

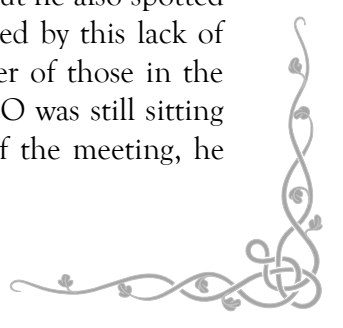
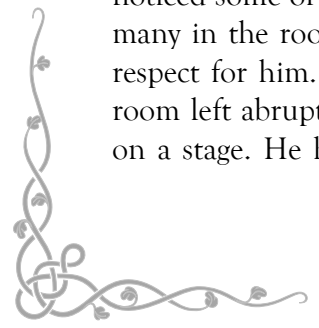
<b>Topic</b>	How Do We Relate to God
<b>Reference</b>	Psalm 16:1-11
<b>Date</b>	May 23 2021
<b>Speaker</b>	Yee Dian Lee

Once again, it's my joy and privilege to be standing here, sharing with you from the word of God in spite of the circumstances. The first lockdown MCO 1.0 was imposed on 18 March 2020. Today, one year and two months later, the virus doesn't seem to be going away and I'm still here having to deliver the sermon facing a camera and you're all in your respective homes. Nonetheless, I am much encouraged that so many of you are able to join this morning's Sunday services via Zoom and be connected to the body of Christ.

We're going to take a break from our series on the book of Matthew and for today's sermon, I've entitled it "How do we relate to God?" based on Psalm 16. I felt led to use these texts from Psalm 16 to address this important topic of our relationship with God as an encouragement or impetus to aid you in your journey of faith. In the opening slide, you see this famous painting by Michael Angelo, the creation of Adam, which he finished in 1512 on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Now, since we are a conservative church, I've censored a small but sensitive part of the painting. If you're curious to see what's behind the circle, go check it out on Google, but don't do it now. I chose this on purpose as an attempt to illustrate the situation many of us are in. We see God stretching his hand, trying to reach out to Adam, look at God's face and his forefinger. He appears to want very much to connect with Adam, but look at the man's posture, his face and his forefinger. He seems to lack the enthusiasm to respond to God. His is the picture of apathy and indifference.

What we are going to do is to draw from Psalm 16 to see how we may respond to God with zeal and devotion, how we may deepen our relationship with God. This is a recent parody of Michelangelo's art in which we see God sanitizing Adam's hand. We may laugh at this picture, but seriously we need to ask God to sanitize our hearts and to cleanse our mind of all forms of apathy and indifference so that we may relate to him intimately, closely and personally like the way David walked with God.

Once upon a time, there was a very successful CEO who plan an important meeting for all his employees. He asked his secretary to book a large conference room at a nearby hotel, the time and the date of the meeting was set. But even before that, they came, some managers emailed to say they couldn't make it. One said that that day was his daughter's birthday. The rest gave various other reasons. The CEO frowned in response, but the meeting had to go on. When the day came and the meeting started a number of other employees didn't show up. The CEO wondered why. Perhaps they had more important things to do. What's worse, many came late for the meeting. Some were five minutes late, some 10 minutes, a few of them were even 30 minutes late. The CEO was let down by such tardiness. The meeting got underway with several division hits, making announcements. When the CEO finally delivered his address, he noticed some of the attendees paying full attention to his speech. He was very pleased, but he also spotted many in the room busy on their mobile devices while he spoke. The CEO was dismayed by this lack of respect for him. And that is not all, as soon as he finished his address, about a quarter of those in the room left abruptly through the back door, but the meeting wasn't over yet, and the CEO was still sitting on a stage. He hadn't left the room yet, and this got him a little upset. At the end of the meeting, he



invited those two who remain to some coffee in the foyer, so that he could mingle with them, so that they could mingle among themselves, but only half of those chose to remain, to chat with the CEO and with other employees, the rest rushed back to the office. When the CEO finally returned to his office, he was so disappointed that he told his secretary that he might consider canceling the bonus payment for that year.

This story is not a real story. I made it up. You may call it a modern day parable. In relating the story, I don't have the slightest intention to offend anyone. I don't mean to admonish anyone. I just wish to push across a point relating to the sermon topic. It's just a mere introduction to the sermon. And that point is, the way we conduct our faith, our actions relating to matters of faith, including coming for Sunday Service, it says a lot about our relationship with God. Whether it is deep or shallow. To press this point further, let me relate another story to you and this one is a real incident during my corporate days.

Once I called one of my subordinates, a young salesman into my room for a discussion. Halfway through the conversation, his mobile phone rang and to my shock he answered it. He spoke for a minute or two while I waited patiently. I didn't know who was on the line with him. Maybe his girlfriend. When he finished the call, he said sorry, still I made this remark wow! whoever you spoke to he or she must be more important than me. He said sorry again, but I wasn't impressed by his lack of respect. In contrast, whenever I went to see my boss, I would never let my phone ring aloud, let alone answering it. I will sit up straight, lean forward with a pen in one hand and a notepad in the other. Yes sir, got it. Paying him full undivided attention. What I mean is my boss is not God, so how much more should I look up to God? But his story is also a useful tip for the young working adults in our midst who seek to advance their career.

As I was saying, our actions pertaining to matters of faith speak volume about the depth of our relationship with God or the lack of. In other words, those who take God seriously they act in a certain way. Those who take God less seriously, they act in other ways. The question is how should we conduct our relationship with God? How did David conduct his relationship with God? We seek answers to these questions from our text today.

To begin with before we dive into Psalm 16, it is well known that David walked closely with God all his life. He is described as a man after God's own heart from 1-Samuel 13 verse 14. Now incidentally, this statue of David was also sculptured by Michelangelo, which he completed in 1504 and it sits today in the city of Florence. Besides a man after God's own heart, David is sometimes referred to as the apple of God's eye from Psalm 17 verse 8. Actually, the Hebrew word for eye here is not so much about the whole eye, rather is referring to the pupil of the eye, the most sensitive part of the body. It's like saying, if you try to harm David, you'll be touching God's most sensitive part and he wouldn't stand for it.

How did David get to be a man after God's own heart, and the apple of his eye? In his early years as a shepherd he forged an intimate relationship with God as he tended the sheep. He developed a close fellowship with God with a time he had. Later in his old age, he wrote in Psalm 71, since my youth God you have taught me. It's fair to say that among all the characters in the Old Testament, no one walked closer with God than David. You read any Psalm written by David and you will sense the depth of his intimacy with God. You can feel his emotions permeating to the verses. A passion founded on is deep and

intimate bond with God. The joy he poured out when he praise God, Psalm 9. The anguish he felt when he cried out to God for help, Psalm 22. The confidence he expressed when you thought of God, Psalm 23. The remorse he drown himself in when he sinned against God, Psalm 51. Don't we wish we can relate to God the way David did.

And so it is abundantly clear that David's closed walk with God is something for us to emulate. The way he related to God so intimately should be a model for us. But how? This is where Psalm 16 is so instructive. It has a lot to teach us about our own relationship with God. Now, I wouldn't be approaching the text the usual manner, looking into the background and unpacking the verses. We can do that another time. Instead for the purpose of our discussion, which I will scan the verses to pick up key points in order to piece together a comprehensive picture of David's relationship with God. We should examine the manner by which David related to God so that we can extract practical lessons for our own walk with God.

In the first part of the sermon, drawing mostly from the first half of the text, we shall go through four specific aspects of David's relationship with God.

1. David **resorting** to God as his refugee.
2. David **revering** God as this lord.
3. David **rejoicing** in God as his treasure.
4. David **relying** on God as his counsel.

In other words, to David God was his safest refuge, his sovereign Lord, his supreme treasure and his trusted counsel. Another question here is, what about you? What or who is God to you? If God is none of these to you now in your current station of life, then you may want to conduct an honest audit of your walk with God on how you traverse your journey of faith. God should be for every believer, what he was to David. And after this, in the later part of the sermon, we should look at four spiritual dividends that are the outcome of a close relationship with God.

1. Satisfaction and joy.
2. Security and safety.
3. Supply and provision.
4. Salvation for eternity.

And these four points we shall draw mainly from the second half of the text. This and the slide before this will be the structure of the sermon. At the end of the service during the benediction, I shall see a special prayer for you to ask God to bestow upon you these spiritual blessings. So do stay connected until the end of the service. Remember the story of the CEO don't leave before the service is over.

Let's dive into the text. The psalm opens with David pleading,

#### DAVID RESORTING TO GOD AS HIS REFUGEE

Keep me safe. my God,  
for in you I take refuge

Another translation says,

Protect me, O God,  
for I run to you for safety.

It is a petition for help. David starts with a heartfelt petition to God to grant him safety and protection. Keep me safe my God for in you I take refuge. For in I take refuge, meaning because you are my refuge, please don't let any harm come to me. Before anything else, above everything else, O God I acknowledge you as my refuge. On that basis because of that, help me and save me. That's the tone of this verse. David seems to be in some kind of trouble. He appears to be facing some sort of crisis. The text doesn't tell us the nature of his problem. In any case, we seem running to God for safety. Bearing in mind that David was the king, he had many resources at his disposal. He had the power and money. If his issue was health-related, he had the best doctors. If it was a threat from foreign enemies, he had a strong army.

Yet despite having all these resources, his sense of safety came mostly from God. Because to him, God was his safest refuge. He told his people in Psalm 20 verse 7, some trust in chariots and some in horses but we trust in the name of the Lord our God. That doesn't mean that he didn't use horses and chariots when leading the Israelites into battles. Of course he did, but they were secondary to him. His primary hope was in God Almighty. Now, what does this first aspect of his relationship with God mean for us. Like David I think we also have plenty of resources, which we readily deploy when confronted with a grave danger or when dealing with a severe storm of life. We rely on our financial assets, our connections, and our friends, our knowledge and experience, et cetera. And we employ these resources to deal with the problem at hand. Well and good. That's what we should do. That's what I would do. After all these resources come from God and should be used effectively, but over and above all these we should be also be like David. We should be first petitioning and beseeching God for safety and protection, because we believe that God is our safest refuge. But do we do that?

Now putting in another way, what is our first instinct? I mean, first instinct when dealing with a crisis, is it what I can do or is it what God can do? I believe it's more of the former. Often, we run to God only when our options are running out. Let's take an actual example. Our fear of the virus in this pandemic. My wife and I, we follow the SOPs very strictly. We wear our masks without fail whenever we go out. We make sure we keep our distance from people and we want so much to be vaccinated. All these offer as much protection. Understandably in many churches, the emphasis is on masks, social distancing, vaccination and then by the way, let's also pray. Shouldn't it be the other way? Keep us safe O God for in you, we take refuge and then the SOPs and vaccination. Don't get me wrong. You have to wear your mask. Please practice social distancing, and I urge you to get vaccinated ASAP, but over and above all this, not because of these, keep us safe O God for in you we take refuge. Some trust in AstraZeneca and some in Pfizer, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

It really boils down to how close our relationship is with God. Do we know him well enough to know his power over the virus and his care for us? It's also a question of faith. Now to drive this home, let me share with you another story. And this one, another real incident. About 20 years ago, when our daughter Melody was 5 years old, we took her to Disneyland in California. The three of us had a wonderful day of

fun and togetherness. This is a photo from those happy times. Hey, there was once when my hair was black like yours. Perhaps there is another this time for the young parents in our midst, enjoy your kids before they grew up, before the growing and flyaway. Anyway, we went and joined this right in Disneyland when suddenly a huge mechanical dinosaur jumped overhead with a thunderous Tundra sound. Melody was absolutely terrified and she screamed, pray to God, pray to God. We quickly hugged and shielded her and assured her that it wasn't real. Till today, I've never understood why in the face of grave danger, the first instinct was to resort to God for safety.

Nonetheless, perhaps the innocent mind of a young child can instruct us about God as our safest refuge, which is what this first point from the text is all about. For sure masks and vaccines can provide us vital protection, but God is our ultimate and safest refuge. That's what God was to David. That is how closely David related to God.

## DAVID REVERING GOD AS HIS LORD

He declares in verse 2.

**I say to the Lord, "you are my Lord;...**

Meaning you are my master, I submit to your authority and your sovereignty. Bearing in mind again, that David was the king of Israel, yet he bowed to the king of Kings. He was the ruler of the land, but he yielded to the Lordship of God over him and his kingdom. Before we go on, there is an interesting observation I want to make. In the Old Testament, there are generally three ways God is addressed.

- Firstly, God is addressed by the Hebrew word 'El' or the plural 'Elohim'. The generic word for God in the English Bible, it is translated as God with a capital G of course. So God is addressed which is the personal name of God. In the English Bible, this will be translated as LORD.
- The English equivalent of Yahweh is Jehovah, but why doesn't the word Jehovah appear in our Bible? Well, there's a long story behind it, but in the Chinese Bible they have it. So whenever you see the word LORD all capitalized, originally it is Yahweh, God's personal name.
- Thirdly, God is also addressed as Adonai, which means ruler or master. Surely speaking, it is more a title than the name. In English Adonai is rendered as Lord with only the L capitalized. No incidentally, the Japanese woman, they refer to the husband as master. They use this same character in Japanese. So not too bad if you marry a Japanese wife, she calls you master. If you have a Chinese wife, you call a master. Sorry for the digression.

So we have three words in the Old Testament to address God; El, Yahweh or Adonai. The notable thing is that in the first two verses of our texts, David used all three words.

**Keep me safe, my God (El),**

**For in You I take refuge.**

**I say to the LORD (Yahweh), "You are my Lord (Adonai);...**

If you say this in English, it doesn't come up quite right. I say to the Lord, you are my lord, it sounds the same. That's why in the NLT, this is better translated as,

I say to the Lord, you are my master.

And that's exactly what David meant. To him God was his master, and it is the second aspect of his relationship with God. He himself set on the throne as king, but at the same time he enthroned God on the throne of his heart. What does that mean for us to relate to God as our master in a practical sense? How can we say it like David, I say to the Lord, you are my master? The opposite of a master is a servant. In biblical times, the opposite of a master is often a slave. The servant or slave submits to his master. He listens to and obeys his master. He serves his master. Is that an accurate description of how we relate to God? You see, it's far easier to address Jesus as savior rather than acknowledging him as Lord or master. When we say Jesus is our savior, we think of eternal life and a passport to heaven. Who wouldn't want these gifts, but when we declare Jesus as our Lord and master, it involves obedience and submission. These are far harder things to do. And so we cherry pick what God offers. This one very nice, thank you very much. That one, no thanks, maybe later.

In other words, we tend to approach God on our own terms, at our own convenience. Remember the story of the CEO. Some employees came for the meeting and left at their convenience. Put in another way, we try to fit God into our plans and not the other way submitting ourselves to his plans and in doing so, we deny ourselves a closer walk with God and an intimate relationship with him. In his epistles, Paul often use the term Lord Jesus when referring to Jesus. He wrote in Greek and the Greek word used for lot is Kurios, which has the same meaning as the Hebrew word Adonai. So whenever you see Lord Jesus in the New Testament, it means Jesus is Adonai. Jesus is master.

From now whenever we say Lord Jesus, let us realize and mean what we profess. Like when David declared you are my Lord, it is a confession of God's exalted place up there and our subservient position down here when we relate to him. It is also an expression of our willingness to obey and submit to him.

## DAVID REJOICING IN GOD AS HIS TREASURE

He continues in verse 2,

“...apart from You I have no good thing.”

He's like saying, O God, you are the best thing that has happened to me. Whatever good things I have in my life, they are nothing compared to you. I enjoy a lot of good things in my life, but when compared to you, they are zero, zilch, empty. You are my treasure, but the rest are trash when compared to you. Bearing in mind again that David was the king. He had the best things in life, the best food, the best wine, and a nice bed of sleep on in the comforts of life in the palace. Yet he counted these things as nothing when compared to the exceeding good that came from knowing God. In fact, one translation renders this verse as, without you nothing makes sense.

In Matthew 13, Jesus illustrated this immeasurable value of knowing God using two back to back parables. In Matthew 13 verse 44 in the parable of the hidden treasure Jesus explained.

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in the field. When a man found it, he hid it again. And then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought the field.

The picture is of a man who has found something that has the value far far greater than all that he possesses, and immediately after this in verses 44, 45 and 46, Jesus told a similar parable. The parable of the pearl. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything had and bought it. The picture again is of this person who has found that one single pearl that he treasures far far above anything that he owns. And that is how verse 2 in our text is painted in Matthew 13.

In God David found the treasure, his treasure of unsurpassed value. In God David had discovered the pool of unparallel value, which prompted him to say, "...apart from you I have no good thing". He then underscored this in verse 4,

Those who run after other gods  
will suffer more and more.  
I will not pour out libations (offerings) of blood to such gods  
or take up their names on my lips.

What does this verse mean? Now, let me paraphrase so that you can appreciate what David was thinking. He's like saying. O God, you are everything to me. You are my Supreme good. I have no interest in all these other gods. I won't offer anything to them. I won't even mention their names. What can these gods do? What can they offer? Nothing but sorrow and everything bad. Now of course David was referring to the various pagan gods that people worship in the ancient world. People today still pray to all kinds of false gods. You might say, I don't believe in any of them, but you need to be careful. Anything in your life that you value more than God that becomes a god. Anything that is more important to you than God, your job, your position, your money then that thing is a god to you.

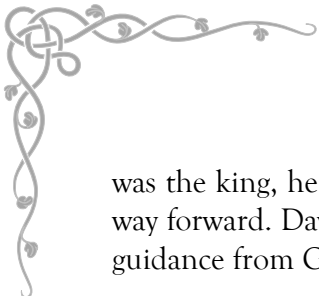
Our father in heaven in his goodness has bestowed many good things in our lives for us to enjoy. A comfortable house to live in, a nice car to drive, all kinds of delicious food to eat, occasional holiday trips for some fun including to Disneyland. And again, we must be very careful that we don't value these things above God. Over and above these good things in life, we acknowledge that God is our supreme treasure. In all these good things themselves, we see that God is supremely good to us. Let us be like David who valued God and his relationship with God far above anything and everything.

### DAVID RELYING ON GOD AS HIS COUNSEL

In verse seven he writes,

I will praise the LORD, who counsels me;  
even at night my heart instructs me.

Meaning, I will bless Yahweh because he guides me every step in my journey. By day I receive his counsel and even at night his counsel continues to resonate in my heart. Bearing in mind once again that David



was the king, he had plenty of advisors in his court, but David looked ultimately to God to show him the way forward. David on his own was not without his knowledge and experience yet he sought direction and guidance from God.

Now I need to emphasize that this fourth aspect of God being his trusted counsel, it's not just the fourth aspect. It is foundational. It propels the other three. Now, what do I mean? I cited the Psalms 71 verse 17 earlier where David said, since my youth God you have taught me. Now because of God's counsel all his life:

1. He began to realize that God was his safest refuge.
2. He began to submit to God as his sovereign Lord.
3. He began to appreciate God as his Supreme treasure.

So you see God's counsel led him into a deeper multifaceted interaction with him. The obvious question here is how do I receive God's counsel? The primary mode by which God counsels us is through his word. I am talking about your Bible, whether a physical Bible or electronic. It is believed that it was David who penned this famous verse in Psalm 119:105

**Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path.**

Paul wrote in 2-Timothy 3:16.

**All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.**

And that's why it's important that you read the Bible every day if possible. If you want God to guide you and to instruct you, but reading the Bible sometimes can be a challenge. There are passages that can be hard to understand, and that's why it is also important you attend Sunday Service every Sunday. Not just for worship and be connected to the body of Christ, but also to listen to the sermon where the word of God is explained and expounded. Often that is still not enough. You will need to join a live group or a gamma group where they go deeper into the word of God. Some live groups, they discuss the previous Sunday sermon. Other groups study selected books of the Bible. Not for the sake of knowledge but in order that God can be their counsel and guide. The deeper you go into the word of God, the better you are guided and led by God that is a guarantee.

The journey of life is often not easy. Like David, we need God to direct our path, to show us the way and to instruct us on how best to live our lives. Now, whenever you read the Bible, whenever the word of God is preached on Sundays, whenever it is studied and taught at the life group, behind all these activities is the Holy Spirit. He is there to illumine our mind and to convict our hearts. The Holy Spirit is also known as the counselor not without a good reason. So, it is through this combination of his word and his spirit that God becomes our trusted counsel as he did to David. This is my prayer and hope that all FBC members and worshipers become diligent students of the Bible, going deeper than ever into the word of God, going deeper than ever in their relationship with God.



For the concluding part of the sermon. I want to take you through from the text, four spiritual dividends that are the outcome of a closer walk with God. Four blessings that are the result of an intimate relationship with him. This was shown earlier, this is the secondary theme of the sermon and so I should touch on then briefly. The four spiritual dividends from Psalm 16;

### 1. Satisfaction and joy

David was completely satisfied in God. He experienced deeply the joy of the Lord. If you will look at the entire text as a whole, you will find many words like delight, joy, pleasure weaved into the verses. So you can sense David's joy bubbling up through the Psalm. He declared exuberantly in verse 9,

Therefore my heart is glad  
and my tongue rejoices..

The joy that David experienced is not the same as happiness. Joy and happiness may be synonyms in the dictionary, but they are different. Happiness is the feeling triggered by something external. Joy on the other hand comes from a deeper place in our soul. Happiness is fleeting, whereas joy is long-lasting. I feel happy when I'm on holiday, but as soon as I get home, things are back to normal and my happiness is no more. Put it in this way, happiness puts a smile on your face while joy puts a smile in your heart. But the face cannot get a smile for too long. The face muscle would get a cramp, but you can experience joy all your life.

More than being happy God wants us to be joyful. Throughout the entire Bible, the word happy or happiness is seen only about 30 times, but the word joy or joyful appears about 250 times. So, the question is, do you want this joy that comes from a close walk with God? Do you want to be joyful like David was?

### 2. Security and Safety

This is based on our first point in the earlier part of the sermon. Because God was his refuge from verse 1, David was able to experience confidence and calm whenever the road of life got bumpy. He had his share of troubles in life, but in place of fear and anxiety he felt a sense of security and safety in God. He knew that God would shield him in the face of danger just like how we shielded Melody in the moment of fear in Disneyland. Time and again in David psalms, he described God as a shield. In verse 5 of our texts, he affirms,

...You make my lot secure.

He also writes in verse 8.

I keep my eyes always on the LORD.  
With Him at my right hand,  
I will not be shaken.

When David writes, I keep my eyes always on the LORD. It's the way of saying I'm sticking close to God. And hence the next line with Him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Conversely, when you look away from God, when He is not by your side, the ground beneath you will shake. Don't be like Peter in Matthew 14 when he and the disciples were in the sea of Galilee, he stepped out of the boat, but instead of focusing on Jesus, he was too preoccupied with a strong wind around him and he started to sink. Sometimes we hear the phrase, that sinking feeling, it is associated with fear. The further we are from God, the greater the fear. The nearer we are to God, the fear subsides.

In Matthew 8, there is another incident when Jesus was with his disciples in a boat in the sea of Galilee, when they were caught in the furious storm. The disciples were overcome with fear when they actually had nothing to fear. Jesus rebuked them, you of little faith. Why are you so afraid? If our life were a ship or a boat, may we find safety in God's harbor, when the sea out there is raging with high waves and strong wind. Even if your boat is caught in an angry sea, just as the Sunday School song goes with Christ in the vessel we can smile at a storm. Again the question is, do you want this security and safety that comes from knowing God intimately.

### 3. Supply And Provision

David writes in verse five,

**LORD, You alone are my portion and my cup.**

Now this needs explanation. What does David mean my portion and my cup? Many translations have the first spot as the portion of my inheritance with allusions to the inheritance of land and this is supported by verse six, where we see again the word inheritance. The word cup here is harder to understand. The metaphor of cup in the Bible and carry various meanings, from God's wrath to suffering and afflictions. But here from the context, it means the cup of blessings. In fact, some translations render this as my cup of blessing. And hence in full this verse should be read as,

**You alone are my portion of my inheritance and my cup of blessing**

From this angle, what David is really talking about is his physical wellbeing that God would supply his needs. One translation even translated the word cup here as food and drink. David is like saying my God is so good to me that he makes sure that my needs are met. And here we need to be careful because if carried too far it can become Prosperity Gospel. Dr Peter mentioned last Sunday that our approach to God should be relational not transactional. Prosperity Gospel is transactional.

Paul writes in the Philippians 4:19

**My God will supply every need of yours.**

That's what God does. He supplies what we need for the sustenance of life. He meets our needs, not necessarily our wants. What is the difference between a need and a want? Simple, need is food, want is fine dining. God will meet our needs even with a simple meal in a coffee shop, unlikely in a fancy

restaurant and nothing against you if you want to eat in an expensive restaurant just don't forget to invite me. This third dividend is in the context of a heavenly father's care for us, and Jesus further explain in Matthew 6, Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow nor reap and yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than them.

#### 4. Salvation for Eternity.

Towards the end of his Psalm, David writes in verse 10,

*You will not abandon me to the realm of the dead.  
Nor will you let your faithful one see decay*

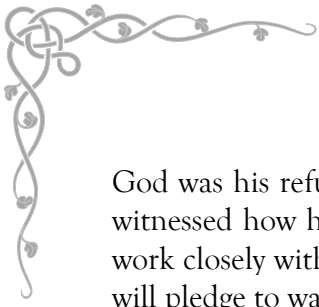
He is talking about what would happen to him after he leaves this world. He is talking about eternal life, while the second dividend is about his preservation during his earthly life. He now writes about his preservation after his death. The realm of the dead here comes from the Hebrew word 'Sheol'. In the New Testament the Greek word for this is Hades. It's the place the departed will go to await the day of resurrection. David was certain that God will not abandon him in sheol. And then after he died, he will be given life again and would be eternally in God's presence at his right hand. And this we see in the last verse,

*You will make known to me the path of life;  
You will fill me with joy in your presence,  
with eternal pleasures at Your right hand.*

It was his blessed hope. It's also our blessed hope. David harbored this supreme confidence that God would grant him an eternal future of joy and pleasure. And once again, this confidence stemmed from his close relationship with God. No, here troubling question may be brewing in your mind, that is if I haven't been walking closely with God, if my relationship with God has been rather shallow, will God still grant me the future described in this verse? In other words, am I still safe if I've kept God at a distance. Now this is a common question of once saved always saved. It's not a question we can answer in one breath, but nonetheless, I've addressed this in one of my sermons in the past. So let me put it this way, for Christians who think there salvation for granted, those who don't take God seriously, the Bible contains plenty of warning versus but for those who harbor doubts about their salvation, those who are not sure, even though they have received Jesus as their savior and Lord, the Bible at the same time offers many verses of assurance.

When the day come, Jesus would say to many I do not know you, but to those whom he knows he promises them the path of joy life, the joy in his presence and eternal pleasures at his right hand as described in verse 11 here, and God always keeps his promises. This is the greatest of the four spiritual dividends in our texts.

**In conclusion**, the main question still remains. **How do we relate to God? How closely do we walk with him?** And we have gone through earlier the four aspects of David's intimate relationship with God. Today the 23rd of May happens to be the birthday of my late father. He would have been 96 this year. All his life

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God was his refuge, his master, his treasure and his counsel. Growing up I witnessed it before my eyes. I witnessed how he walked with God until I left home at the age of 19. 20 years ago, I made a decision to work closely with God, to be like my late father, to emulate what he did and I pray and hope that you too will pledge to walk ever closer with God as David did.