in God. Does this mean that everything will turn out as we hope or plan? Absolutely not! But, if

we believe the word, we can trust that God is working everything out for our good (Romans 8:28) and that he is able to accomplish all that he intends to do. So, to be satisfied with God is to look to him for our security.

Our problem is that often we do not think biblically about our lives. We think that the best possible thing that could happen to us is to be healthy, have a good job, have a nice family, and not have any problems. We think that the best thing for us is an easy life. By faith we need to understand that, according to the Bible, the best thing for us is to be made like Christ and to learn to treasure and love Christ more. Sometimes the very thing that God uses to help us to do that is our problems.

So, in every situation, we should seek our security, not in our circumstances or abilities, but in God. We should learn to rest in the goodness and the wisdom of God. God knows what is best for us and, for the one who is in Christ; he has promised that he will give him what is best for him. So, when one lives to find his satisfaction in God, he seeks his refuge and security in God. He does this because he trusts that what God has for him is what is most going to satisfy him.

## **2. Submits to God's Lordship V2a**

The second thing that we see about a person who is living to find his satisfaction in the Lord is that he is submitted to the lordship of the one true God. Notice a very subtle detail in verse 2. David says "I say to the LORD" (all caps), that is Yahweh, "you are my Lord" (not all caps), that is Adonai.

So, here, David declares his allegiance to and submission to the one true God, who has revealed himself as Yahweh. This revelation occurred in history to the people of Israel. To declare that he is his Lord is to say that he is his master; the one who has the right to govern his life.

Where do we find the one true God today? In the Bible, where we have the inspired account of God's dealings in human history and where we have God's very words to us. A lost person does not submit to God because he recognizes that what God wants and requires of him is contrary to his fleshly desires. However, a person who is living to delight in God will then gladly submit his life to God's lordship as it is revealed in his word, trusting that it will bring him the most happiness in God.

## **3. Acknowledges God as his treasure V2b**

The third thing that we see about a person who is living to find his satisfaction in the Lord is that he acknowledges that God himself is his treasure; God is the greatest thing that he possesses. As I mentioned before, we see that here, in verse 5, and in verse 11.

Some translations and some commentators take verse 2 to be saying that David has no good THING apart from God. Indeed, this is a theme that we find in other parts of the Bible such as **James 1:17 where we are told: "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.”** We can definitely affirm that the Bible teaches that God is the source of every good THING that we have.

However, other theologians and translations of the Bible take this verse to mean that God himself is the “good” that David possesses. I think that the ESV reflects that. The NASB which is a very literal translation from the original languages (when I was in seminary it was the translation that you could use to check your Greek homework) says: **“I have no good besides you.”** I think that this also reflects the idea that God himself is the good that David possesses.

This is the idea that I alluded to at the beginning. If the gifts that God gives us are glorious (salvation, eternal life, nature, life, marriage, etc.), how much more glorious must the giver be. And make no mistake, God gives us gifts because he wants us to enjoy them, but we, like David should like behind those gifts to the giver and recognize that God himself is the most satisfying gift that we have received.

#### **4. Delights in God’s People V3**

The fourth thing that we see about a person who is living to find his satisfaction in God is that he delights in God’s people. David says this in verse 3. This is one of the themes of the book of 1 John; love for God is manifested in love for other believers. **1 John 2:9-10 says: “Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.”**

Why does a person who finds his greatest satisfaction in God also delight in God’s people? I think that there are two reasons. **First**, they delight in God’s people for the same reason that I, on a smaller scale, enjoy being with other people from Paducah, Kentucky; they share a common passion. When you are passionate about something you naturally enjoy being around others who share that passion.

The **second** reason that those who find their satisfaction in God delight in God’s people is that they can see God in the lives of God’s people. Everyone who has been born again is in the process of being molded into the image of Christ. If you love Christ, you will love being around people who are being made like him.

#### **5. Withdraws from Wickedness V4**

A fifth thing that we see about a person who is living to find his satisfaction in God is that he withdraws from wickedness. In verse 4 David says that he will have no part in pagan sacrifices and that he won’t even mention the names of the pagan gods. He also recognizes that wickedness, here the pagan offerings, only leads to sorrow.

There are **a couple of things** for us to think about here. On the **one** hand we need to take what David is saying very seriously. As believers, we should not love the world or the things of the world. **1 John 1:15-16 says: “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is**

**in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world.”**

We should keep in mind the overall context of this Psalm as we consider why we should withdraw from sin, wickedness, and the world. This is something that we often miss. Often times we focus only on withdrawing from the world and not on the reason. The reason that we should withdraw from the world and have nothing to do with wickedness is because there is superior delight in God. We don't just withdraw to withdraw. We withdraw to be with God.

**One other thing** to take into account here is that this does not mean that we should become hermits and have no dealings with non-Christians. Paul makes this clear in 1 Corinthians 5:9-10 and Jesus makes this clear in Matthew 5:13 when he tells us that we are the salt of the earth. In other words, we are to have a positive impact on the world with the gospel. We can only do this as we interact with people. However, in our interaction with the world, we need to be careful to not become like the world, to not love the things that they love, and to not participate with them in their sin.

#### **6. Is satisfied with what the Lord gives because he is satisfied with the Lord VV5-6**

A sixth thing that we see is that the person who is living to find his satisfaction in God is satisfied with what the Lord gives because he is satisfied with the Lord. This is similar to what we saw in verse 2 in that some translations and commentaries take it to mean that the Lord “has given me my portion and my cup.” However, others (including the ESV and the NASB) take verse 5 to mean that God himself is David's portion and cup.

This kind of language would be consistent with other parts of Scripture. For example, in **Numbers 18:20** we read that the Lord said to Aaron and his descendents that they would not have a portion of the land. Rather he told them: **“I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel.”**

So, I believe, that again here we see that David views God himself as his greatest possession. However, in verse 6 David does refer to his actual inheritance in the land of Israel and there we see that he is satisfied with what he has.

This is another characteristic of a person who lives to find satisfaction in God; since God, and not things, is ultimately what satisfies him the most then he is easily satisfied with whatever God gives him. This is much like the sentiment that Paul expressed in **Philippians 4:11-13: “Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”**

#### **7. Delights in the Lord's counsel V7**

A seventh thing that we see is that the person who is living to find his satisfaction in God delights in the Lord's counsel. This is related to the second thing we saw, submitting to God's lordship.

It appears from verse 7 that the source of the counsel that David received was two fold. He certainly would have been referring to counsel that he received from the Law; the Word of God. In the second half of the verse it appears that he is referring to his own meditation on the Word which he has memorized.

As I said, delighting in the Lord's counsel is similar to submitting to God's lordship. To delight in his counsel is to accept what his word says; it is to allow God's word to be the guide that governs our life. Since David treasures God above all else, he doesn't begrudgingly submit to the word, but rather he rejoices to do so since he views it as an instruction manual to lead him to God, in whose presence is fullness of joy.

### **8. Is constantly focused on the Lord V8**

An eighth thing that we see is that the person who is living to find his satisfaction in God is constantly focusing on the Lord. This is entirely logical; it makes sense that we would be consumed by and constantly thinking about that which makes us happy.

So, David says here that he sets the LORD always before him. To set God before us is to focus on him and I think that it is very similar to an idea found elsewhere in Scripture; that of setting our hearts and our minds on things above, which we find in Colossians 3:1-4. To set our hearts and minds on the things above is to be consumed with them.

Likewise, God should be our consuming passion. We can set him before us by constantly being in his word, in prayer, and with his people. Perhaps, you think that you don't have enough time to do this. I would exhort you to make time. Evaluate the things that you are giving time to and consider where you can make more time to give to the things of God. Let me suggest that a good place to start for many of us would be by turning off the television.

Of course, setting the Lord before us is not just having a quiet time. Rather it is to be constantly thinking of him and meditating on him. One discipline that can help us to do that is the discipline of scripture memorization.

## **II. Future Satisfaction in God VV9-11**

In verses 9 through 11 we see David's hope of future satisfaction in God. Verses 8 through 11 are actually quoted in Acts 2:25-28 and are there applied to the resurrection of Christ. Then, in verses 29-31, Peter says that David was a prophet and that in some sense he knew that he was prophesying of Christ.

Other passages such as 1 Peter 1:10-12 seem to indicate that sometimes the Old Testament prophets did not understand all of the precise details of how their prophecies would be fulfilled. In light of 2 Timothy 2:10, which says that Christ: **"brought life and**

**immortality to light through the gospel”** we might conclude that David did not understand all of the precise details of the resurrection.

Although we can't be sure of the degree to which David understood how his words would be fulfilled, in light of the New Testament usage of the passage, we can affirm that the Holy Spirit inspired him to write what he wrote.

Paul also quotes verse 10 in Acts 13:36-37. Both he and Peter focus on the idea of Jesus' body not seeing corruption (or decay). In other words, they see there the idea of Jesus dying but of not seeing corruption or decay because he was resurrected just a few days later. Paul is explicit in pointing out that David's body did decay.

So, in addition to recognizing that David was pointing beyond himself, we should ask, in what sense did he understand his words to apply to himself in these verses? Some have suggested that he was audacious enough to imagine that somehow he would not die. Others have suggested that he simply was expressing the hope of eternal life. Still others have said that he was simply expressing a confidence in God's protection and in his present deliverance from his enemies. I believe that the last two are probably the way he intended for his words to apply to himself.

#### **9. Has the hope of eternal life VV9-10**

So, in verses 9 and 10 we see a ninth characteristic of those who find their satisfaction in God. Their hope is in eternal life and not in this world. David recognized that eventually his life would end, but he trusted that God would continue to preserve him even beyond the grave. His hope was an eternal hope and ours should be too.

We should not spend ourselves making ourselves comfortable in this life. Rather we should live in light of eternity, storing up heavenly treasure (Matthew 6:19-21), and living as if **1 Corinthians 15:19 is true. It says: “If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.”**

Church, Christianity is ultimately not about a nice set of principles that leads to happy living. Ultimately it is about facts; the historical facts of the gospel and the fact of Christ's historical return and of future life with him. I pray that we might live in light of eternity and that the Lord would spare us from seeking to be too comfortable here.

#### **10. Is looking forward to eternity because of God V11**

The tenth thing that we should see is that David was looking forward to eternity because the very presence of God brings complete joy and endless pleasures. He recognized that God himself was the source of infinite satisfaction and happiness.

Unfortunately, many are most looking forward to heaven because they want to see their loved ones or because they want a mansion or because they want to be free from pain. Many of these people could care less if God is there.

Brothers, all of those things will be nice, but the whole point of heaven is that we will be with God. The whole reason that heaven will be heaven and that it will be glorious is because of God's presence and because of the uninterrupted fellowship that we will enjoy with him. This is our true hope and what will truly satisfy us.

**Conclusion:**

I hope that this study has been profitable for you. Most of all, I hope that you have been inspired to seek your satisfaction in God alone and to let that be reflected in your daily living. I'd like to close with a verse from the New Testament that I think encapsulates the truths that we have seen in Psalm 16.

**Philippians 3:8 says: "Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ."**