

## ***“Receiving The Desires of Your Heart”***

Matthew 7:7 – 14; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4: 1 – 11; Ephesians 1: 3- 14; **Psalm 37: 1 – 9 (Sermon)**

Psalm 37:4 states; ***“Take delight in The Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.”***

So I want to begin by asking you; *“what are the desires of your heart?”*

Unfortunately Psalm 37:4; ***“Take delight in The Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.”*** is frequently taken out of context and this verse is often misquoted.

You see we all are guilty of picking and choosing what we want The Bible to say.

Christians often say; *“if you ask God, He will give you what ever you want.”* Or they say; *“if you have faith God will give you whatever you want.”*

We want to believe God’s promises but when troubles and problems come and we do not get what we prayed for our faith is shaken.

As believers we know we are to trust in promises like this one, but sometimes behind our smiling faces and exterior images lies a frustrated interior of unfulfilled desires.

So if God wants to give us the desires of our heart why don’t we get everything that we want?

How are we to reconcile the fact that God wants to give to us the desires of our hearts, but we have not received them yet?

So we need to look carefully at Psalm 37:4 which says; ***“Take delight in The Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.”***

One of the keys to understanding verse 4 is understand the Biblical definition of the heart.

In The Bible the heart is regarded as being the seat of intellect, a person’s feelings, and the person’s will.

For example in Genesis 6:5 we read; ***“The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.”***

So we need to remember that the heart is not only a physical organ but the heart is also the center of our emotions and the center of all of our motivations.

The desires of our heart reveal our true character as well as the motivation for all of our actions.

Let me give you an example; Do we ask God for more money so we can adequately feed and cloth our family? Or do we ask God for more money so we can buy a bigger TV or a newer car.

Do we ask God for more money so we can buy more things? Or do we ask God for more money so we can give more to Him and to help a friend in need?

James 4:3 states; ***“when you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”***

You see we can not fool God because God knows our motivation for asking.

Psalms 37:4 contains a wonderful promise from God.

But verse 4 also contains the first condition that we must meet in order for God to fulfill this wonderful promise of giving us the desires of our heart.

Verse 4 starts with the condition; ***“Take delight in The Lord”***.

So what does it mean to ***“take delight in The Lord”***?

To delight in The Lord means to experience great pleasure and joy in being in The Lord’s presence.

The world delights in the physical things they have and / or in the physical pleasures they experience.

The world teaches a *“me first”* philosophy.

But as Christians we should delight in the spiritual blessing God has already given to us.

As Christians we are to focus on eternity not on the present.

We read some of the many spiritual blessings that The Lord has already given to us in our lesson from Ephesians.

Christianity teaches a life of love, humility, submission, and serving others.

As Christians our first priority should always be our relationship with The Lord Jesus Christ.

As Christians our joy should come from the fact that we have Jesus in our life.

As the Praise Song says; *“I am more than a millionaire because I have Jesus”*.

The second condition that we must meet in order for God to fulfill this wonderful promise of giving us the desires of our heart is verse 3a – ***“Trust in The Lord”***

Hebrews 11: 6 reminds us; ***“without faith it is impossible to please God”***.

Do you really believe that God will take care of us and all the injustice in the world?

Proverbs 3:5 states: ***“Trust in The Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding in all your ways submit to Him and He will make your paths straight.”***

The third condition that we must meet in order for God to fulfill this wonderful promise of giving us the desires of our heart is in verse 5; ***“commit your way to The Lord.”***

To commit your ways to The Lord means to turn everything you do and everything you have over to The Lord.

Everything includes our time, our talents, and our treasure.

Committing your way to The Lord means that you are living your life in accordance with all of Jesus' teachings.

You can not live like Jesus taught on Sunday and live like the rest of the world during the week.

You can not live for Jesus on Sunday and live for yourself the rest of the week.

You have to choose your way or choose The Lord's way.

As you know The Lord's way is love, peace, patience, mercy, forgiveness, and compassion.

Christianity is a way of life; 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

There is another wonderful promise in verses 5 and 6 that we do not want to miss.

*“Commit your way to The Lord; trust in Him and He will do this: He will make your righteousness reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun”.*

When you do your part, God will do His part. When you do the possible God will do the impossible.

The fourth condition that we must meet in order for God to fulfill this wonderful promise of giving us the desires of our heart is in 7; ***“Be still before The Lord and wait patiently for Him.”***

We need to be still in order to hear The Lord speak to us.

We all need to set aside some quiet time each day to spend with our Lord.

We all need to wait patiently on The Lord to answer.

Psalms 46:10 says; ***“Be still and know that I am God.”***

If God gave us every thing we want we would be spoiled little brats who only loved God for what He could do for us instead of loving God for who He is.

God is not Santa Clause. God is our loving Heavenly Father who provides for all of our needs.

(Matthew 6:25 – 34) In Matthew when Jesus was talking about our needs; Jesus said; *“Seek you first The Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all of these things will be given to you as well.”*

In Psalm 37 God was talking about our desires.

For us to realize all the desires of our heart we must meet all of the conditions in Psalm 37.

You see when our relationship with The Lord is right and our motives are pure our desires will always line up with God's desires.

We need to be honest with ourselves.

When you pray are your desires for your pleasure or are your desires for the advancement of The Kingdom of God?

This morning we sang the hymn *“Praise to The Lord, the Almighty.”*

It is one of the great hymns of faith.

This hymn was written by a German Pastor named Joachim Neander who was dying of tuberculosis.

In the first refrain he praised The Lord for His health and salvation, but listen in the second refrain and remember he was dying when he wrote these words.

*“Praise to the Lord, Who o’er all things so wondrously reigneth, Shelters thee under His wings, Yea, so gently sustaineth! Hast thou not seen, How thy desires ever have been Granted in what He ordaineth?”*

God grants the desires of our heart, but He does not always grant them in the way we want.

Rather God grants them in the way God ordains so His righteousness can shine through us into this sin darkened world.

We must never forget God knows the future, our God knows everything about us, and our God knows what is best for us.

God promised to give us the desires of our hearts when we delight ourselves in Him rather than in what the world has to offer.

God will give us the desires of our heart when we trust in Him and when we are totally committed to following Him.

God will give us the desires of our hearts when the desires of our hearts match His desires; that is, when our desires promote love, peace, righteousness, justice, and forgiveness.

Then the desires of our hearts will be in accordance with God’s purpose in making a Kingdom impact in our life.

**AMEN**