

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 4/12/92
Psalm 16 "The Psalm of the Empty Tomb"

Scripture:

Intro:

Today is Palm Sunday. Next Sunday will be Easter. On these days each year we rehearse the great events surrounding the last week in the life of Jesus--His entry into Jerusalem amidst the cheers of the crowd, His confrontation with the religious leaders in the temple, His final instructions with His disciples, His betrayal by Judas, His condemnation by the Sanhedrin, His execution by ruthless Roman soldiers, His burial by Joseph of Arimethea, and then the climax, His resurrection from the dead!

Key: These events were not coincidental. They were ordained by God. In fact, they were spelled out in Scripture centuries before they occurred.

For the past month, we have been investigating the "Messianic Psalms." That is, we have endeavored to "See the Savior in the Psalms." There is a tremendous wealth of insight into the Person and Work of our Savior in the OT book we know as the Psalms. We saw the Majesty of our Blessed Lord in Ps 110, then in Ps 2. Last week we were humbled by the portrait of Ps 22, "The Psalm of the Cross."

Ps 22 presented the Suffering of Jesus Christ. David penned the inspired words. 1000 years before the event, he recorded in graphic detail the Crucifixion of God's anointed. Ps 22 takes us to the foot of the cross. As we gaze upon the spited face of Christ in Ps 22, we see the anguish of His physical suffering, the abandonment of His emotional suffering, and the alienation of His spiritual suffering. That's where we left off last week, gazing at the Cross of Jesus.

But wait. Did Jesus' earthly ministry end with the Cross? No!

If it had, guess what? In Paul's words, "We are of all men most miserable!" (I Cor 15:19) The cross WAS not the end. It COULD not be! Why not? Ps 16 said so 10 centuries prior!

This morning, I invite you to turn to the Psalm of the Empty Tomb--Ps 16. What great event described in Ps 16 was fulfilled in the life of Jesus Christ? His Resurrection!

Q: Why is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ so critical?

1. Lots of great, influential leaders have impacted the world scene. Some left an indelible impression upon humanity. But they all had one thing in common. What do these men have in common? Alexander the Great, Aristotle, Plato, Julius Caesar, Constantine, Napoleon Bonapart... Two things--they all impacted the world, and they all DIED. They're gone. Their influence was limited.

Jesus not only impacted the world and died, but He conquered death and lives!

2. If Jesus Christ is not alive right now, then Christianity would be dead.
3. If the Resurrection of Jesus Christ did not occur, we have no hope.

Q: What difference does it make that Jesus Christ did not stay in the grave?

Proposition: Psalm 16:8-11 reveals the truth that the Messiah would indeed conquer death. Let's investigate the Psalm by asking 3 questions.

I. What did Psalm 16 Mean to David?

- A. His Crisis (1-7)
- B. His Commitment (8)
- C. His Confidence (9-11)

II. What did Psalm 16 Mean to Jesus?

- A. According to Peter (Acts 2:25-31)
- B. According to Paul (Acts 13:35)

III. What should Psalm 16 Mean for Us?

I. What did Psalm 16 Mean to David?

Q: Look at the heading over Ps 16. Who wrote this Psalm?

"Michtam of David"--Miktam is a Hebrew word. We don't know what it means. But notice something. Who wrote the Psalm? David. David wrote the psalm. Why did David write Ps 16? Ps 16 grew out of a Crisis.

A. His Crisis (1-7)

In Ps 16 David described an experience he faced in his life. Ps 16 is a psalm of confidence, yet a confidence that grew out of a crisis. Apparently, David has in mind a brush with death. Of course he had many in his life (eg--Incident with Goliath; Incidents with Saul...Saul thrust his spear at him; Saul hunted him as if he were a dangerous fugative; Incidents with enemy armies).

Q: In all those dangerous encounters, what did David learn about his God?

A: He tells us 2 lessons he'd learned in vv 1-7. David learned that...

1. The most Confident people in the world are those that trust in God(1-3, 5-7).
2. The most Unstable people in the world are those that trust in themselves (4).

That's the message of vv 1-7. God is Trustworthy, Dependable. He wants us to place our confidence in Him, no matter how great the problem. And that is exactly what David chose to do.

READ vv 1-7

So there's David's Crisis.

Q: What did David's Crisis cement in David's mind and heart?

B. His Commitment (8a)

Note: Ps 16:8 is my "life verse."

Illust: J. Don Jennings challenged C'ville b-ball team in 1980...

What was David's commitment?

V 8 "I have set the Lord always before me..."

What does that mean? Let's look at David's commitment word for word.

"I"--David made a decision. A personal decision. Not made by his parents...

"have set"--His commitment had to do with his priorities. What was David's #1 aim in life? What passion consumed David's attention day by day? His job? No. His

family? No. Pleasure? No. Having a good time in life? No. What was David's "summom bonum" in life? What was his priority?

"the LORD"--Notice this particular name of God; All capital letters. This is God's covenant name. It's the name by which He revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush (Yahweh; Jehovah). This name describes God not as Creator (Elohim), but as Redeemer. There's David's commitment in life--"I will give My redeemer first place in my life." How often?

"always"--In every decision, in every choice

"before me"--David lived with this picture in his mind

Illust: Imagine that the Lord is with you wherever you go. He is!

That was David's commitment. Is that your commitment in life?

What does that commitment mean practically? When I choose to set the Lord always before me, it means I make Jesus Christ the priority in the way I use my time, and my money.

Illust: I heard of a Christian couple this week who met with their pastor. They were having marriage problems. The wife spoke up and said, "My husband makes \$80,000 a year, but each week when the offering plate is passed, he puts in a 5 dollar bill..."

Not so David. David was consumed with a passion, a commitment in life. He resolved day by day to give the Lord first place in his life!

Q: What happens when a person makes that kind of commitment?

A: That commitment produces something in a person's life--V 8b

C. His Confidence (8b-11)

V 8b "Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

Remember, David faced a crisis. But since he responded with a commitment, he experienced great confidence. Confidence, not in himself, but in the Lord.

Q: What are the things that "move" us in life?

A: The things that are out of our control.

Illust: Things that cause us to worry...

Q: What's the #1 thing that is out of our control in life?

A: Death.

Quote: 2 things are inevitable in life: taxes and death.

Illust: Death last week of Sam Walton, one of the most wealthy men...

Key: Do you know something? People fear death.

People are afraid of dying. The fear of dying "moves us." Why? It's out of our control.

Now watch this. David had confidence in the face of death. Why? Because people who set the Lord first in their lives realize one tremendous truth.

Key: The things that are out of OUR control in life are NOT out of the LORD'S control!

So instead of fearing in the face of a crisis, what did David do? V 9...
V 9 "Therefore my heart is glad...my flesh shall rest in hope."

Notice carefully the last phrase in v 9.

V 9 "my flesh shall rest in hope."

Q: Have you ever noticed the differences in the way people handle death? Have you ever wondered why it is that those who love and live for Jesus Christ face death with such confidence? Here's the answer--v 9 "my flesh shall rest in hope." We have HOPE!

Illust:

Q: What is our hope? See vv 10-11

Vv 10-11 "For thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol..."

Remember Ps 16 grew out of an experience David faced in his life. A Crisis. Which led to A Commitment. Which resulted in his Confidence.

Even in the face of man's greatest enemy, DEATH, David was confident.

Q: How? How could David be confident?

A: David knew 2 things for sure when he thought of death.

1. Death was not the END for him. Why not?

V 10 "For thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol."

"sheol" = viewed in David's day as the "underworld"; not "hell"; translated by the greek word "hades"

Sheol in the OT, as Hades in the NT, was viewed as the state of the dead, the separate state of souls after death. It was the invisible world of souls. The doctrine of the afterlife was not fully developed in David's day (he did not have II Cor 4:8, or I Cor 15). But he did know this. Death would not be the end for him.

2. Death would not be the END for God's Holy One.

V 10--Who is God's "Holy One"? The Hebrew word appears 32 times in the OT, 25 in the Psalms. It usually refers to God's people, the saints. Obviously, in part, that's what David has in mind here--"I know that You LORD will not permit me, as one of your saints, to see corruption."

But I'm convinced David is alluding to another Person here as well.

Illust: Mk 1:24 Jesus cast a demon out of a man at the synagogue in Capernaum. Remember what the demon said about Jesus? "...I know Thee, who Thou art, the Holy One of God."

Don't miss this. How was it that David could have confidence in the face of death? For this reason. The Spirit of God guided David's eye and pen as he wrote Ps 16. He looked ahead, down the corridors of time. And who did He see? He saw his own seed. He saw THE Holy One of God. He saw THE King, whose reign would never end.

Q: What did David see in Ps 16? David saw the coming Messiah.

Q: And what was David convinced the Coming Messiah would do?

He would defeat Man's greatest enemy! David defeated a lot of enemies himself--Goliath, the Philistines, etc. But there was an enemy he couldn't defeat. It happens to be Man's greatest enemy. Death!

What gave David confidence as he faced death? He looked ahead to the One who would conquer death. He looked to Jesus.

Illust:

Tran: That's what Ps 16 meant to David. Now a second question...

II. What did Psalm 16 Mean to Jesus?

Did you realize that the NT gives us commentary on the importance of Ps 16?

A. Peter in Jerusalem (Acts 2:25-31)

Setting:

--less than 2 months after Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension

--Day of Pentecost (2:1) when the Holy Spirit given to the Church

--Peter preaches in Jerusalem (2:14)

Q: What did Peter say to the Jewish crowd? He told them about Jesus! (22)

1. Jesus' miraculous works (22)

2. Their execution of Jesus, acc to God's predetermined will (23)

3. Jesus' Inevitable Resurrection

V 24 "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death... not possible that He should be held by it."

How did Peter drive home this point to his audience? He quoted Ps 16!

V 25 "For David speaketh concerning HIM..."

Peter says that David was talking about Jesus! In fact Peter quotes Ps 16:25-28.

Vv 25-28 "... Because thou wilt not allow Thine Holy One to see corruption..."

note: Guess which Bible Peter quoted? The LXX (a "contemp" version)

Q: What's the point? Why did Peter quote Ps 16?

v 29 "Men and brethren"--David is dead! But Jesus is NOT!

v 31 "He (David) seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection of Christ"

v 32 "This Jesus has God raised up... we are witnesses."

What's Peter saying? Remember he's talking to the very same mob that rejected called for Jesus' execution just weeks before. Peter gets to the point--"David is dead and gone. You can go see his tomb if you want (29). If you open it up, you'll find his bones. You can go see Jesus' tomb too, if you like. But there's one big difference! Jesus tomb is empty! Why? Jesus conquered the grave!

B. Paul in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:35)

Setting:

--Paul's 1st Missionary Journey

--Preaching to Jews in synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia

What was Paul's message:

v 15 Used OT Scriptures

v 23 Preached Jesus

v 30 Focused on the Resurrection

How did Paul substantiate his point that Jesus was raised? He quoted Ps 16...
13:34-35 "And as concerning that He raised Him from the dead..."

Implication?

13:36-37 "David fell asleep...but He whom God raised saw no corruption."

Illust:

Tran: There's a third question we need to ask...

III. What should Psalm 16 Mean for Us?

What gave David confidence as he faced death? He looked ahead to the One who would conquer death? What can give you confidence in life today? You too must look, not ahead but backwards, to Him who conquered death, Jesus Christ.

All of us here today face a common foe. All of us face the foe of death.

Key: What did Jesus accomplish when He died and rose again?

Heb 2:13-14 "...that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death"
II Tim 1:10 "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality."

See: I Cor 15

V 4 The Resurrection is essential to the Gospel.

Why is the Resurrection important? If Christ is NOT risen, then...

1. Our preaching is vain (14).
2. Our faith is vain (14).
3. We are still in our sins (17).
4. There is no hope for us of life beyond the grave (18).
5. We are miserable in this life (19).

Challenge:

Key: Ps 16 is an evangelistic text. Both Peter and Paul used it in evangelistic messages. Why did they? To show this. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ must be at the heart of the gospel we preach. Why? Because we don't call men to believe in a dead martyr, but in a Risen Lord! Because He lives, we too can have the confidence of eternal life!

Q: Do you have confidence in your heart today as you face the prospect of dying? Do you have the confidence you've seen in David's life? Are you confident that you will enjoy everlasting life after you die?

Two diagnostic questions:

1. If you died today, are you sure you'd go to heaven?
2. If you died... why should I let you into heaven...?

Illust: