

You Will Not Abandon My Soul

The Psalm for the Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost is Psalm 16. It is a prayer for safekeeping, pleading for the Lord's protection against the threat of death. It could also be called a psalm of trust.

Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge. ²I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.” ³As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight. ⁴The 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. ⁵The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. ⁶The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. ⁷I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. ⁸I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. ⁹Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. ¹⁰For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. ¹¹You 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 elaborates on one of the key thoughts of Psalm 15, namely, dwelling with God. This psalm describes the security and eternal life of God's Holy One. This is a Messianic psalm which refers first of all to the resurrection of Christ, by which he conquered death for us. However, we can also use this psalm as our personal prayer, because Christ has won all the blessing of this psalm for us. (PBC)

The first verse expresses confidence in God's ability to save even as it cries out for help and sets the tone for the entire psalm.

All through the entire psalm are peppered actions that are ascribed to the Lord's protection. It begins with the word "Lord" which means Covenant God and Keeper. They contrast mightily with the idols that others worship. The expressions of confidence follow below:

You are my Lord...I have no good apart from you...the Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you are my lot...I have a beautiful inheritance...he is at my right hand I shall not be shaken...my heart is glad and my whole being rejoices, my flesh also dwells secure...you will not abandon my soul...you make known to me the path of life...in your presence there is fullness of joy...at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

We who are in Christ have been set at God's right hand, where we can never be removed. As Christians, we can join the psalmist in praising the Lord for all the actions of protection that the psalmist's expresses in this psalm.

Prayer: Lord, keep us in your presence throughout our earthly pilgrimage, that we may come to the fullness of your joy in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected Lord. Amen. (TLSB)