

## Delighting In The Lord: One Perspective

Recently, I visited with someone who obviously delighted in their garden. They had spent the winter researching different gardening philosophies and preparing for spring. As I talked with this individual, I could not help but get excited. Their emotion pulled me right in and a vision of beautiful vegetables made it sound quite fun. Now I am no gardener, yet I realize springtime is the most enjoyable time for many gardeners. August and weeds will come and for many, despair, weariness and the lawnmower may overtake the excitement of springtime. However, if you talk with a gardener in the spring, even a novice, there is much excitement.

If given the opportunity to observe a seasoned gardener, you might see an emotion and attitude of delight because they enjoy their garden. To delight in something means you derive great pleasure from it. In *Psalms 37:4* we are told to “*Delight thyself also in the Lord...*”The Hebrew word used in *Psalms 37:4* gives the picture of being pliable. Delighting in the Lord largely means to be pliable to Him and His ways. Thus, finding and experiencing great pleasure and delight in the Lord starts with trusting Him. We must know Him well enough to trust that what He is doing and what He desires is indeed what we would want if given the opportunity to see things through His eyes. Consider the 12 year old boy working in his mother’s garden. Would you anticipate seeing delight or dread in this young man? Now think about the mother who delights in gardening. What would be the difference between the two? How is it that the mom, who likely did not delight in gardening when she was 12, now does? She has learned to gain pleasure from gardening.

To delight in gardening you must have at least three key ingredients to support your trust in the gardening process: 1) understanding 2) vision and 3) perseverance. You must understand how plants grow and trust the process of planting, watering, sunshine, and time. You must have a vision of what plants will look like as they grow so as to give seeds enough room to flourish into mature plants. Seeing this vision of beautiful vegetables and what will be done with them is also important as you persevere through long hours of weeding, watering, picking, and so on.

In many ways, these are similar ingredients to delighting in the Lord. To delight in Lord we must trust His ways and understand who He is. He is working in us for our own good even when it is difficult and not going as we planned. Much like the gardener who plants seeds that do not sprout or works all summer to keep weeds from overtaking the garden and still has a poor harvest, there are times when it seems like life is all work with no reward. The seasoned gardener expects hard work before they even begin in the spring. Like the Hebrew definition of delight in *Psalms 37:4* the gardener is willing to be pliable to the process of planning, planting, and working until it is harvest time. The gardener does not get to pick where or how many weeds grow neither do they get to decide how much they need to water the plants. They must be pliable to things outside of their control. They must do this knowing that, while it is tedious work, the work is to be expected and will, in time, bring a harvest. This harvest will vary from year to year and sometimes might even seem independent from the labors of the gardener, yet they engage in gardening because they delight in it.

As we know and trust the Lord more deeply, we will be more able to delight in Him and His ways. Our desires will become conformed to align with His desires. Like the seasoned gardener who does not fight the work of gardening but rather embraces it, we can find joy in the process. We become pliable to Him and His laws, seeing them as good and gracious. We trust the good Gardener to be working even when it does not seem like He is. The worry from work and labor begins to fade and we rest in our wholehearted delight in Him. May we each embrace the invitation to delight in our great God as we trust His working in us.

*Psalms 37:4* “*Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*”