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Pleasant Places?

God gave us the brief 16th Psalm through King David. In it he proclaims,

“The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You support my lot. The measuring lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, my inheritance is beautiful to me.”

(Verses 5-6)



That is a beautiful, wonderful testimony!

But we could say, “David was a powerful, popular, wealthy king! It could be easy for him so say that!”

Context is critical. David opened the Psalm by crying out to God,

“Protect me, God, for I take refuge in You.”

He does not give us any details on what led him to cry out to God for protection, but it is clear he needed protection, he needed a refuge. How then could he say “the measuring lines for me have fallen in pleasant places”?

The word for *pleasant* here has the ideas of beauty, pleasantness, kindness, sweetness and sweet sounding. It can also carry the idea of being good. King David is saying that in spite of the dangers and threats he faced, the place and path God has given him is good, is pleasant.

David’s perspective was critical to this accurate view of himself and his situation. That involved:

- knowing that God provides a beautiful heritage for His people. He knew God Himself was his inheritance, and gave him a beautiful inheritance beyond the things of earth (verses 5-6). In Psalm 73 he testified, “God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (verse 26).
- He also recognized and relied on God to support him, to keep him secure. Because God is at his right hand, is the source of his power, he knows he is secure, even in death (verses 8-10).
- He experienced God advising, instructing him through all he experienced. In Psalm 73 he tells God, “You will guide me with Your plan, and afterward receive me to glory” (24).

- He knew, experienced the joy and pleasure of God making the way of life known to him, the way to life and fellowship with God, just as he prayed in Psalm 139, “lead me in the everlasting way” (24).

That was David then, what about us today? To experience what he experienced we need to do what he did. He shows us three things that we need to do.

- He made God, who is the sovereign Lord, his Lord. In verse 2 he tells us, “I said to the LORD, ‘You are my Lord; I have nothing good besides you.’” In Psalm 73 he told God, “Whom do I have in heaven but You? And with You, I desire nothing on earth” (25).

He is saying, “God, I not only know that You are the sovereign ruler, I have chosen to bow my knee before You, I accept You as my master.”

To experience the pleasant places God has for us we must do that, we must live as willing, obedient servants of God, following Him.

- A second thing that David did which we need to do is to delight in God’s people. In verse 3 he declares, “As for the saints who are on the earth, they are the majestic ones; all my delight is in them.” A core truth of God’s creation and recreation in Christ is His design for people to live in fellowship, in meaningful relationships with each other. Living in isolation will not lead you to experience the beauty of the *pleasant places* God has for you.
- The third thing is to bless God. In verse 7 he sings, “I will bless the LORD who has advised me.” That might sound a bit strange because we think of God blessing us, and also of us blessing each other. But how do we bless God? In short, he is saying that he will say good things about God, he will testify to God’s greatness and goodness. He opened Psalm 34 with “I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.”

Have you been blessing God lately, regularly?

How are you experiencing the place where you are at today? Even if your circumstances are bleak and your feelings are blue, God who is good, is good to You, He wants you to take refuge in, to find joy in the pleasant places He provides for you.

Pastor Lyle