

Loving God: Delighting in Him



The Definition of Loving God



- To love God is:
 - to self-sacrificially commit oneself
 - to delight in Him,
 - to rejoice in serving Him,
 - to desire continually to please Him,
 - to seek one's happiness in Him,
 - and to thirst day and night for a fuller enjoyment of Him.

The Duty of Delight



- Psalm 37:4 Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart.

—“It is a Christian duty, as you know, for everyone to be as happy as he can.”

~C. S. Lewis

The Duty of Delight



“Joy is not just the spin-off of obedience to God, but part of obedience. ... Saying ‘don’t pursue joy, pursue obedience’ is like saying ‘don’t eat apples; eat fruit.’ ... Joy is an act of obedience. We are *commanded* to rejoice in God.”

~John Piper

The Meaning of Delight



- The word translated “delight” in Psalm 37:4 means “to take exquisite delight in” or “to take one’s pleasure in.”
- Isaiah 55:2 illustrates what this delight is like

Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And delight yourself in abundance.

Our Problem



- C. S. Lewis:

“If we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. ...

Our Problem

...We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

The Expression of Delight

- "All enjoyment automatically overflows into praise.... The world rings with praise—lovers praising their beloved, readers praising their favorite author, walkers praising the countryside, players praising their favorite game.... We delight to praise what we enjoy because praise not only expresses our enjoyment; it completes it. Praise is the natural result of enjoyment." (C. S. Lewis)

The Expression of Delight

- If Lewis is right, the Psalms overflow with expressions of the Psalmists' delight in God
 - **Psalm 89:1** I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever; With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.
 - **Psalm 84:11** For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

The Expression of Delight

- Key points
 - Delight expresses itself in praise.
 - Delight is incomplete until it has been expressed in praise.
 - Praise not only expresses our delight, but it completes our enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation.

How to Delight in the Lord

- n A. The requirement for delight
 - q We must have a personal relationship with God before we can truly delight in Him.
- n B. The focus of our delight
 - q Delighting in God is the result of meditating on how His person, works, and word benefit our lives.

Summary

We delight ourselves in the Lord when thinking about who God is for us, what He does for us, and what He reveals to us brings us pleasure and we express that pleasure in joyful praise.

Delighting in what Delights God

- We foster delight in God by delighting in
 - Who He is for us
 - What He does for us
 - What He says to us
 - What He Delights in

Delighting in what Delights God

- Isaiah 58:13-14
 - 13 If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the LORD honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words,

Delighting in what Delights God

- 14 Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the LORD has spoken.“

The Sabbath in God's Plan

- Instituted at Creation
 - Gen. 2:2 By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.
 - ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

The Sabbath in God's Plan

- Pre-Covenantal Gift to God's People
 - God gives the Sabbath to His people before they come to Sinai and enter into a marriage covenant with God.
 - Exodus 16:29 "See, the LORD has given you the sabbath; therefore He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. ..."

The Sabbath in God's Plan

- Integrated into Mosaic Covenant
 - Exodus 20:8 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

The Sabbath in God's Plan



- ¹¹ "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy

The Sabbath in God's Plan



- **Deut. 5:12** 'Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. ... ¹⁵ 'You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.

The Sabbath in God's Plan



- **Continues in the New Creation**
 - Sabbath will be a part of the new heavens and earth (Isa. 66:22-23)
 - **Isaiah 66:22** For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain.

The Sabbath in God's Plan



- ²³ And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, says the LORD.

Key Sabbath Principles



- **Rest**
 - We follow God's pattern of rest and no work. (Gen. 2; Exod. 20:9-11)
- **Remembrance**
 - We remember God's deliverance of us from bondage (Deut. 5:12-15)
- **Worship**
 - We focus our thoughts, words, and activities on delighting in the Lord (Isa. 58:13-14)

Jesus Clarifies the Sabbath



- Jesus clarified what He meant by the Sabbath laws in the NT. Rest and no work does not exclude the following activities:
 - Deeds of Mercy (Matt. 12:10-13; Luke 14:5) – healing, ox in a ditch
 - Deeds of Necessity (Mark 2:23-28) – plucking grain on the sabbath
 - Deeds of Worship (Matt. 12:5) – priests offering sacrifices on the sabbath

From Sabbath to Lord's Day



• Key Reference to the "Lord's Day"

- **Rev. 1:10** the apostle John refers to the "Lord's Day."
- 1. John uses this term without explanation. That means he expects his readers to understand what he was talking about. In other words, by A.D. 95-100, the term "Lord's Day" must have been in common usage among the churches, otherwise John would have explained what he meant.

From Sabbath to Lord's Day



- 2. As far back as we can go in church history, Christians have consistently applied the OT Sabbath principle to the Lord's Day, keeping it as a day of rest and worship. For example, references to the Lord's Day may be found in Ignatius's epistle to the *Magnesians* 9 (c. A.D. 110), the *Didache* 14 (c. A.D. 120), and the *Epistle of Barnabus* 15 (c. A.D. 70-130).

From Sabbath to Lord's Day



- 3. The Lord's Day commemorates, like the OT Shabbat, the initiation of God's new creation in Christ through the resurrection and the deliverance of His people from the bondage of sin.
- 4. Although the New Testament does not make this switch as clear as we might like, the evidence given above has been considered sufficient by the Church since the time of the apostles.

From Sabbath to Lord's Day



- Circumstantial Evidence for 1st Day Worship
 - **Acts 20:7** Luke records that the Christians gathered to break bread on the first day of the week in Troas.

From Sabbath to Lord's Day



- **1 Cor. 16:2** Paul suggests that the Corinthians put aside their offering for the needy Christians in Jerusalem on the first day of the week.

More Extended Discussion ...



- For a more extended discussion see the following article on my website:
apbrown2.net/web/sabbath.htm

Delighting in what Delights God



- **Isaiah 58:13-14** clearly teaches that when we take pleasure in the Lord on the Sabbath, we are delighting in ourselves in the Lord.

Helping Children Delight



- Activities that focus on God
 - Music: Sunday School Sing-along, Hymns for the Home I & II
 - Stories: Jonny & Susie, Character Sketches
 - Media: Mr. Fixit, Visual Bible
- Special times of Christian fellowship
 - Christian Version of Un-Game
- Naps with explanation

What the Lord delights in



- **Proverbs 11:1** Dishonest scales *are* an abomination to the LORD, But a just weight *is* His delight.
 - The Lord delights in honesty in business

What the Lord delights in



- **Proverbs 11:20** Those who are of a perverse heart *are* an abomination to the LORD, But *the* blameless in their ways *are* His delight.
 - The Lord delights in the blameless = those who maintain a clear conscience in their relationships with others.

What the Lord delights in



- **Proverbs 12:22** Lying lips *are* an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully *are* His delight.
 - The Lord delights in truthfulness in all of life.

What the Lord delights in



- **Proverbs 15:8** The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD, But the prayer of the upright *is* His delight.

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Benefit of Delighting in the Lord



- “The joy of the Lord will arm us against the assaults of our spiritual enemies and put our mouths out of taste for those pleasures with which the tempter baits his hooks.”

~Matthew Henry

Benefit of Delighting in the Lord



Psalm 119:97, 104 O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. ... Through thy precepts I get understanding:
therefore I hate every false way.

Richard Baxter’s Prayer



- “May the Living God, who is the portion and rest of the saints, make these our fleshly minds so spiritual, and our earthly hearts so heavenly, that loving him, and delighting in him, may the work of our lives.”

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