



Delighting in the Lord

“Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart” (Psalm 37:4, KJV).

Does that sound like an offer you can't refuse? God's Word is filled with amazing promises—too good to let pass. That's because we have an amazing and good God. It is difficult to imagine not taking God up on this promise. Even the premise to the promise is a “delightful” one. Yet some refuse not only this offer but also God's offer of forgiveness of sins and eternal life with Him to those who accept His Son, Jesus, as Lord and Savior—the best offer ever!

God is good. He delights in His obedient children, and He desires that we delight in Him. The result is that He will give us the desires of our hearts.

To delight in the Lord is not difficult most of the time. Occasionally, when we are down or depressed, it may seem difficult to do at first. Those times are exactly when we need to delight ourselves in the Lord. It has the same effect as praise. Our hearts are lifted as we begin to delight ourselves in God.

What exactly do we do to delight ourselves in the Lord? In the natural, what do people do when they delight in something or someone? For example, I delight in my dog. My daughter thinks I love my dog better than I love her. That's not true, but I feel a little silly acting toward her like I act toward my dog. I am basically a reserved person—something I probably should overcome, and I have worked on that some. However, I may have overdone it with my dog—Queenie. But that's one example.

Some of us delight in a certain sport or a television program. When we talk about those things, our faces brighten and become more expressive. The pitch of our voice rises. We talk

non-stop about them when the subject comes up, and we bring up the subject often. We may become very animated as we talk, and we will put other things on hold in order to watch that program or to go to that sporting event.

When we delight ourselves in God, we can focus on His greatness, kindness, love, compassion, faithfulness, mercy, graciousness, holiness, patience and so on. If that is not enough, there are the things He does—He provides, protects, guides, helps, comforts, leads, instructs, forgives, heals, delivers, disciplines, warns and much more.

He's the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (see Isaiah 9:6). He is The Way, The Truth, and The Life (see John 10:6). He's the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end (see Revelation 1:8). We can talk about these things to ourselves (this is great self-talk) and to others. We can seek opportunities to be in His presence and to be with others who also delight in Him.

Throughout the Psalms are scattered numerous examples of how to delight in God. One example is when David wrote, “I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord’” (Psalm 122:1, NASB). David also wrote, “I delight to do Your will, O my God” (Psalm 40:8, NASB). Again, in Psalm 119:47, David said, “I shall delight in Your commandments, Which I love.”

The human soul searches for something—or someone—to delight in. Man's efforts to escape life's pressures have led to a multitude of distractions and potential pleasures. There are hundreds of TV channels. There's the internet—a wealth of information as well as communication, and there are games of all types. If none of these

seems sufficient, there are sports, clothes, food, and relationships. Pressured, thirsty and hungry souls today have much to choose from.

God created us with this soul need, and He knows how to supply it. About 2,500 years ago, God spoke through Isaiah the prophet who wrote:

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; And you who have no money, come, buy and eat!

Come buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, And your labor on what does not satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, And your soul will delight in the richest of fare.

Give ear and come to me; Hear me, that your soul may live” (Isaiah 55:1-3, NIV).

While this passage speaks specifically to God’s people Israel, whom He was calling back to relationship with Him, it clearly has implications for today. Our soul was made to delight in the Lord and thus to prosper and flourish. (I am not saying anything is wrong with participating in some of life’s fun things. They, however, are not significant nourishment for the soul.)

Closely connected to delighting is rejoicing. Paul wrote in Philippians 4:4, “Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.” God knows it is good for us to rejoice even when things are not going well—maybe especially then. Scripture says, “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine” (Proverbs 17:22). It is almost impossible to maintain negative thoughts while delighting in the Lord.

Remember, the Word of God is alive and powerful. I have experienced the power of today’s verse to significantly change my mood when I began to speak it—either aloud or in my heart. I know the Lord impressed me to write on this particular verse because I needed it. Maybe you as well will experience the power of this verse to work within you when the enemy is trying to depress or discourage you. Try it! **SH**

GOD’S WORD FOR TODAY

Teaching Letter 10

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