

FOUNDER OF DAUGHTER OF DELIGHT

ELLE CARDEL

# She Delights



CULTIVATE  
A LIFE OF JOY  
FOR THE ONE  
WHO REIGNS  
& SUSTAINS

Elle does an incredible job taking what we know to be true of Scripture and unpacking each truth for women in an applicable way. *She Delights* will not only deepen the way you pursue your faith but will also shift the way you want to share Jesus with others, reminding you that what you find within the depths of God's Word is what you can without a doubt tether your life to.

CHELSEY DEMATTEIS

Author of *More of Him, Less of Me: Living a Christ-Centered Life in a Me-Centered World*

Page after page, Elle encourages the reader to fix her eyes solely on God. In a world constantly promoting self-gratification, *She Delights* is a breath of fresh air, calling for God-centered glorification without apology. This is a book every Christian woman, regardless of age or season in life, will benefit greatly from. My prayer is that no reader will walk away without a deeper sense of delight for who God is and who He has made us in Christ.

KRISTINA WILLIS

Creator of @FaithfulFootprints

How do we find delight instead of disillusionment on the pages of Scripture? Elle pioneers joy amid suffering and hardship, revealing how God's offer of love and joy endures in every hard season. Elle's captivating storytelling and fresh perspective on various aspects of the Christian journey, such as Scripture reading, community, prayer, and navigating suffering, are delivered with purpose and will inspire everyone to walk with joy.

MIKELLA VAN DYKE

Author and founder of *Chasing Sacred*

From the very beginning, this book brings a weighty excitement as it takes you on a journey toward delighting in God and receiving the freedom that comes with delight. Carefully written and prayed over, *She Delights* has beautiful depth to it. Elle's encouragement to women about how to be a daughter of delight, with relatable struggles and wise application of God's Word, is a must-read.

MEGAN EDMONDS

Founder of She Lives Purposefully

For those immersed in hardship, this book is the lifeline you've been searching for. Elle's unyielding faith in Jesus resonates with a raw intensity that pierces the soul. Through her vulnerable and grounded biblical teachings, she invites readers to draw closer to the Father's heart and deepen their trust in Him. *She Delights* isn't just a book—it's a rallying cry, urging us to anchor ourselves in the unwavering strength of God's embrace amid life's toughest battles.

BRITTANY MAHER

Bestselling author, founder, and president of Her True Worth

In *She Delights*, Elle asks the question "Can you relate?" to acknowledge that we all, in some way, want to do better living out our faith. The reality is, I could relate to the whole book. Not only is Elle's writing relatable; she also addresses the daily questions and struggles we all face. Then she eloquently smothers them in biblical truth and gives practical ways to delight in the Lord in a real, deep way of knowing Him more. I'm on the other side of her words, feeling inspired to seek, study, be rooted in, and *delight* more in Christ every day. I believe you will be too once you read this book. (Chapter 4 was my favorite!)

SARAH MOLITOR

Creator of Modern Farmhouse Family and bestselling author of *Well Said*

*She Delights*



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# *Introduction*

I was sitting in one of my theology classes during my junior year of college when the Lord seized my attention and made it clear I was to pursue ministry in the online space.

I had no idea what to do with this. I had never experienced a calling from out of the blue until that very moment, so I was completely caught off guard.

I can remember the voice of my professor becoming muffled, like the teacher from Charlie Brown, as I began questioning internally what, exactly, had just happened . . . even though I already knew.

The Lord had, very clearly, invited me into a God-sized dream.

I was overwhelmed and intimidated at first, and, truth be told, I pushed it away for as long as possible. Ultimately, however, it got to the point where I could no longer live as if God had not impressed it on my heart. It became clear that what was really holding me back was the fact that I was more concerned with what others would think than I was with obeying my Father in heaven. This was a painful but also humbling realization. I am thankful the Lord opened my eyes to this truth,

however, because realizing the root of my hesitation meant I could surrender it.

This dream felt so much bigger than me, and it *is*. In fact, God intended for it to be. He desired to make more of Christ through me, and this was not something I could do alone. Attempting to pursue this dream while leaving out the One who invited me into it would have resulted in only one thing: failure. The Lord intended for me to depend on Him every step of the way. Before I knew it, the beginning of my grand online ministry adventure began. Stepping out was an act of obedience—a leap of faith. I had no idea what the next steps should look like, but I knew that God would be faithful to guide me and reveal the path set before me as He saw fit. And He surely was faithful, both then and now, ten years later.

This God-sized dream evolved into what is now known as Daughter of Delight. If you are unfamiliar with Daughter of Delight, it is a global online ministry for women of faith to come and be encouraged and edified by the truths of God's Word through gospel-based resources.

When I first embarked on this grand adventure with the Lord, Instagram filters were still all the rage. Do you remember that? (Amaro was my favorite!)

There were no videos, no carousel posts, not even Instagram Stories. No music or cute noises to add to a post. Just a square-shaped picture with the option to slap a filter on it and pair it with a caption.

Those were the days . . . (If you know, you know!)

All that to say, as much as things have changed with social media, the Lord's faithfulness has remained unchanged. And as much as I have wrestled with being in online ministry, the Lord has always been present and faithful to supply my every need. He

has been faithful, through and through. It has been such a sanctifying journey, and I'm beyond humbled that the Lord would see fit to invite me into something so beautiful for His name's sake. This journey has blessed me beyond measure.

If you had told me when I first got started that the Lord would grow Daughter of Delight in the ways that He has, I would not have believed you. I remain in awe of what He has done, is doing, and will do. Praise be to His glorious name!

God has stored up an archive of truths in my heart over the course of my faith walk and ministry experience, but there has been one folder in particular that has taken its sweet and perfect time filling up, and I have both wrestled with and enjoyed the process. That folder contains the message you will find in the pages of this book.

I knew years before writing this book that I would, one day, write it.

I thought it was time when I had a handful of publishers reach out to me in 2020 inquiring whether I would be interested in writing a book. As dreamy and exciting as these meetings were, the peace to move forward simply was not there.

The peace was coming, just not yet.

Soon after my meetings with publishers, I discovered I was pregnant. I was beyond excited! Before I knew it, though, I was so sick I could hardly lift my head. The first trimester quickly zapped all my energy, and most days my excitement centered around eating Popsicles (one of the only things I could keep down) and making images out of the textures of the popcorn ceiling in the bedroom. By the time the sickness passed and I was starting to feel like myself again (hello, second trimester!), my husband, Michael, and I received some very difficult news.

Our beautiful daughter, Selah (SAY-luh), due in November

2021, would be born with a single-ventricle heart, among other heart defects. This meant she would have to undergo open-heart surgery just days after she was born. The moment she entered the world would mark the moment she stepped foot on her own personal battlefield.

The first three months of Selah's life were filled with more open-heart surgeries than we anticipated, and we nearly lost her a handful of times too. She has, undoubtedly, endured more suffering than many people will in a lifetime.

I felt her suffering as if it were my own. In some ways, it was.

Suffering is not easy, and that is an understatement. However, as Michael and I watched Selah fight for her life during those first three months in the hospital, we came to recognize the ways in which God was using her story and revealing His glory to us and others along the way. We knew, without a doubt, He was with us in this, sustaining us with our every breath.

Once we were finally homeward bound with our beautiful miracle, the rhythms of normalcy set in and so did the peace. You know, the peace that made it abundantly clear it was time to write. In fact, when I sat down to put my proposal together, the vision and message for this book poured out of me.

There is no doubt in my mind this season of suffering was the very thing waiting between me and this book. It was the missing piece—the one final chapter—I needed in order to properly and faithfully complete this project. Because although this has been the most difficult season of my life, it has not been without refining hope. The Lord has done a *mighty* work not just in Selah's heart but also in my own.

As we embrace the call to delight in the Lord together throughout the pages of this book, I pray you would find great joy in the truth that God delights in ruling and reigning in our

hearts, in sustaining us not just sometimes but all the time. In the good, the bad, and the seemingly mundane, He is always there.

I am so thankful to have the opportunity to share these truths with you in a special way, but before you dive in, please know this:

- These are truths I believe but do not always practice.
- I fall short. Every single day.
- I desire the things of this world.
- I neglect the Word.
- I entertain thoughts I should not.
- I question God's perfect timing.

The list goes on. I get so frustrated with myself and cannot help but wonder why I am the way I am sometimes.

Thankfully, Paul reminds me I am not alone in this. Even he, an apostle of Jesus, struggled with feeling like this! In Romans 7:15, Paul writes, "I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate" (NLT).

Words cannot express how much relief this brings to my weary soul.

When you look at me, and when you look at yourself, I want you to see the miraculous gift of sanctification (see Hebrews 10:14 and Philippians 2:13).

My sister, as we live in the time between Christ's resurrection and return, we are in the process of being sanctified by our Father in heaven, of being conformed to the image of Christ. The more we pour into our relationship with the Lord, the more we will come to recognize the idols we have filled our hearts with, the more we will grow in our desire to repent of our sin and turn away from choosing culture over Christ, the more we will grow

## SHE DELIGHTS

in our desire to be holy and imitate Christ in all we do, and the more we will delight in and live in obedience to God's Word.

When we fall short—which we will—God's grace will be there to carry us through (see Romans 5:20-21). For “he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

*Hallelujah!*

As we dive into the disciplines of delight together, I pray you would be encouraged, challenged, and motivated by God's glory. I pray your understanding of God and your love for knowing Him through His Word would thrive!

May we delight in the One who first delighted in us and is worthy of our every praise, always.

May we live as the Father's daughters of delight!

CHAPTER 1

*Delight Defined*



Have you ever read Psalm 37:4, “Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart,” and wondered what a life of delight actually entails?

I remember the excitement that washed over me when I read this verse for the very first time. I was instantly convinced life was about to become so much sweeter due to my newfound belief that God wanted to bless me with “the desires of my heart” as long as I followed in the footsteps of Christ. This line of thought made it easy for me to question why there were people in the world who did not follow God.

I mean, if He gives us the things we want when we follow Him, what do we have to lose? That’s what the verse means, right?

Wrong.

You see, at the time I first encountered this verse, I lacked the proper tools needed to read, study, and apply Scripture in a way that edified me and yielded glory to our almighty, everlasting God. Because of this, my spiritually immature self entertained the surface-level and false belief that as long as I was on my best behavior and did good, the Lord would reward me with the ever-changing things of the world my sinful flesh desired.

Sadly, a large portion of my childhood centered around this twisted ideology of who God was. If you have been there, done that, then you know it can only result in one thing: a very unhealthy, guilt-filled relationship with the Lord.

My false ideologies eventually morphed into a point reward system that determined how well-off my relationship with God was. In my eyes, as long as I was scoring well on the charts I had personally created, God's delight in me was bursting at the seams. My successes were my way of leveling up and inching closer to receiving the things my flesh desired as a "good job" reward from my Father in heaven.

As you can imagine, when things were not going well, I was a terrified puddle of emotions. This self-focused system of winning God's approval that I concocted for myself had me living in a constant state of both fear and pride. It felt good to level my way up in God's eyes, but it was always so short lived.

Any time I made a mistake—which, might I add, was often—I found myself bearing the unnecessary and incredibly heavy weight of believing God's acceptance of me depended on what I could and could not do in my own strength. In high school, this belief centered on my grades. I was determined to graduate at the top of my class, and I refused to take anything less than college prep and honors courses. Add to the list marching band (yeah, I was a band geek), cross-country, National Honor Society, and a job at

Sonic, and I was at the top of my game. Except not really, because it was extremely difficult and exhausting to keep it all up. I was drowning in commitments and hours of homework every day.

Each morning I was up at 5:45 for school. Three days a week, I had a three-hour break after school and before marching band practice to do my homework—that is, if I did not have cross-country practice or responsibilities with the National Honor Society. When my twelve-plus-hour day at school ended, I would get home after nine to eat dinner, finish the homework I'd been unable to get to, and go to bed somewhere around 10:30 or 11:00. Two days a week, I rushed home from school to get dressed for my shift at Sonic, which ended at 7:00. Then I would come home, shower, eat dinner, and do all my homework.

With every mistake I made, whether it was a grade I disapproved of, not finishing all my homework the night beforehand and therefore having to rush to complete it during lunch the next day, missing an after-school club meeting, or getting a poor time on one of my cross-country runs, I would find myself in the cycle of self-recrimination. It felt a lot like falling into a dark hole, helpless—and confident that God wanted nothing to do with the many ways I was falling short. It was a weight God never intended for me to bear, but I simply had no idea.

I was so young and struggling internally in so many ways.

Oh, how I wish I would have known this weight was not mine to bear.

Living like this distracted me from feasting on the freedom Christ's sacrifice made way for me to enjoy. It kept me from my seat at the table. Instead of feeding my weary soul the nourishment it needed, I feasted on lies. Instead of walking in the truth that my Father's approval of me was by grace alone, I chased after the ways I thought I could "balance the scales" and gain back

His approval. Instead of trusting in God's holy, infallible Word, I trusted my fallible self.

I look back now and can clearly see that I was running after the exact opposite of freedom. I was a lost and lonely prisoner, held captive by my own thoughts, running my way through a maze I did not belong in with no end in sight, hoping, like a hungry little mouse, I would turn the corner and find the cheese—

the prize of God's approval. And the only one pleased by my misguided and destructive theology was Satan.

In order to escape the maze once and for all, I needed the sight I did not have. Rather than viewing things

through my own lens, I needed to put on the lens of Christ by reading and studying the Word correctly. I needed to pivot in such a way that demonstrated the truth that my trust and security were both faulty when placed anywhere outside of Scripture.

Instead of reading the Bible at surface level, it was time to plant myself in its pages and remain rooted in them with a genuine desire to understand what God desired to reveal to me. Rather than visiting God's Word on occasion, it was time to make His Word my dwelling place.

Thanks be to God, by the power of His Holy Spirit, He lovingly and graciously guided me to the freedom I did not know I was seeking a few years later—the freedom my soul was starving for. This freedom welcomed me with warmth and open arms, and I could feel the eagerness it brought with it to release me from the shackles of my false understanding of my great God. This freedom opened my eyes to the self-empowered theology I had been fed for so long. *Too long.* This freedom invited me to stay and make myself at home.

THIS FREEDOM INVITED ME  
TO STAY AND MAKE MYSELF  
AT HOME.

You see, I did not know how to properly study Scripture until I was in college. As someone who was raised in the church, this is a little hard for me to admit, but it is the cold, hard truth. I remember feeling equally as sad as I was excited after discovering a new way to read and interpret Scripture. I was sad because I was learning all this much later in life than I wished I had, but I was excited because the scales had finally fallen from my eyes, and I could taste and see how much more there was to God's Word!

*Finally*, I could dive in and swim in the sea of abounding truths Scripture offered without feeling as if I were drowning. This newfound freedom breathed life into my being in ways I had never imagined or experienced, and it made way for my relationship with God to thrive as He had always intended.

I share this with you because it marked the beginning of my journey to cultivating a heart of true delight for knowing my heavenly Father through His Word. What an honor it is that I get to share this journey with you.

Thanks be to God!

## **The Danger of Misapplying Scripture**

Delight yourself in the LORD,  
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

PSALM 37:4

This verse is a great example of why we should not read God's Word at surface level and simply leave it at that. When we do this, it is incredibly easy to take Scripture out of context, which results in a flawed interpretation of the text and an inaccurate

application of it to our lives. This is a tempting yet dangerous way to create a false gospel like the one I once clung to.

We are all guilty of making assumptions about what the Word says. I know this to be true because we are fallible human beings, and it is the quick, easy, and less time-consuming thing to do. No matter how well-intentioned and sincere we are about it, though, if we are not careful we will quickly lose ourselves to how our false ideologies about the Father make us feel. We will start to value and prioritize our feelings over the Father's unchanging truths.

My dear sister, we must never assume we understand what any verse of Scripture says without careful, intentional prayer and study. I do not say this with the belief that God is incapable of transforming the heart without these things. He surely is capable. Nor do I say this with the belief that God is incapable of meeting and gifting supernatural understanding to someone who is introduced to His Word for the first time. He surely is capable. What I *am* saying is that there is an incredible depth to all of Scripture, so it deserves to be treated like the most precious and powerful thing we will ever hold—and we are to hold it with our whole hearts.

A good rule of thumb to help us do this is to acknowledge God's Word is not a self-help book. Nor is it a game. We should not open it up to a random verse, assume the verse was intended for our specific situation, and leave it at that. Neither should we seek out only the passages we love and ignore the rest. God has revealed what He wants us to know through every page of His Word, not just the feel-good bits and pieces of it. Each and every word in our Bibles matters so much. It is through our time spent weaving our way through the Scriptures that we will come to know the Father's heart for His people.

To know God is to know *all* of His Word.

I want to take an in-depth look with you at the beautiful charge given to us in Psalm 37:4 and reflect on what it means for us as children of God.

To get started, it is very important that we first consider the context of this psalm. Knowing the context of Scripture is vital to truly understanding it.

### **About Psalm 37**

In this particular psalm, David shines light on an issue we can all relate to in some way. During the time he wrote this, those who did not follow the Lord were prospering while those who faithfully pursued God struggled through one battle after the next. David describes the situation like this in verses 1-2: “Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers! For they will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb.”

Since the Fall, wrongdoers have acquired wealth through deception while some people seeking to live righteously have struggled to put food on the table. Perhaps you are facing a struggle like that right now. When we find ourselves dealing with challenges like not being able to provide for ourselves or our families in the ways we long to, it can be pretty tempting to envy the people who do not consider themselves Christians yet enjoy wealth and luxury.

David wrote this psalm as an acknowledgment that this earthly life is not fair. He also wrote it knowing that life is temporary. This psalm is intended to encourage God’s people to view life from an eternal perspective rather than a perspective dependent on their circumstances, and to battle the anxieties and fears that come from loss of control with the weapon—the *antidote*—of delight.

David desired for God's people to make room in their hearts for the truth that the spiritual will always outweigh the physical.

Take a look at Psalm 37:16 with me: "Better is the little that the righteous has than the abundance of many wicked."

Now skip down to verse 20: "The wicked will perish; the enemies of the LORD are like the glory of the pastures; they vanish—like smoke they vanish away."

The overall purpose of Psalm 37 is to encourage those who trust and delight in God with the promise that the wicked will not win—because evil will not and cannot have the final say. Thanks be to God!

Now that we have considered the context surrounding this specific psalm, let's home in on verse 4 and think about what it means to delight in God.

"Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart." Have you ever wondered what it means when "LORD" is in all caps? This is the English replacement for God's Hebrew name, YHWH. It is also meant to emphasize the Father's divine lordship and sovereign nature.

That means David uses "LORD" to magnify the unique name of God in His fullness as Lord and Creator. Don't you just love that?

David tells us to delight ourselves in Yahweh—the God of Israel, the holy Father—who would send His Son to earth to die for sinners like you and me, and who will return in order to establish a divine, eternal Kingdom.

My dear sister, no matter how this world appears or how unfortunate our circumstances are compared to someone else's, we are invited to delight in the truth that it is the Father's deep and vast love that has made a way for us to be *reconciled to Him*. Not our circumstances or how hard we work, but God's endless,

unchanging love! This way will not always—or maybe ever—look how we would like it to, but the everlasting hope we have in Christ is where it leads. It is not some temporary, feel-good path. This way is filled with the guidance and faithfulness of our great God, and it results in eternal life!

Remaining steadfast will undoubtedly be worth it in the end. And it is our hope in Christ that the Father will use to strengthen us and propel us forward.

May it be so.

## How to Delight

David does us all a favor with his words. Rather than simply telling us to delight in the Lord and leaving us to guess what he means, he includes a step-by-step guide on *how* to delight. Let's take a look at his instructions, shall we?

It begins in Psalm 37:3, which says, “Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.”

### *Trust*

We are first to trust in the Lord. How do we do this? By seeking to live in obedience to His Word. This is easy—until it is not. It can become especially difficult to trust in God when life is falling apart. I bet you know exactly what I'm getting at here.

When our circumstances get messy, it can be easy for us to try to take complete control of them. It can be tempting to believe we know better than our Father in heaven what is best for us and what the outcome of our situation should be.

If we place our trust in anything outside of the Lord—our desire to be in control, our job, our finances, you name it—we are not truly delighting in Him.

Saying we trust God is one thing. Actually trusting Him, however, is what really matters.

Sister, the same God who created the universe breathed life into us. He knows us better than we will ever know ourselves, and this is good news!

So let me ask you: Are you trusting God in such a way that demonstrates your complete dependence on Him to supply your every need?

### *Do Good*

Right after David instructs us to trust in the Lord, he tells us to do good. But what does that mean exactly? Well, simply put, it means to live for God's glory and not our own. This world makes it far too easy—and appealing—for us to become distracted from what is truly good.

In this specific scenario, David is referring to the people of God who are distracted by their envy of the prosperity of the wicked. Whether you can relate to this exact situation or not, the call to “do good” remains the same.

Want to know the recipe for doing good? It is one of my favorites to share!

There are two ingredients: your Bible and your desire and willingness to apply its truths. Colossians 1:16 tells us, “God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him” (NLT).

When we embrace the truths of Christ in such a way that they dwell in us richly, we have exactly what we need to stay Kingdom-minded and to do good in all parts of our lives. In practical terms, doing good looks like knowing what the Lord

requires of his servants and doing our best to walk that path. It means putting our own needs and desires on hold to love and care for those around us (see Philippians 2:4). It means being bold and holding our friend group accountable when conversation turns into gossip (see Psalm 15:2-3). It means sharing the gospel with our friend or coworker (see Romans 10:14-15). It means examining our life against the marks of a true Christian, as we see summed up in Romans 12:9-21:

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Let's say you are out to coffee with some friends from your small group. What was meant to be a time to catch up and encourage each other somehow evolves into a gossip session. The things being said are not sitting right with you, and you are convicted that it needs to be put to a stop. There are many ways you could respond here, but the question you must first ask yourself is, *How can I respond in a way that reflects my love for the Lord and my desire to be faithful to His Word?* Expressing your discomfort when everyone else seems to be just fine with entertaining the sin at hand will likely feel awkward, and it may or may not yield the response you desire. But regardless of the outcome, you can take heart in knowing your response is a beautiful reflection of Christ and your allegiance to Him.

### *Dwell in the Land*

David makes no mistake in his charge to dwell in the land that God provides us. The word *dwell* also means “abide.”<sup>1</sup> It is a reminder that we are not simply here to exist in the world or to live the way the world does; we are here to live set apart as God's people. In a world that worships self and idolizes instant gratification no matter the cost, it can be tempting to lose sight of the good things we have in this life that hold eternal value. It can be tempting to abide not in the Father's ways but in our own. However, we must not do this, which is why David takes the time to remind God's people of that which truly matters: abiding in Him and walking in the knowledge that He is and will always be better.

### *Befriend Faithfulness*

I love the phrase “befriend faithfulness” here in Psalm 37:3. It beckons us to step into God's loving arms. It serves as a reminder that the Lord's faithfulness is a friend that never leaves our side.

If you are struggling to place your trust in God, let me challenge you to do two things.

First, plant yourself in Scripture. Spend time marinating in the precious, life-giving, and sustaining promises of His Word.

Second, spend time remembering the things God has done for you. A great way to start is by looking at the cross. Consider when He first drew you to Himself, how He saved you, and the ways in which He has revealed His glory to you.

### *Surrender*

Now, let's look at Psalm 37:5: "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act."

A large part of the trusting process involves the act of surrender. In order to really trust God in all things, we are to yield our hearts to the Father's heart, to surrender all things into His hands so we can submit to His good, perfect, and pleasing will. This is how our delight in the Lord is fueled in our lives—by acknowledging our utmost need for Him and seeking His ways for us rather than our own.

Have you ever heard the saying "Jesus is my copilot"? This should not sit well with us. If it does, we should prepare ourselves for a crash landing because we need Jesus to be our sole pilot. God did not intend for us to fly the plane. If we are honest with ourselves, we have all tried and failed. And we will try and fail again because, well, that is just the nature of our flesh. But the power of God's Spirit in us can trump any temptation we face. He gives us the power to look to Him when we are tempted to look outside of Him for control.

I really struggle with this sometimes. At those times, the very last thing I want to do is admit my pride, repent of my sin, remove myself from the pilot's seat, find my seat in the cabin of the plane,

and yield to the Lord. When things in my life get shaky and unsettled, I am instantly tempted to do everything in my power to take the yoke and ensure a safe landing. But it is only in the arms of our heavenly Father that we are ensured the safety we long for. It is only His hands that belong on the yoke of the plane.

May we look to the Lord for His steadfast mercy and strength to help us release our desire for control. May we surrender ourselves to the wisdom of His Word as He guides us in our journey. May we delight in the act of surrender.

### *Be Still, Be Patient*

Last but certainly not least, let's take a look at the charge to be still and patient in Psalm 37:7: "Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him."

The takeaway here is to carve out time and space to sit in stillness before God. To confess what has caused you to fall into the mindset of believing His plan is *not* fully good and completely perfect.

Depending on what we are waiting for, we can easily run out of patience with God and His timing. But the thing is, His timing does not work like ours. Our minds simply cannot comprehend it. God is God and we are not. This truth should bring a tremendous amount of comfort and assurance to the soul.

Instead of trying to take matters into your own hands when it feels as if God has left the picture or like He is taking His sweet time, take a deep breath and recall the living reality of God's Word in that He wastes no thing or time. Nor does His Word return void. Nothing is ever wasted—not one second, not one thing.

This is not a "my way or the highway" kind of thing, friend. You may, unfortunately, experience that approach with others in your life, but there is no room for it in the presence of God. God's

ways and timing will always be higher, better, and exactly what we need. Say it with me, will you? “His ways, always.”

Take delight in the reality that even when it doesn't seem like it, God *is* on the move. As you do so, rejoice in the beautiful truths of Isaiah 55:11 and Romans 8:28:

It is the same with my word.

I send it out, and it always produces fruit.

It will accomplish all I want it to,

and it will prosper everywhere I send it.

ISAIAH 55:11, NLT

We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

ROMANS 8:28, NLT

## The Fruit of Delight

Now that we know what it means to delight and how to delight in the Lord, let's talk about what it means when David says God will give us the desires of our heart as a fruitful result of delighting in Him.

Notice that the “desires of our heart” he refers to come *after* the call to delight in God. The sin in us wants to twist this around, but do not let it! If the desires of the heart come first, then we will never truly delight in God.

Delighting in God does not mean that we will get the things we long for in this life if we believe in Him and do things that reflect His will and bring Him joy. Sadly, many people read Psalm 37:4 in this light as a result of neglecting the surrounding

verses and context. This can result in a prosperity-driven way of thinking that centers on the false teaching that the more we do good things, the more God will give us good things. When this happens, people fall into the false belief of a works-based salvation. As I shared at the beginning of this chapter, I was guilty of this approach for *years*.

Thankfully, our faith is grace-based. There is literally nothing we can do to earn our salvation because it has already been earned for us—not because of anything we did but because of everything Christ accomplished on the cross! He took His last breath with us in mind. We would be helpless and lost without His saving grace in our lives.

What a true comfort for us sinners!

## The Reality of Delight

What David is really getting at with Psalm 37:4 is this: if God's people will continue to delight in Him, their desires—our desires—will be satisfied. When our eyes are truly set on Him, the desires of our heart will become more in sync with His ways rather than the ways of this world.

The biblical reality of the word *delight* is that we delight in God's will over everything else. This is where true joy and contentment come from. And the joy that flows from seeking the heart of our Father gradually regulates our desires to be more in alignment with His desires for us. How wonderful is that?

However, when we delight in the Lord and our hearts long for the things God has in store for us, then we will see blessings flow because the posture of our heart will be exactly where the Lord longs and delights to see it. Our eyes will begin to view things from a perspective of thankfulness.

It is harder to do this in the midst of difficult circumstances, but it is possible. Consider how you handle bad days. I have been known to try to turn my bad days around by fixing my eyes on the things of the world. As if, somehow, snacking on the couch and binging episodes of my favorite TV show will offer me what only God can. However, when I follow the nudging of the Holy Spirit on a bad day or in a difficult season and seek to keep my heart set on the Lord despite my circumstances, my perspective shifts and I experience His peace. I experience delight. The next time you find yourself in a hard place and tempted to look to anything else but the One who satisfies, I urge you to pause and pursue the path of delight. You will find that nothing and no one else compares.

NOTHING AND NO ONE  
SATISFIES LIKE OUR GOOD  
AND GRACIOUS GOD.



Take heart, my friend. What God most delights in about us is that we delight in Him! When we truly delight in our Father, He rejoices because our sight is set on Him rather than on the desires of our flesh. And we find ourselves all the more satisfied because our delight is truly where it belongs: in His heart for us.

Nothing and no one satisfies like our good and gracious God.

### **The Beautiful Truth**

When we choose to take delight in God's ways over the selfish, sin-prone ways of our flesh, we will become more complete in Him and in our identity as a daughter of the Most High King. We will become His daughters of delight.

Our joy is found in the One who sustains—in His being, His perfection, His friendship, and His love!

The Lord longs to be the desire of our hearts . . . our true

delight. He rejoices when we live in such a way that reflects the abounding truth that all we will ever need is found in Him.

Let us rejoice and give thanks to the Lord for all that He has done, is doing, and will do. Let us live as His daughters of delight.



## **PRAY**

Heavenly Father, to delight in You is to love You. Thank You for delighting in caring for me and supplying my every need. Please help me to grow in my delight of You as I seek to know You through the reading and studying of Your Word. As I pursue and embrace the truths of Your Word, I trust that You will make way for the desires of my heart to align with Your desires for me. Help me to live my life in such a way that my delight in You simply cannot be questioned. Help me to live as Your daughter of delight. Amen!

## **REFLECT**

1. Did your understanding of Psalm 37:4 change after reading this chapter? If so, how?
2. What are some ways you can stand on guard against abusing Scripture and feasting on sugarcoated teachings?
3. There are some seasons of life when we find it easier than others to delight in the Lord. Is God the true desire and delight of your heart in this season? If not, what needs to change so that He is?
4. What was your favorite takeaway from this chapter? Write it down and share it with someone you would like to encourage today.