

Well last week Nate finished our Sermon on the Mount study which for me was honestly one of the most life changing studies. I want to be that man that Nate challenged us to be last week - that man that does what Jesus says. I want to be like that man who builds his house on the rock because he believes Jesus, treasures Jesus and obeys Jesus. I think if you were to summarize the challenge of the Sermon on the Mount in a single question it would be this, "Do you treasure Jesus Christ more than anything else?"

Even though we move on from our Sermon on the Mount study, we don't want to move on from the lessons we have learned and so we want to make "Treasuring Christ" our theme for 2017. We made some bookmarks with this theme printed on it. And so we are going to hand these out now. On the front you'll see the actual theme and the verse from which we are taking it. And on the back you'll see our mission statement as a church.

Now the idea behind a church theme is that we want to try and emphasize this theme from different angles through our sermons, our small groups, our camps, our bible studies. It's a way to constantly remind such that this thought works it's way to the front of your mind.

There are several reasons why this themes is appropriate beyond even our study on the Sermon on the Mount:

- We have spent the last few weeks focusing on money and finances. The small groups are going through Randy Alcorns book "The Treasure Principle." We have learned that we should not treasure money. But we don't want to stop there. We want to think in positive terms, we want to remind ourselves of what is truly worth treasuring.
- Lord willing we will be moving into a new building this year. That

represents a big transition. There are tons of details and potential distractions. It helps us focus our eyes in a time of building transition. We never want to treasure a building, a location, any comforts that a new building might bring. We want to treasure Jesus Christ and him alone.

- It is the heartbeat of everything we want to be as a church - mission statement. The second our hearts loose this focus we loose everything.

So that is the reason for our chosen theme. Let's remember that what we choose to treasure is not a side issue. It's the only issue.

There is a saying that says, you are what you eat. There are ways we can eat that bring us health and other foods we can eat that will literally kill us. Our bodies thrive when we drink lots of water, healthy vegetables, organic foods and get exercise. We flourish. But if we drink soda laced with heavy metals, greasy food and never get exercise we wilt. That makes sense. We are what we eat.

Well spiritually speaking, you are what you love - you are what you treasure. God says if you treasure money, God says our eyes will be full of darkness. We will be spiritually sick. Loving idols is the spiritual equivalent of over-eating a non-stop McDonalds diet. We weren't designed to be satisfied with that. Our being was designed to be most healthy, most fulfilled, most joyful when we love and treasure Jesus Christ and him alone. You are what you love. You are what you treasure.

Perhaps you are here today and that principle makes sense to you, but you are not convinced by it. Well then we encourage you to just listen. All through 2017 we are going to lace into our sermons, small groups and camps and try and make the argument of why you should treasure Jesus Christ.

And to kick that off, today we are going to start a short mini series in the Psalms the first of which is Psalm 16, a Psalm of David where we are listening to a private prayer where he explains why he treasures God. It's really a testimony. It's very personal. Let's listen to David's testimony of why he treasures Christ.

"A Miktam of David. 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" (Psalm 16).

This is a perfect Psalm to simultaneously introduce our series but also our theme for the year because in this Psalm David gives us five reasons why Christ is his treasure. Let's try to think David's thoughts after him, and feel his affections with him as he moves through Psalm 16. So let's consider each of these reasons. David says

1. I Treasure Christ because he is the source of good.

David says, I have no good apart from you. That is a confession. It's a confession of source. David is saying, goodness only has one source. Imagine living in a desert community with a single well. For hundreds of miles in all directions there is nothing but sand. But you survive because of that single well in the center of the city. Now let's say you are out in the field working and you are sweating like crazy and somebody comes to you and hands a glass of water out of kindness, you would know exactly where that water came from. There's only one possible source. It came from the well. It came from the source.

That's what David is saying. I know the source of goodness and it's not me. I might drink water and the water might be in me but it didn't come from me. I might have goodness in me but it didn't come from me. I have no good apart from you. Picture here a well from which goodness is drawn. If there is goodness in me, it is deposited there by God. It certainly didn't originate with me.

God is the Source of Good in Me

We all can recognize goodness. A believer, an unbeliever. We can sense goodness. And we aren't even talking here about explicitly Christian things. Just good things we see in others

- An artist is a good gift to society. A musician is a good gift to the world. A scholar or an amazing statesman is a good gift to our culture.
- A smile is good. When someone greets you with a giant warm smile, that is good. You can sense that.
- A self-forgetful athlete who wins is good. I remember watching this year's Olympics and I can't even remember the event but I watched this guy who worked really hard and overcame all odds and for the love of the sport he won a bronze medal. And he was just flipping out with excitement. It was so fun to watch how pumped he was. He was high fiving the guy who won gold. His love of the sport and his excitement stole the spotlight. That's good.
- A self-sacrificing man is good. A guy who gives for his employees or gives for his family or gives for his neighbors. We see that in others and recognize it as good.

Goodness in mankind is beautiful. But where did it come from? David says, when I trace goodness, when I try to discern the place from which that goodness came, I can't take credit for it - it didn't come from me.

When I look at the good in me, I trace it to you. You again are the origin of it. I didn't come up with it. The initial cause wasn't me. The causes that well up within me are anything but commendable. I am the cause of selfishness, bitterness, jealousy. But you are the source of goodness.

Just yesterday there was an example of this in my life that was so

simple and innocent but simultaneously so stinging. My wife and I were sitting in one of the rooms in our house that was cold. And we were talking and we had this little space heater there. And as we are talking I subconsciously reach down and point the space heater at me. I did it without even thinking. And she looks at me like, "That was rude." And I wanted to defend myself. "I did it without thinking. I seriously had no idea I even did that." But that's the point. That's what comes out of me naturally. If I don't work on it. If I don't force myself to think about it, what naturally emerges out of me is not goodness.

If you were to convert David's statement here to a mathematical equation it would be $Me - God = no\ good$. If I subtract God out of my life, I remove all good.

Practically what does this mean? It means we need to like David, praise God for the good we see in ourselves. This is harder than it might seem. Because we have been rightly trained to fear pride we will often downplay true goodness in ourselves. And in a sense that is okay. If someone says to you, "Man I was so blessed by your generosity. I was so encouraged by the way you helped out this weekend. I was so blessed by your encouraging words" what is the way we typically respond? We tend to downplay it. But a better response is to give God the credit for the goodness in us.

For sure it would be prideful to take credit for the goodness of God in us. But hiding the goodness of God in us is not necessarily humility. Sometimes it takes more humility to admit the goodness of God in you and to vocalize it's source than to simply dismiss it. To say not with swamy humility, "Oh it wasn't me, it was God in me." But to really take the time to explain that God is so good to transform what I love and change my desires. And I really see how good he is in

helping me. We need to be like David and say, "All the good in me comes from God.

So if all the goodness comes from God and you see a lack of goodness in yourself or in your kids or in your spouse, where do you need to turn? You need to turn to the source. It's so easy to bark at yourself and say, be good. Stop doing that. Start being kinder. But you can't. You don't generate kindness or goodness or patience or tenderness or self-control? Where do those things come from? From the Spirit of God. They are fruits of the Spirit not fruits of the self.

So part of asking is confessing. I confess Lord, I am not the source. Apart from you there is not goodness in me. Therefore, I ask for you to give me more of your goodness. Notice even in the first line this relationship between petition and confession. I confess that you are my refuge. I confess that you are the place of safety, therefore I ask, preserve me.

God is the Source of Good in Others

Not only does he see the goodness of God in himself. He sees it in the saints as well.

"As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight."

David says, the saints are the ones in whom he delights. Now why? Does David delight in God's people because they are somehow magically free of the sins and problems that the rest of humanity is forced to deal with? No, God's people struggle with all the same non-good. No, he delights in God's people because they all love the

same good. They collectively treasure Christ, the source of good.

Is this not what makes close friends? Are you not close with those who love the same things you love? Do you not delight in those people who call the same things good and the same things evil. Do you not feel distant with those who call evil good and good evil? David says, these guys are my friends because we love the same things.

This is one of the best parts about traveling the world and seeing the church across the globe. You realize that no matter where you go, no matter what language they speak, no matter how crazy different the dress and the mannerisms, with any Christian on planet earth, we share a bond. We share a love of the same good. We share a closeness that can be stronger than family. If you have unbelieving parents, you can probably say that the church in some ways feels more like family than even your own parents. Why? Because there is a shared understanding and love of the source of all good.

And I actually ask you to analyze your friendships this way. Do you love your friends because there is a shared love of Jesus Christ, because you treasure Christ together or are there other loves that hold you close? If Christ is rarely part of your conversation with your friends then there must be other loves upon which that friendship is built.

1. I Treasure Christ because he is the source of good.

2. I Treasure Christ because treasuring other gods brings sorrow.

This is point drawn from comparison. David is acknowledging here that not everyone is going to agree that God is the source of good. There are many that disagree.

- Some might say, I don't agree. God is not the source of all good. There are ways of experiencing good outside of God. I disagree. I think good can come from within me.
- Some might say that power and ambition are good.
- Some might say sex is the real good.
- Some might say that beauty is the only good in the world.
- Some might say that sport or recreation is the good we should be after.

And that is fine David says. In one sense, who am I to tell you what is good. But let's compare. Where does your pursuit of good lead? If you run after your god, the thing you say is good, what is the result? Let's compare the claim of goodness based on the results of those who run after them.

"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." (Psa 16:4 ESV)

What he is saying is that there is sorrow in the hearts of those who run after other gods. Run out the lives of those who parse God out of their existence, who try to make a case for goodness without God. How is that working for them? David says, when I look, I see sorrow.

That word sorrow is a good word. It's talking about something deep, something heavily unsettling at the worldview level. What source of satisfaction exists for those who don't have God in their lives.

David says the sorrows multiply. Why because with every new pursuit, the problems increase. Let's say you sell out to money. Money is your god. Well, you have to sacrifice something to pursue this god. So you sacrifice your family. You sacrifice your health. But it didn't turn out like you had hoped. Money didn't deliver on it's happiness promise. So now you don't have happiness and you don't have your family or health. That is a multiplication of sorrows.

Or lets say you sell out to travel and experiencing the world and nature. The multiplication of experiences is your god. You can't have kids because they get in the way of that pursuit. And you can't really focus on a career because that is limiting so everything is about seeing the next cool thing and visiting the next awesome place. Well, there is diminishing returns here. There are only so many cool things to see and do in the world. And pretty soon, they aren't as cool as they once were. Your god didn't deliver so you don't have happiness, you don't have a family because now it's too late, you can't really make it in your career.

Or lets say you sell out to sports. What happens when you win it all?

Remember Michael Phelps and his story. He was in a low, low, low place.

David looks at all that and says, "The sorrow of those who treasure other gods multiply." By contrast the more I treasure you Lord, the more I am satisfied.

That's a multiplication of problems.

1. I Treasure Christ because he is the source of good.
2. I Treasure Christ because treasuring other gods brings sorrow.
3. I Treasure Christ because he offers security.

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. (Psa 16:5-6 ESV)

What he is saying, is that of all the things to treasure, of all the God's to follow, of all the loves to love, I choose you Lord. The Lord is my portion. Picture life as a giant cake. You can't have it all. You have to choose something. What slice will you choose? What will you make your life about? What will you choose to be known for? An athlete? A successful executive? An artist? A musician? An

academic? All these possible options. What will you choose? David says, the Lord is my chosen portion. I want to be known as a follower of Jesus Christ.

And in choosing Jesus as your Lord there is this amazing security. And David comments on that. He says, "you hold my lot." You are the only one that holds the keys to what gives me value and identity and purpose and happiness.

By contrast, if I had chosen sports as my lot who would be holding the keys to it? My lot, my investment, my portion, my total value is held in this account called athleticism. Is that account secure? Who has the keys to that account. Who ensures that it maintains its value? There are many key holders. I am one. I have to train hard and eat the right foods so that I can have a competitive edge. That's important. But who else has keys? Anyone or anything that could change the value that I bring as an athlete. Age is a constant threat. Injury is a constant threat. More talented athletes are a constant threat. My physical size and weight are a constant threat. Do you see how little control you have and how insecure you if your chosen lot is athleticism. No matter how talented, you will one day vanish off the scene. It's over for you.

But David says, God holds my lot. There is only one keyholder and God is holding it secure. He compares putting his trust in the Lord to an inheritance. David says, "The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance." Assume you are heir to 7 million dollars. You might say, "The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places." Why? Because you recognize that you did nothing to get in that position. You were simply born. You did nothing to receive and you can do nothing to undo it. That is security. And it is this kind of security that can be the experience of those who choose

Jesus Christ as their lot and portion.

There is so much security in being a child of God. And David just rejoices in that security. I'm not worried about the wrinkles in my skin or the pain in my joints or the politics of our nation or the balance in my bank account because God holds my lot secure. God holds the keys to what I really care about and what gives me value. I am secure in him.

1. I Treasure Christ because he is the source of good.
2. I Treasure Christ because treasuring other gods brings sorrow.
3. I Treasure Christ because he offers security.
4. I Treasure Christ because he guides me.

"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." (Psa 16:7-8 ESV)

David is saying I treasure Christ because it is Christ that gives me direction in life. When do we normally need this direction and counsel and guidance? Not when things are easy, but when they are hard. When the path forward is unknown.

David says, in the night you instruct me. That might be a reference

to the time of day at night when he is sleeping on his bed he is thinking of the Lord, but more likely that's referencing his situation. In the darkness, in the night, in adversity, in times when there is most uncertainty, it is then that you instruct me.

What college do I go to Lord?

Lord, how do I get out of this financial nightmare? What university job do I take? How do I speak to my children about this hard topic? How do I make progress in my marriage that has stagnated? How do I deal with these unknown health challenges? What should I do with my friend who isn't responding to you?

We need God's guidance and instruction when we are tossed and confused. When life does not make sense. There's a somewhat parallel thought from David in Psalm 73 where he speaks of a type of confusion he was in. He looked at the rich and the wealthy and powerful and he envied them. David was scrolling the Facebook of his day and he sees all the vacation photos and the lifestyle of these people who are having such a great time and he says, "Why don't I ever get to do that? Why do they get all the privileges and money and recognition. All I get is trials and difficulty. All I get is suffering. It's not fair."

When my soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart, I
was brutish and ignorant; I was
like a beast toward you.

Psalm 73:21–26

Nevertheless, I am continually
with you; you hold my right
hand. You guide me with your
counsel, and afterward you will
receive me to glory.

Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth
that I desire besides you.

My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my
heart and my portion forever.

"When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart, I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you. A beast doesn't look forward in time or take into account future realities. He just reacts in the moment with whatever is in front of him.

David looked at these guys and he envied them. He was like a beast just responding in the moment. He didn't acknowledge God as part of the equation. It's more like our expression a dumb ox. He was looking at the situation narrowly and stupidly like a dumb ox. But look at what happens in that dark situation. David says,

"Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand."

Picture a child reaching out his hand and being led by his father. This is the idea. [kaylia help]

"You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Psalm 73:21-26).

That is exactly what David is saying in this passage. I treasure you Lord because you guide me like a child. You hold my hand. If I simply follow you, if I simply do what you say, if I simply surrender my idea of happiness and joy. If I simply acknowledge the source of goodness. If I simply just give you full control of the wheel I am so happy. This in fact becomes David's conclusion

Because God is the source of good and because other gods will just result in sorrow and because this good God is offers eternal security and because he guides me. He says THEREFORE....

"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."

Treasuring Christ ultimately brings us joy. Our mission statement reads, "We exist to glorify God by pointing the affections of all-peoples to the all-satisfying person of Jesus Christ."

In other words we believe that Jesus Christ objectively satisfies the human soul. That when you choose to desire him, when you seek after him, when you search him, when you love him, you will be satisfied. You will be able to say with the psalmist, "my heart is glad."

Happiness is proportional to the proximity of our love. If a boy loves his girl but is distant from her, he will not be happy. But if he is in her presence he is happy. David says, in your presence Lord there is fullness of Joy.

This is really a testimony. It's an argument from experience. All of us are on a quest for happiness. This is the single motive of every man in every decision he ever makes. We are always at all times seeking happiness and joy.

Here David is. He had tried a lot of things.

- He had experienced the thrill of military conquest.
- He experienced the thrill of killing wild animals in an adrenaline rush experience.
- He was a skilled musician.
- He was stupid wealthy.
- He had attendants.
- He was the greatest king that Israel ever had.
- He had multiple wives.
- He even took a wife that wasn't his and tasted the risky waters of

adultery.

- He had sons and daughters born to him

Here's a guy who has tried it all. Here's a guy who knows what is possible to experience under the sun. And what is his experience regarding where joy can be found? He says, the Lord my God brings me joy. In your presence God is fullness of joy.

Now in 2017 our theme is Treasuring Christ. We've talked about 5 reasons David treasures Christ.

1. I Treasure Christ because he is the source of good.
2. I Treasure Christ because treasuring other gods brings sorrow.
3. I Treasure Christ because he offers security.
4. I Treasure Christ because he guides me.
5. I Treasure Christ because he brings me joy.

Can you agree with those statements. Let's take a moment to ask that God work those realities into your heart. If you don't treasure Christ perhaps the first prayer is Lord would you show me that you are worthy of me valuing you above everything else. If you treasure Christ but want to treasure him more perhaps the prayer is, God I want you to become more valuable to me.