

Delight Yourself in the Lord

“The Lost Art of Delightful Prayer”

Delight yourself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of your heart. – Psalms 37:4

Luke 10:38-42 – Story of Mary and Martha

Both loved the Lord. Both were Christians, born again Christians. Both followed the Lord in baptism. Both were ardent disciples or followers. But there was a difference that Jesus noted.

Miss Martha’s Characteristics

1. Distracted - *doing and fighting off a lot of things at once - “many things”*
2. Worried - *fussing about to please people, co-dependent mothering*
3. Upset - *upset and angry - hot under the collar, all worked up*

Miss Mary’s Characteristic

1. Sat at his feet - *focus on (vrs 42) “one thing - needful - chosen - the delightful”*
2. Listened - *be still and know, let all the earth keep silence, “you would not” (wait Is 40:28)*
3. Delighted in him - *enjoy the Lord, revel in him, love him with all heart (Ps 37:4)*

Our Missing Characteristics (Strangers In My Prayer Closet)

1. Silence - *sitting at his feet*
2. Wait - *listening for his voice (seek the Lord)*
3. Rest and delight - *in his presence*

Spirit and truth - with deepest heart-longings, with honest heart-desire.

John 4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

Martha thought the “yoke” was on her

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (rest = ana-pousis “pause”)

Conclusion: Opportunities to Seek and Delight in the Lord

- Personal Prayer Retreat – morning song, afternoon delight, a day away, weekend retreat
- Retreat Centers – Whitehall (\$20), Life Ministries Castle (\$25), St Thomas More (\$35)
- Prayer Plan – or Delighting in Intimacy With God
- Group Retreat – quarterly or 3x per year - Fall, Winter, Spring (Summer, Winter, Spring)

Focus on God: **Silence** (delightful), **Worship** (delightful), **Thanksgiving** (delightful),

Focus on Self: **Confess Sin** (hard then delightful), **Clothe Self** (delightful), **Cast Care** (delightful)

Reading book, listening Bible, worship CDs, writing journal, walking, napping, eating, walking, singing, smiling, laughing, smelling, feeling, looking, tasting.

WHAT DO YOU DELIGHT IN?

A picture of delight is a hot summer afternoon with two boys swinging on a rope and jumping gleefully into a cool river. In that picture you can almost hear the giggling delight of smiling children frolicking playfully in the delightful river. It makes one wonder if Adam and Eve might have done the same.

I delight to sit by the se shore and watch the waves crashing onto the shore. My wife and I can do that for hours in silent timeless wonder. It's delightful.

I delight in soaking in a hot tub when my back and neck are aching from a long day of hard labor. I can just lay there soaking up the massage of that hot water, soothing my aches and pains. It's delightful.

I delight in a deliciously prepared, well-seasoned meal at a fine restaurant with friends and good conversation. Then to finish it off with a smooth, rich bitter sweet chocolate dessert and an espresso coffee. Ahh! What a delight!

To delight ourselves in the Lord is to bask in his presence, to revel in his goodness, to soak up his love, and to savor him for who He is. Soaking up God's presence is not something preferred by most 21st century men. We are addicted to busy-ness and hurry. We think real accomplishments are getting things done.

Keith Miller calls delighting in the Lord, "holy leisure." I like that. Too often prayer is going to God to get stuff. It is often a hurried affair, sandwiched between our "to do lists." We frantically rush into God's presence with an apology for our hurry and dump our load at his feet before snatching some crumb from his table, and hurrying back to the "real world." It reminds me of the skittish wild dog that sneaks up on its scraps, quickly grabs it and runs away.

When we delight in something we must first find it worthwhile. Then, once we have tasted the delight of a sunset, an ocean shore, a quiet stream, a walk in the woods, or a succulent meal, we find quality and quantitative time for what we delight in. So too, once we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, we can separate dedicated time to enjoy it even more.

Delight requires space. Time and space go together. Holy leisure is time expensive. It will cost you some valued time, and some crowded space must be given up to delight yourself in the Lord. Whether it is an hour anchored in your prayer closet, or a week-long prayer retreat you have to annex the time. It will not come to you. You must pursue it. Delight requires heaping helpings of precious time.

Isaiah 58:13 If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words:

Isaiah 58:14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.