

9.5.10
THE GOLDEN PSALM
 PSALM 16

INTRO

There was a sermon done a few weeks ago about idols. We talked about what idols were and how they are not just things made out of wood or stone, but that they are those items that we look to for the "satisfaction of our souls". *"Idolatry is attributing ultimate value, authority, or supremacy to any object other than God"*¹. Those things that we look to for our security. I'm sure that you noticed at least one thing about all those idols though: they lose their appeal. That new computer, or new phone that you thought would bring you joy just got doesn't seem as life changing as you thought it would be. The longer you are exposed to these idols, the less you appreciate them. In fact, you will soon find yourself running off to the idol factory again to get a new one, so that your "happy" levels don't flatline. THIS truth is WHY a lot of professing Christians are not excited to go to heaven. Intuitively, even if they can't explain it, or perhaps are not aware of it, they are not excited about a place that will eventually become lack luster. The newness of it will end, the excitement will be quenched, the adventure will be choked out.... But this picture of Heaven is an idolatrous one. It is a Heaven where we are the main players. In this view, going to Heaven is the chief end of man. It is an end in itself. I had this view of Heaven for most of my Christian life. God broke the chains of this infatuation for me while I was reading a book and thinking about Psalm 37:4 . I repented deeply for my low estimation of the worth and supremacy of Christ. . My prayer is that he would do that for you today. *"He who esteems God above the glory of heaven and the comforts of the earth knows him (Psalm 73:25). To compare other things with God is to debase deity; as if you should compare the shining of a glow worm with the sun."* Thomas Watson pg. 21 *The Godly Man's Picture*

I think one of the purposes of this psalm is to create such a picture of the supremacy and all encompassing value of Christ, that all of our idols would be shattered. Some have coined this psalm "The Golden Psalm" because of it's beloved and inestimable worth. Using that idea, I'm going to apply a helpful framework² that I found fitting for this Psalm.

- I. The Seeking of Gold (v1)
- II. The Possessing of Gold (v 2-3)
- III. The Testing of Gold (v 4-5)
- IV. The Treasuring of Gold (v 6)
- V. The Exploiting of Gold (v 7-8)
- VI. The Reckoning of Gold (v 9-10)
- VII. The Perfecting of Gold (v 11)

(although I've broken this into sections, this psalm really is one continuous thought)

THE BIG IDEA is that Christ is our highest treasure and He is our inheritance for all eternity.

DOCTRINE

- I. The Seeking of Gold (v1)
 - A. Permanent Poetry
 1. (v1a) "A *Miktam of David.*"

¹<http://www.worshipmatters.com/2005/11/29/worship-service-idolatry-on-sunday-mornings/>

² Mr. Canon Dale pg. 213 *Treasury of David* Charles Spurgeon

- a. **Permanent Poetry...**“Miktam” used (x5).
 - Idea of permanence.
 - It is poetry that is engraved. It's meant to leave an indelible mark on our soul. It cannot be removed, washed away or erased.
 - Meditating on this psalm is like staring at the sun, it should burn a bright spot on the eye of your soul.
 - Spurgeon calls this psalm THE PSALM OF THE PRECIOUS SECRET, and for good reason as we'll see...

B. Passive Faith...

1. (v1) “Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.”

a. Keep me I am Yours...

- Similar language to Psalm 11:1 where it said: “In the LORD I take refuge”
- What's the difference? Rescue vs. Keep me I am yours...
- Unlike other “refuge” Psalms where David declares what kind of danger he is in, he instead focuses on the goodness and all surpassing worth of God. This entire Psalm is a declaration of the excellency and infinite joy of God and all who belong to Him. The bottom line is that David wants God! He's asking God to keep him, to guard him, to preserve him. He's declaring that God is his refuge and there is no other.

b. The nature of faith...

- What David is and is not doing....
- Doesn't mean not active, not alive, or not passionate.
- What I mean by using this term is that faith is main object of focus here, CHRIST is.
- GIVE DIFFERENT EMPHASIS
- . Our faith is not something that we can ultimately say is our claim to inherit the promises of Christ. “[This] is the proper work of God...Believers act passively inasmuch as the power is given them from heaven, and cannot in any way be [appropriated] to themselves”³ We are not looking to the strength of our faith or the pureness of our belief. “Faith is a passive thing, simply accepting, receiving, believing Christ—taking God seriously in what He promises in the gospel” Michael Reeves pg. 51 *The Unquenchable Flame*. I think the text supports these comments about our “passive faith” because of the next verses.

II. The Possessing of Gold (v 2-3)

A. I belong to YOU

1. (v2a) “I say to the LORD, you are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.”

a. Targeting His Treasure...

- David calls upon YAHWEH
- To the God of Israel, the creator of all things, to the King of kings, Lord of lords, the only Wise God, to YAHWEH.
- He is proclaiming that “YAHWEH, you are my Lord!” It's a type of emancipation proclamation. He is saying “I renounce all other gods. You are my God, and I owe all allegiance to you! I abandon and forsake all others for you alone. You hold all rights and deeds over my life and I am wholly bound unto You. I am Yours.” Song of Solomon 7:10 “I am my beloved's and his desire is for me.”

³ John Calvin II.V.11 *Institutes of the Christian Religion*

2. (v2b) *"...I have no good apart from you."*

a. Embracing His Treasure...(vs. 2b) The second part of this sentence is what everything else in this Psalm points to... *"I have no good apart from You."* This IS the summary verse of our whole existence. Don't miss this though... it says just as much about us as it does about God. "I am completely insufficient for any good thing, AND You are completely sufficient for EVERY good thing!" David is declaring "I have no good apart from you. Nothing. My existence is pointless, worthless, meaningless, full of all evil and misery, an everlasting night, the horror-filled nightmare that I never wake up from if I don't have you. I have no good apart from you." This is exactly what the Apostle Paul declares in Romans 7:18 *"For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh."* Paul (like David) was driven to despair in this chapter, despising all of his own nature even going as far as calling himself wretched! He ends the chapter by throwing himself upon the infinite goodness of God who is the fountain of all good. *"My good is nowhere except in thee; I have no source of good of any kind-happiness, hope, life, safety, salvation-but in thee. My good is not without thee."* Albert Barnes pg. 135 Barnes on Psalms Vol. 1 Psalm 73:28 *"But as for me, the nearness of God is my good"*

- There is another good in this Psalm that David claims which seems to come to conflict with this point. verse 3....

B. They belong to You...

1. (v3) *"As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight."*

a. The excellent ones... David is delighting (all his delight, IT SAYS) in God's people.

- CONFLICT? Psalm 73:25 *"Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you"*
- . This theme is repeated often in Psalms; Psalm 101:6 *"I will look with favor on the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; he who walks in the way that is blameless shall minister to me."* Psalm 119:63 *"I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts."* David is delighting in God through the saints.
- In these first 3 verse we see David sprinting towards God, now we are going to see the wicked sprinting towards sin.

III. The Testing of Gold (v 4-5)

A. The wicked's inheritance

1. (vs 4) *"the sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips."*

a. Sprinting towards sin... This verse has the residue of the Fall all over it. When God pronounced the curse in Genesis 3 he promised a multiplication of pain because of their abandonment of Him.

- THE VERB "RUN"
- Psalm 32:10 *"Many are the sorrows of the wicked..."*
- Matthew Henry described a difference between the saints in the previous verse and the wicked here by saying: *"Gracious persons, though they still covet more of God, never covet more than God;..."* The wicked described in this verse are coveting more than God! They are craving more than the treasure of Christ which in the end, turns out to be nothing more than shadow and dust.

- Jeremiah 2:11-13 *"Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. **12** Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the LORD, **13** for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water."*

b. The Nameless ones...David held these idolatrous practices, and their false gods with such contempt that he vowed to avoid them entirely, which of course what was commanded in the Law of Moses...

- Joshua 23:6-7 *"Therefore, be very strong to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left, that you may not mix with these nations remaining among you or make mention of the names of their gods or swear by them or serve them or bow down to them,..."* I think that a quote from Ayn Rand is actually helpful here to get at the heart of what this verse is saying... *"In any compromise between food and poison, it is only death that can win. In any compromise between good and evil, it is only evil that can profit."*
- So the wicked inherit increased sorrows and only profit evil, and vs 5 shows what the righteous inherit...

B. David's spiritual inheritance...

1. (v5) *"the LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot."*

a. (Remember) **I have no good apart from you...** This word "portion" is akin to an allowance, measure or ration. David is proclaiming that "God is the full measure of my inheritance" He is seeking no possession, no comfort, no dominion, no rights which did not proceed from God.

- Second part of fighter verse: Psalms 73:26 *"My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."*
- The Lord IS my chosen portion BECAUSE he is the fullness of all the good that there is and I have no good apart from Him.

b. **My cup; you hold my lot...** When he mentions "cup" here it is in counter-distinction with the previous verse, i.e., I will not partake of the wicked's cup but..."the cup that I consume, that animates, revives, and sustains me is the LORD. I find comfort, restoration and joy in Him alone; in His being, in His perfection, in His friendship, AND HE HOLDS IT ALTOGETHER" This verse placed immediately after the last is showing an either/or relationship. You can either have the false gods, or you can have me. It cannot be both, and there is no third category.

- Jesus says in Luke 14:33 *"So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple."* JESUS REQUIRES ALL OF US!! There is no neutral ground in this world! Calvin points out in this place that *"if we do not reckon the LORD alone an all-sufficient portion for us, and if we will have idols along with him, he gives place entirely to them, and lets them have the full possession of our hearts"* In other words, we will either be possessed by the Lord or we will be possessed by worthless idols. If we will not be possessed by the Lord, He is the one who takes action...Jeremiah 13:25-27 *"This is your lot, the portion I have measured out to you, declares the LORD, because you have forgotten me and trusted in lies. **26** I myself will lift up your skirts over your face, and your shame will be seen. **27** I have seen your abominations, your adulteries and neighings, your lewd whorings, on the hills in the field. Woe to you, O Jerusalem! How long will it be before you are made clean?"* The Lord is asking Israel: HOW LONG BEFORE YOU WILL POSSESS ME?
- This is what David was abhorring in the previous verse. David's refuge is in God and now let's see how he is treasuring Him...

IV. The Treasuring of Gold (v 6)

A. David's physical inheritance

2. (v 6) *"The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance."*

a. Governing and Preserving... The last verse dealt with David's deep contentment in the spiritual realm, this verse shows that David is equally pleased with his physical allotment.

- Land allotment--Israelites
- Job allotment--David king! So... David's "boundaries" in life were pre-determined by God. As are all of our lives. David is saying that this is a pleasant and beautiful thing! He's rejoicing in it.
- Acts 17:26-27 *"And he [God] made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him."*
- God does these things for the purpose (instrumentally) that we would seek Him and find Him! This should destroy all grumbling and complaining FOREVER. If everything passes through the most holy and most wise hand of God, for the purpose of seeking and then finding God, then we are of all beings most fortunate. God has set up a system in which he is the main target and he arranges and orders our lives in such a way where we have the best opportunity to find Him as our treasure and worship Him! But God does more than that...

V. The Exploiting of Gold (v 7-8)

(exploiting-profiting, capitalizing)

A. David's Counselor...

1. (v7) *"I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me."*

a. I will praise, thank, adore, MAGNIFY the Lord who is my counselor. I WILL BLESS HIM! Spurgeon says in this place that: *"we are not truly his followers unless our resolve be, 'I will bless the Lord.'"*

- What is His counsel? IT'S HIS WORD! Psalms 119:24 *"Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counselors."* We need God's counsel, therefore we need to be ABSORBED in the Scriptures, in God's very word.
- Notice here that this counsel continues even in the night when David's heart is instructing Him. This is David's inner man here meditating on God's word!
- Psalms 1:1-2 *"Blessed is the man [whose]...delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night."* There is no third time during a 24 hour period, It's either day or night=ALL THE TIME!
- So whether it be in the morning or evening, we need to put the Scriptures before us continually just as David did to be our counselors. This is David's thought in the next verse.

B. David's Protector...

1. (v8) *"I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken."*

a. David's resolve... was to live in the presence of the LORD always. His chief goal was to delight in God always-Psalm 37:4. He wanted God to be on the throne in his life. This is his 1 Cor 10:31. What does this look like for us? "I have set the LORD always before me..." In my eating, drinking, internet surfing, email checking, tweeting, facebooking, working, vacationing, kid raising, friend making, movie watching, and even sleeping, "I have set the LORD always before me."

- One puritan Cotton Mather resolved to do this EVEN when he was going to the bathroom!
- Because of God's worth and beauty, and because I have no good apart from Him, I choose to live in such a way where I am recognizing and joyfully expecting His presence at every turn!

b. Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken...

- Idea synonymous with defender/protector.
- David is saying that God is his defender his shield, just like the psalmist says in other places:
- Psalm 109:31 "For He stands at the right hand of the needy one, to save him from those who condemn his soul to death."
- We see this all throughout David's life. David's life was in trouble, and he always put his trust in the Lord. From lions and bears, to Goliath, to Saul, to Absalom, he was always trusting that God was at his right hand, and so he would not be shaken...

VI. The Reckoning of Gold (v 9-10)

A. David's Source of Joy...

1. (v9) "Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure,"

a. Connecting with previous...

b. Blessed redundancy... Again this theme of praising God because of what he has wrought bubbles to the surface. WE SHOULD NOT SURPRISED THAT THE MAIN THEME OF THIS PSALM IS PRAISE! IT IS THE MAIN THEME OF THE BIBLE.

- Phil 4:8 "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." IN OTHER WORDS THINK ABOUT AND PRAISE GOD ALL THE TIME!
- David a man after God's own heart is so because of his God-centered heart and mind. He pointed to the fact here that the whole of his existence is bent to only praise God. His heart was full of cheer, his entire being is thrilled, and his flesh is under the umbrella of God. He treasures the Supremacy of God in all things, and it forces it's way out every couple of sentences with praise. If that is not your attitude, it's because you are not seeing Christ! The veil is still covering and blocking your view. David saw Christ with the eyes of His heart, and his only response was "...my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices!!" ENDLESS WORSHIP!
- But there is another reason why David is exploding with worship... We see that with this next connector word--FOR-or it could be interpreted because...

B. RESURRECTION!

1. (v10) "For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption."

a. Pen-ultimately us...

- DAVID'S UNSHAKABLE CONFIDENCE...!
- He in a sense was singing over his own tomb! THIS IS ODD in light of the observations John Owens makes on the union between body and soul... *"The alliance, the relation, the friendship, the union that are between the soul and the body, are the greatest, the nearest, the firmest that are or can be among mere created beings. There is nothing like it, nothing equal to it."* John Owen⁴ This is something I don't have to convince you of. But David is singing over this separation because of something that he sees. Owen goes on to say...*"But how is it possible that a man should attain such an inclination to, such a readiness for, such a vehement desire of, a dissolution? It is from a view by faith of Christ and His glory, whence the soul is satisfied that to be with him is incomparably better than in its present condition."* Psalm 63:3 *"Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you."*
 - b. Here's where the veil is removed. CHRIST! CHRIST! CHRIST! "...or let your holy one see corruption..."** THIS IS SPEAKING OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST!! David penned this Psalm 1000 years before it took place. His hope was in the promise of this event, our hope is in the fulfillment of this event.
 - c.** This is quoted by Peter in his first sermon on the day of Pentecost. (Turn to Acts 2:22-31)
 - d. Jesus HAD to rise!...** It is the ground of our justification! Romans 4:25 *"It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification."*
- Why is that? He was delivered for our sins and rose for our justification. What is the connection between Christ's resurrection and our Justification? Death could not hold him because of his perfect obedient life. His perfect obedient life is the very ground of our righteousness before God!! It is the ground for us to enter into glory!

VII. The Perfecting of Gold (v 11)

1. (v11) *"You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."*

a. This verse is progressive--EVER-INCREASING TO EVERLASTING

b. This is His work!... Psalm 3:8 declares which the Prophet Jonah repeats *"Salvation belongs to the LORD;"* It is His work from first to last. God the Father elects some unto salvation, Jesus Christ bought those whom God elected with his own precious blood, and the Holy Spirit finishes the transaction. The Shorter Catechism says that He *"convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightens our minds in the knowledge of Christ, renews our wills, and He persuades and enables us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the Gospel"*⁵ HE MAKES KNOWN TO ME THE PATH OF LIFE! This is step 1 in the progression. Salvation, but the joy doesn't end there.

c. In your presence is fullness of joy... There is limitless riches in the presence of God. There is a complete absence of sin resulting in perfect joy. This is incomprehensible to us this side of Heaven. One author said.... *"It is a constant happiness without intermission...Heaven's joys are without measure, mixture, or end."*⁶ Our souls will at last find their satisfaction in what they were made for. We will fully know, even as we have been known.

- There will be no more tears of sorrow only those of uncorrupted joy.

⁴ pg. 33 *The Glory of Christ*

⁵ WSC Q. 31

⁶ Trapp as quoted by Spurgeon pg. 197 *The Treasury of David*.

- No more pain, only pleasure
- No more grumpiness, only gentleness
- No more anxiety, only assurance
- No more sickness, only perfect health
- No more doubting, only confidence
- There's no more sinning there, only perfect righteousness
- No more arguments, only harmony
- No more jealousy, only charity
- No more coveting, only perfect contentment
- No more sadness, only comfort
- No more anger, only understanding
- No more despair, only perfect blessing
- No more bad news, just increasing good news
- No more problems only peace
- No more fear, only faith
- No more hatred, only perfect love

There will be fullness of JOY!

c. **At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore...** The Psalm of the PRECIOUS SECRET...

- The question is: What are these pleasures that are promised? Let's not ignore other Scriptures here. What is at the right hand of God? Or maybe we should ask who...
- Right before Stephen was stoned in Acts 7 he *"looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."* (Acts 7:55-56)
- It is **Jesus!** He is our treasure, and all pleasures flow from Him forevermore. He is the embodiment of everything good and we will never be separated from Him for all eternity.
- **This will be and ever-increasing everlasting treasure hunt.** It will only ever get better for an infinite amount of time. The enjoyment of God will create such a surge of bliss that if it wasn't God that was holding us together we would fall apart. *"...the redeemed have all their objective good in God. God himself is the great good which they are brought to the possession and enjoyment of by redemption. He is the highest good, and the sum of all that good which Christ purchased. God is the inheritance of the saints; He is the portion of their souls. God is their wealth and treasure, their food, their Life, their dwelling-place,... their everlasting honor and glory. They have none in heaven but God; He is the great good which the redeemed are received to at death, and which they are to rise to at the end of the world... The glorious excellencies and beauty of God will be what will forever entertain the minds of the saints, and the love of God will be their everlasting feast. The redeemed will indeed enjoy other things; they will enjoy the angels, and will enjoy one another; but that which they shall enjoy in the angels, or each other, or in anything else whatsoever that will yield them delight and happiness, will be what shall be seen of God in them."* Jonathan Edwards from the sermon *God Glorified in Man's Dependence*

APPLICATION

TO THE UNSAVED...

Are you trifling with God?

Your sorrows will multiply v 4.

Turn to Romans 1:18-24 "God gave them up..."

TO THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST...

Be Heavenly minded! Meditating on Heaven and the Glory of Christ *"...will lift the minds and hearts of believers above all the troubles of this life, and is the sovereign antidote that will expel all the poison that is in them; which otherwise might perplex and enslave their souls."* John Owen⁷

Exhort yourself with the heart of this Psalm: *"I have no good apart from You"*

⁷ pg. 30 *The Glory of Christ.*