

## Finding Refuge

Psalm 16

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July 5-6, 2025

I delight when biblical references are made in culture, as long as they're quoted correctly and reverently. This is especially evident during the Christmas season when gospel-centric Christmas carols saturate the shopping experience. Here are some ways the Book of Psalms have appeared.

- In the movie *Titanic*, a minister quoted the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm while the ship was sinking.
- Psalm 46:1 was read by President Barak Obama on the 10-year anniversary of 9/11: ***“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”***
- Just this week, The New York Times reported that a famous defendant was reading a printout of Psalm 11, which begins like this: ***“In the Lord I take refuge.”***
- Seth Wade reminded me that Psalm 118:24 is printed on the inside cover of Aldi egg cartons: ***“This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.”*** This verse is also displayed prominently on the website of Rose Acre Farms, the company behind Goldenhen Eggs. The founder placed it on egg cartons in 1980, where it has remained to this day!
- In-N-Out Burgers puts many Bible references on their packaging, including a verse from our Psalm for today. Listen to Psalm 16:11: ***“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fulness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”***

The Book of Psalms is treasured by many Edgewood members. When we asked people to share their best-loved Psalms on the Edgewood Facebook page, 75 out of the 150 Psalms were referenced! Many of you are reading the Psalms right now using our July Bible Reading Plan.

Matt Bowman, a deacon, posted this: *“Psalm 16 has been my favorite for a long time.”* I'm going to ask him to come up and share what this Psalm means to him and then he'll read it for us.

*Years ago, I read Psalm 16 and saw it in a whole new light. I'm sure some of you have had this happen with other verses in the Bible as well. A verse you have read many times and then suddenly, this time, God fills your mind*

*with meaning that you never saw in that verse before. I've found this Psalm to be one that I find myself going back again and again to read and to pray to the Lord.*

*Matthew Henry describes this as a "golden" Psalm. He said it is "A very precious one, more to be valued by us than gold because it speaks so plainly of Christ and His resurrection, who is the true hidden treasure hidden in the field of the Old Testament." Charles Spurgeon said this is "the" golden Psalm.*

*I have taken this Psalm as a prayer of Christ, written by the hand of David. And, just as Jesus taught the disciples how to pray, what we call the Lord's prayer and pray it back to the Lord, I come back to this Psalm often and pray it back to the Lord. The Psalm roams from a dependency and declaration of faith in the Lord alone in verses 1 and 2, to a contrast of those who follow him and those who do not in verses 3 and 4, it then moves to thanksgiving and trust in verses 5 thru 8, and finishes with the hope of the resurrection in verses 9 thru 11. This Psalm contains all the ingredients for a prayer to come before the Lord daily.*

*My favorite portion is how this Psalm ends. If I were asked, I would say verse 11 is my favorite verse in the Bible. It comes to my mind often when faced with decisions and I find myself reciting it in my mind. You will show me the path of life. You, and only you God, will make the path known to me. Not my own wisdom, but yours and yours alone. Many can show me the path to destruction, but You give me counsel and hope.*

*And isn't there joy when we know we have taken that path? Whether that path is hard and difficult at times, there is a satisfying joy in it. The end of this Psalm reminds me that even if the path I'm on might be my last here on earth, as we never know when He might call us home, the path continues on past what I cannot see here and into Heaven. There the path is easy and full of pleasures to last for eternity.*

Let's give our attention to the reading of Psalm 16 now.

***Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge. I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you." As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight. 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. The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

As we learned a couple weeks ago, some Psalms provide us with historical context, which helps us to apply them. For instance, it's helpful to know David had landed in a cave of despair when he wrote Psalm 34. We applied it this way: *When you hit rock bottom, you'll find that the Rock at the bottom is God Himself*. Last week, Pastor Kyle masterfully guided us through Psalm 13, a Psalm of lament. He summarized it like this: *No matter how you are feeling or what you're going through, God is your ever-present hope*.

As we come to Psalm 16, we encounter this introductory phrase: *A MIKTAM OF DAVID*. While commentators are divided on the exact meaning, it's commonly understood as "golden." It can also be translated as, "to cover as a precious secret." Psalms 56-60 have this same title, and since these Psalms were written during times of peril, we can conclude that Psalm 16 is a sweet treasure written to help us in times of trial and tribulation. We could put it like this: *When we run to God for refuge, we will find confidence and contentment now and forevermore*.

Let's worship as we walk through this Psalm. I see five anchors that will give us stability during the storms of life.

**1. Protection from the Lord.** We see this in verse 1: "**Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.**" The word "**preserve**" means, "to guard, to keep safe, to watch over." The word "**refuge**" refers to a place of safety or shelter. Psalm 17:8 says, "**...hide me in the shadow of your wings.**" I met with a new person this week who gave testimony of God's protection through some awful events in her life. When I heard her story, I immediately agreed with her.

God is our shelter and verse 2 shows us that He is also our satisfaction: "**I say to the LORD, 'You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.'**" There are three different names for God used in these two verses:

- “**El**” = God. This name emphasizes His role as Creator.
- “**Jehovah**” = LORD (upper case). He is the covenant-keeping God.
- “**Adonai**” = Lord (lower case). This refers to Him as Master. Notice the personal pronoun “**my**,” which shows the importance of making sure He is our personal Master.

It’s important to know the different names for God. This past Sunday, I visited our new tween class for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Listen to what Marcy wrote afterwards:

*Our Tween group has continued to study the name of God, Elohim, Almighty Creator! Today we learned that since God created it all, He is King of ALL! We talked about our little kingdoms we’re in charge of here on earth. Maybe they are in charge of cleaning their room, homework, or feeding the cat. They wrote these things down on a crown. We then read Revelation 4:10, where we lay our crowns at the feet of Jesus...we took our crowns and laid them at the foot of the cross. Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords! He is in control and because of this, as one tween said, “We can be at peace.” The tweens have come up with their group name, High Flyers! They are soaring higher as they study God’s Word, pray, and worship.*

Can you say that Jehovah Elohim is your Adonai? If so, you will also be able to say, “**I have no good apart from you.**” If He is not your Lord, you will look for satisfaction apart from Him and never find it.

*When we run to God for refuge, we will find confidence and contentment now and forevermore.*

**2. Priorities from the Lord.** This Psalm opens with encouragement to find refuge in the Lord and then challenges us with how we spend our attention and affection.

- **Savoring time with the saints.** I’ve been gripped by verse 3 this week: “**As for the saints in the land they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight.**” The word “**saints**” is a synonym for believers and refers to those who are set apart by God for His purposes. They are called “**excellent ones**,” which means, “*mighty, majestic, royal, noble, and precious.*” The word “**delight**” has the idea of desire. I think of Deuteronomy 7:6: “**For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.**”

Because David delights in God, he desires to be with those who also delight in God. Brothers and sisters, we're designed with a desire to be around people who like to be around God. James Montgomery Boice offers this insight: *"This is a practical matter, for it is a way by which we can measure our relationship to the Lord. Do you love other Christians? Do you find it good and rewarding to be with them? Do you seek their company? This is a simple test. Those who love the Lord will love the company of those who also love him."*

On the first Tuesday of the month, the staff team has a training time. This past Tuesday, we encouraged everyone to give their testimony in under three minutes. While most of us struggled to stay under the time limit (including me), the cumulative impact of hearing how Christ saved each team member was very moving. I was struck by how each of us were saved by different methods but by the same gospel message. It was also clear that everyone had come to a point of complete and total surrender to Christ and His kingdom.

I was pretty emotional after this so I decided to tell each ministry partner how much they bring me delight so I gave words of encouragement to each one. You'll have the opportunity to do that for Pastor Ed as we have a retirement reception for him on Sunday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> from 2-5 pm. We'll have cards available next weekend for you to write out some encouragement to him. If you have any pictures of Pastor Ed, please send them to the church office. The Apostle Paul modeled this kind of affection in 1 Thessalonians 2:8: ***"So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us."***

Do you savor time with God's saints? Do you prioritize relationships with others who have been redeemed? Do you tell them how dear they are to you? I love watching how much you enjoy being with each other – it's almost like you like each other! This was confirmed by a recent first-time guest survey: *"The first thing I noticed was how many people were in the lobby area having conversations and engaged in fellowship. It told me that this church has members that are close and enjoy fellowship with each other."* This reminded me of Pastor Kyle's fourth action step from the message last weekend: *"We need the church because we were never meant*

*to do life alone – we need godly community.*” There’s no way to live out the 59 “One Another” statements without being with one another. BTW, when we work together, multiplied ministry happens – I just heard that a record \$12,000 came in through our Baby Bottle project for Pregnancy Resources!

Let me share something else I found great delight in this week. On Tuesday, I called Andrew Hofer (one of our Go Team partners) and learned that Fellowship of Christian Athletes was sponsoring an event called FCA Golf Gameday at the John Deere Classic. Teenage golfers and their parents were invited to walk the course with Christian professional golfers while they practiced. When they finished, Hayden Springer and Jay Giannetto gave their testimonies and shared the gospel. Here’s part of what Andrew posted: “We are so grateful to Haydin and Jay for being bold in their faith and being willing to share about their identity not being in what they shoot on the course, but in Christ. They dove into [Luke 1:37](#) and talked about playing for God’s glory. Jay made this memorable statement: *‘Every day, I’m reminded of who to give the glory to.’*” I delight in these two saints, even though I haven’t met them.

- **Separation from sin.** We’re to savor time with saints and we must make sure we’re living lives separated from sin. One pastor says it well: *“While we should maintain relationships with lost people to reach them for Christ, we must make sure we are not enticed to follow their false gods or join them in godless behavior.”* In [verse 4](#), David paints a vivid picture of how vices can lead to pain because ungodly behavior often ends in grief: ***“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.”***

Derek Kidner writes, *“There is a distinct echo of the story of the Fall in the phrase, ‘multiply their sorrows,’ since very similar words were spoken to Eve in the Hebrew of Genesis 3:16.”* The word **“run”** means to *“hasten after”* unholy behavior. [Psalm 97:7](#) says: ***“All worshipers of images are put to shame.”***

In an effort to avoid legalism, I fear the evangelical church has become soft about calling people to be separated from sin. Are you running to any unrighteous behavior? Like Peter, are you warming your hands at the fire of those who are hostile to the Lord? Have you compromised biblical convictions, making excuses where God has spoken clearly? I think of [2 Corinthians 6:16-17](#): ***“What agreement has the temple of God with idols?”***

*For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, 'I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you.'*” Ephesians 5:12 says, *“For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.”*

*When we run to God for refuge, we will find confidence and contentment now and forevermore.*

**3. Provisions from the Lord.** David comes back to the central truth that God is all we need by addressing Him in terms of His covenant name Jehovah (Yahweh).

- **He cares for us.** As the youngest son in a family with many sons, David would not have had an earthly inheritance. Even so, he declares in verse 5: *“The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.”* In Psalm 23:5 David says his cup *“overflows.”* This is similar to what was told to Aaron in Numbers 18:20: *“You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them. I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel.”* The provision of the Lord is the Lord Himself.
- **He gives us contentment.** In light of that, verse 6 is stunning: *“The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.”* The boundary lines have turned out to be delightful. An *“inheritance”* referred to property and possessions. David knew His inheritance was beautiful because God Himself is glorious. Having the Lord as your portion is better than the best piece of land anyone could inherit.

Friends, if you know Jesus through the new birth, Romans 8:17 says you are *“heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.”* When I was down in Edgekids ministry last Sunday, the leader asked a question about how to be happy. One little girl put her hand up and declared, *“You get happy when you give God your heart.”* While we’re not promised happiness every day, we can be content because contentment is not having everything you want but wanting everything you already have. John Calvin writes: *“For he who has God as his portion is destitute of nothing which is requisite to constitute a happy life.”*

**4. Presence of the Lord.** Isn’t it comforting to know the Lord is always with us?

- **He counsels us.** Look at verse 7: ***“I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.”*** The word **“bless”** has the idea of kneeling or bowing before Him. Since the Lord gives us counsel and instruction through His Word, we must read and study His Word. Isaiah 9:6 refers to Jesus as our **“Wonderful Counselor.”** The phrase **“in the night”** is actually in the plural and means, **“night after night.”**

While I don’t put much stock in dreams, I do like it when I have spiritual dreams (normally I just dream about cheese curds). A couple weeks ago, I dreamt that Beth gave me Charles Spurgeon’s Bible! When I received the Bible from her, it was open to my favorite verse, found in Jeremiah 20:9: ***“If I say, ‘I will not mention Him, or speak any more in His name,’ there is in my heart it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.”*** Beth did give me this verse on a plaque some time ago and she also recently gave me a Spurgeon devotional so all this merged together in my dream that night.

- **He comforts us.** We see this in verse 8: ***“I have set the LORD always before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.”*** The phrase, **“I have set”** refers to an intentional decision to put God first, and in front of Him. When we do, He will keep us from being **“shaken,”** which means He will keep us from slipping and falling. This is reinforced in Psalms 62:6: ***“He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.”***

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**5. Promises from the Lord.** The closing verses of the Psalm give us three promises we can hold on to.

- **We have His peace.** Verse 9: ***“Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure.”*** David is secure in body and soul. He experienced gladness and peace because he had set the Lord before him.
- **We experience His power.** As David looks out into the future, he’s reminded of God’s power over death in verse 10: ***“For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.”*** The word

***“Sheol”*** refers to the realm of the dead as Psalm 9:17 says, ***“The wicked shall return to Sheol.”*** Somehow David knew there would be a resurrection and he would not be left in the grave because the Holy One, the Son of David, conquered death and corruption. Job also knew there was life beyond the grave as stated in Job 19:25-27: ***“For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God.”***

- **We enjoy His pleasure.** Verse 11: ***“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”*** Fullness of joy is found only in the presence of Jehovah. David had full confidence that his life with God, both now and forevermore, would be marked by the highest and best pleasures. Someone said it like this, ***“If God blesses and keeps us in this life, then God, who does not change, will keep us and bless us in the life to come.”***

I think Peter and Paul would say this Psalm was one of their favorites. We know that because both of them quoted from it in reference to Christ. Listen to part of Peter’s sermon in Acts 2:24-28: ***“God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning him, ‘I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’”***

Paul also quoted from Psalm 16 in Acts 13:35-37: ***“Therefore he says also in another Psalm, ‘You will not let your Holy One see corruption.’ For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, but He whom God raised up did not see corruption.”***

Jesus died and yet He did not experience decay because He was raised to resurrection life. Because of the finished work of Jesus and His victory over the devil, our depravity, and the decay of death, we too are given life now and forever.

Let’s circle back to what took place on the Titanic by listening to something written by Erwin Lutzer, pastor emeritus of the Moody Church.

When I became pastor in 1980, I knew one of the church rooms was named *Harper Hall* in memory of the Scottish evangelist who was on a journey to The Moody Church but drowned when the *Titanic* sank in April 1912. Only recently, however, did I learn the full story of this remarkable man.

Harper's reputation as an evangelist was so well known that he was invited to speak at The Moody Church in 1910 and had been invited back for another three months of meetings. And so it was that John Harper, his sister, and his six-year-old daughter (his wife had died) found themselves on the great ship, the *Titanic*.

Survivors later reported that as the *Titanic* began to sink, Harper admonished people to be prepared to die. He made sure his sister and daughter were in a lifeboat even as he continued to share the Gospel with whoever would listen. And when he found himself in the icy water with a life jacket, floating near another man, Harper asked, "*Are you saved?*"

"*No, I'm not saved!*" the desperate man replied. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!*" Harper shouted.

One report says Harper, knowing he could not survive long in the icy water, took off his life jacket and threw it to another person with the words, "*You need this more than I do!*" Moments later, Harper disappeared beneath the water. Four years later, when there was a reunion of the survivors of the *Titanic*, the man to whom Harper had witnessed told the story of his rescue and gave a testimony of his conversion.

I end with the same question, "*Are you saved? Have you found your refuge in Christ?*"

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## **Transition to Communion**

At just the right time, Jesus came to earth and offered His life in our place, taking the blame for all our sin and shame. His amazing grace obliterated our atrocious guilt. When His blood was shed, God the Father accepted the sacrifice of His Son's life as full and final payment for all our sins. God's righteous and holy wrath was fully satisfied by the death and resurrection of our living Lord Jesus.

1 Corinthians 11:28 says we're to not take communion flippantly: ***“Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.”*** The bread represents His body, and the cup is a reminder of His blood which paid the ransom price for our forgiveness and freedom. As we prepare to celebrate communion and remember His work of redemption, let's spend time in confession, repentance, and recalibration.

### Confession Time

We practice open communion, which means you don't need to be an Edgewood member to participate, but you do need to be a born-again believer.

Our deacons and pastors will distribute the trays by passing them down each row. When the tray comes to you, simply lift a cup straight out. You'll notice there are two cups stacked together. Give a little twist and hold one in each hand until everyone is served so we can partake together.

BTW, all the bread is gluten free, and we use grape juice instead of wine.

### Distribution of Elements

Forever family, before we take the bread, let's focus on these words from 1 Corinthians 11:23-24: ***“For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, He broke it, and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’”***

Before we drink from the cup, consider these words from 1 Corinthians 11:25-26: ***“In the same way also He took the cup, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.”***