

#121 “The Desires of Your Heart”
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Psalm 37:4 gives a promise that can often strike us as too good to be true when it says, “Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart.” But it is Scripture, it is given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and it is God’s personal promise to each of His children. One of Satan’s greatest and most frequently used lies to believers and unbelievers alike is that God is a cosmic killjoy. In other words, his assertion is that God does not want to give us what we want, and by implication, He will not give us what we want. Therefore, in order for us to get what we want, we would need to go and get it by ourselves, by our own means, by our own power, and by our own ways. Of course, anytime we do this we will come to regret it as we recognize that God’s ways are the best ways and that He tells us not to sin because He doesn’t want us to hurt ourselves or anybody else. Psalm 37:5 gives a complementary truth to verse 4 saying, “Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.” The idea is that God wants us to trust Him by committing the entirety of our lives, desires, and hopes to His care and perfect timing, planning, and giving. He doesn’t want us to do things our own way, walking by sight and human wisdom but rather by faith and the wisdom which only He can supply. As we trust Him, we can be sure that God will do what is good, right, and pure. When difficult things are allowed into our lives, we can be sure that God will cause all things to work for our good because we are His children whom He loves (Romans 8:28). God does not have evil plans for His people but plans for hope and a future inheritance (Jeremiah 29:11). Our God is deserving of our trust and surrender because He is good, and as David says in Psalm 23:6, “Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life.”

The context of Psalm 37 emphasizes over and over again that the wicked who seem to prosper will in the end be destroyed, while the righteous who suffer for the sake of righteousness will in the end prosper and find fullness of joy. This is because their faith is in God Who cannot fail, Who does not disappoint, and Who always keeps His promises. So our hope is in our unfailing and unchanging God. Circumstances are fleeting and changeable, and people can disappoint. But God never fails, and His mercies are new every day. Thus, it only makes sense to delight and take joy in Him for Who He is and for what He has done. In His presence is fullness of joy (Psalm 16:11). It is not Satan who gives endless pleasures, but it is God at Whose right hand are pleasures forever (Psalm 16:11). God is the good guy, not the villain. Satan wants us to think that he is the giver of life and all that is good. Granted, when we are thinking sinfully and selfishly, his sinful methods do provide a temporary good feeling. However, they are enslaving, and he will gladly suck all of the remaining life, hope, and joy out of us. Only when we do things by faith God’s way can we experience true freedom. Willing enslavement to God is the only road to freedom and joy. The key is that we must believe that God is not a vicious taskmaster but that He is the giver of every good and perfect gift (James 1:7). Satan has never given a good or perfect gift, only evil and perverted gifts. Satan desires our destruction, but God wants to give us the desires of our hearts. So the essential thing for us is that we do not doubt God’s heart toward us but rather believe that He is perfectly

and flawlessly good to us always and forever. Once we get that, it is easy and desirable to commit our ways to Him believing that He will do what is good and best for us, which, of course, He will.

The funny thing as we seek the fulfillment of our deepest desires is that sometimes our desires are twisted and confused. We think we want one thing, and we might be totally sure about it. Yet God might not answer our prayers for that thing, person, experience, job, etc. knowing not only that it is not best for us but that we wouldn't even want it if we got it. He knows what will disappoint us, and He knows what will satisfy us. God prefers to satisfy us, and so He wants to give us that which is the desire of our hearts. From our perspective, however, this may well mean waiting and disappointment until we come to see the goodness of God in our spiritual "rear view mirror." It is not always easy to see God's provision, goodness, and mercy as we forge ahead in life, but it always follows us such that, in retrospect, it becomes all the more clear. The key is that we must not forget in the present that God is good and faithful. He does give us our deepest heart desires, but we must always delight fully in Him lest we fail to see His goodness and fail to enjoy His gifts.

God knows better than we do what we want and need, and we must be willing to keep taking joy in Him and in His will as we wait for Him to meet our desires and provide. He will show us what steps to take and what we need to do to be ready to receive His gifts. But it is only as we let Him shape and change our thoughts, ambitions, desires, and wills that we can truly arrive at the desires of our hearts. When we are totally submitted to God, we will find that His will is no longer a hardship or something to be angry and bitter about but rather a perfect blessing and gift beyond all that we could ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). **May God strip us of the things that we think we want so that we can enjoy the things that He wants to give us because they are the things that we will find that we really wanted all along.**