

## **Psalms 15, 16**

**Psalms 16:10,11 For You will not leave My soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show Me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures**

Today we have two beautiful Psalms that share the expression of a longing for the presence of God. Psalms 15 seeks to define the character of those who are with the Lord. Psalms 16 expresses the experience of a personal quest for God.

**Psalms 15:** David asks the question, “Lord who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your Holy hill?” These are fellowship questions rather than salvation questions. The spirit of the answer David offers is comparable to John’s point in 1 John 1:5,6 “This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.”

The presumption of Psalms 15 is that God has a character that is fixed and that if we are to be close to Him we must come to the place of agreement with Him where our ideas and values are consistent with His. So, consider David’s list: 1) He who walks uprightly. 2) And works righteousness. 3) And speaks the truth in his heart. 4) He who

does not backbite with his tongue. 5) Nor does evil to his neighbor. 6) Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend. 7) In whose eyes a vile person is despised. 8) But he honors those who fear the Lord. 9) He who swears to his own hurt and does not change. 10) He who does not put out his money to usury. 11) Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.

The list suggests that the person David has in mind has Bible based priorities. He is moral. He has integrity. He is compassionate. He is willing to place himself at a disadvantage for the sake of his convictions.

**Psalms 16:** The prayer, “Preserve me, O God” is nearly lost in David’s subsequent expression of trust and commitment to the Lord. You have to pay attention to recognize that David is writing out of circumstances that are on some level upsetting and disconcerting. In verse 7, “My heart also instructs me in the night seasons,” Verse 8, “Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved,” Verse 10, “For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.” These thoughts reveal that David was losing sleep, that he felt like quitting, and that he felt threatened and endangered.

These thoughts are nearly lost in David’s fervent expression of faith. He has the habit of encouraging spiritual self-talk. “You are

my Lord, my goodness is nothing apart from You.” As for the saints, “They are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight.” David knows that those who chase other gods only add to their sorrow. He rejects entirely that way of life.

In the middle of his trouble, David has a focus that is concentrated on the Lord. With gratefulness David celebrated the blessing and good that God brought to his life. “You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Yes I have a good inheritance.”

David’s experience of God’s presence and his confidence in God’s blessing lead to joy. “Therefore my heart is glad. And my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

Within this there is the Messianic promise of resurrection. What was figurative for David as he trusted God to deliver him from the oppression and darkness threatened by his enemies was literal for the Lord Jesus when His enemies crucified Him on the cross at Golgotha. For both, tragedy was turned to triumph, death to life, and disappointment to the fullness of joy.