

“...Delight Yourself...”

Have you heard Christians say “God will give you the desires of your heart”? They are citing Scripture, even if they are quoting only the second half of the verse. The whole verse of Psalm 37: 4 reads: “Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.”

How the Lord gives us the desires of our hearts hinges on how we delight ourselves in him. First comes our delighting in the Lord; then comes his giving us our heart’s desires. Our heart’s desire should be the result of our heart’s delight.

God’s desire is that our relationship with him be mutually delightful.

And when does he delight in me? When I obey him with all my heart. When I please him and serve him faithfully.

But there is more. "...the Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love" (Psalm 147:11).

"He delights in those whose ways are blameless" (Proverbs 11:20).

"The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in people who are truthful" (Proverbs 12:22).

“... but let him who boasts boast that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth.

For in these things I delight, declares the LORD” (Jeremiah 9:24).

What does it mean to delight ourselves in the Lord? How do we do it?

David says to the Lord: “You have given me my heart’s desires.”

And what were King David’s desires? If you read nothing more than just the 119th Psalm, you will discover that David’s desires added up to nothing more and nothing less than to know God, to love God and to fulfill God’s word.

Our desires should be what is appropriate for a child of God. Our new nature does not crave the wrong things. A godly person never entertains desires that don’t glorify God.

It’s so easy to read 1 John 5:14 like this: “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask for anything, he hears us.” But the verse actually says: “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

Our Father in heaven wants us to pray the way Jesus prayed: "Father... not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

Delight yourself in what, in whom? In the Lord! Seek and find your fulfillment in him.

How are we different from worldly people? The world wants things; we want the Lord. The Lord doesn’t want to be simply our provider; above all, he wants an enjoyable

relationship with us. We need to be more interested in his person than in his provisions.

And why should we take pleasure in the Lord himself? Because he is our life – physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. Without him, we are nothing; we can do nothing.

We enjoy the Lord because he is desirable, exhilarating, wonderful, good... Because we are fulfilled, complete in him. We have everything in him. If he is our heart's desire, he will take care of our necessities. More than giving us things, God gives himself to us: his presence, his power, his love, his joy, his guidance, his direction, his control.

We delight in God's wonderful works, his deeds and his amazing salvation.

"I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels" (Isaiah 61:10).

Sometimes, all this may be difficult to do, especially if you suffer from a physical condition such as bipolar disorder, chemical imbalance or clinical depression.

You probably should address these psychosomatic needs first. In the meantime, however, allow the Lord to use your illness to help you grow in your faith and in your love for him.

But at the same time, all of us have some sort of handicap; yet, we all have the wonderful possibility of developing in the area of delighting ourselves in the Lord, and he in us. ◇◇