

The Saint's Spiritual Delight

by Thomas Watson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of delighting in God's law and serving Him with a willing heart, and warns against the dangers of negative goodness and carnal delight.

Scripture: Psalm 119:77

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Delighting In God"

Description

Thomas Watson preaches about the importance of delighting in the Law of the Lord, emphasizing that negative goodness alone is insufficient for salvation. He explains that true delight in God's law stems from soundness of judgment, the predominancy of grace, and the sweetness of the end, leading to spiritual vitality and resemblance to the angels in heaven. Watson provides guidance on how to cultivate this delight by valuing Scripture, praying for a spiritual heart, and purging out the delight of sin, ultimately leading to a life of thankfulness and purposeful service to God.

Transcript

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Thomas Watson

"But his delight is in the Law of the Lord."

Psalm 1:2

1. Showing that negative goodness is but a broken title to heaven.

As the book of the Canticles is called "the Song of Songs"--it being the most excellent song; so Psalm one may fitly be entitled, "the Psalm of Psalms", for it contains in it the very pith and quintessence of Christianity. What Hierom says of Paul's epistles, the same may I of this Psalm; it is short for the composure--but full of length and strength for the matter. This Psalm carries blessedness in the frontispiece; it begins where we all hope to end. It may well be called A Christian's Guide, for it discovers the quicksands where the wicked sink down in perdition, verse 1; and the firm ground on which the saints tread to glory, verse 2. The text is an epitome and breviary of true religion, "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law does he meditate day and night." Every word has its emphasis; I begin with the first word--But.

This But is full of spiritual wine, we will open it and taste a little, then proceed.

"But" This is a term of opposition. The godly man is described:

I. By way of negation, in three particulars.

(1.) "He walks not in the counsel of the ungodly;" he is none of their council; he neither gives bad counsel, nor takes it.

(2.) "He stands not in the way of sinners." He will not stand among those who shall not be able to "stand in the judgment," verse 5.

(3.) "He sits not in the seat of the scornful." Let it be a chair of state, he will not sit in it, he knows it will prove very uneasy at last. The word sitting implies,

1. An habit in sin, Psalm 50:20. "You sit and speak against your brother."

2. Sitting implies familiarity with sinners, Psalm 26:4. "I have not sat with vain people;" that is, I do not visit their haunts. The godly man shakes off all intimacy with the wicked. He may traffic with them--but not associate with them. He may be civil to them, as neighbors--but not twist into a cord of friendship. Diamonds and stones may lie together--but they will not solder and cement.

II. The godly man is described by way of position or rather opposition, "But his delight is in the law of the Lord." From this word "But" observe,

That negative goodness is not sufficient to entitle us to heaven. To be no scorner, is good--but it is not enough. There are some in the world whose religion runs all upon negatives; they are not drunkards, they are not swearers--and for this they do bless themselves. See how that pharisee vapors, Luke 18:11. "God, I thank you that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers," etc. Alas, the not being scandalous will no more make a good Christian, than a cipher will make a sum. The godly man goes further, "he sits not in the seat of the scorner--but his delight is in the law of the Lord. We are bid, not only to "cease from evil--but to do good," Psalm 34:14. It will be a poor plea at last, "Lord, I kept myself from being spotted with gross sin. I did no hurt!" But what good is there in you? It is not enough for the servant of the vineyard that he does no hurt there--he does not break the trees, or destroy the hedges. If he does not work in the vineyard, he loses his pay; it is not enough for us to say at the last day, "We have done no hurt, we have lived in no gross sin!" But what good have we done in the vineyard? Where is the grace we have gotten? if we cannot show this, we shall lose our pay--and miss of salvation!

Use. Do not content yourselves with the negative part of religion; many build their hopes for heaven upon this cracked foundation; they are given to no vice, none can charge them with any foul sins. To such people I say three things.

1. You may not be outwardly bad--and yet not inwardly good. You may be as far from grace as from vice! Though none can say, "black is your eye"--yet your soul may be dyed black. Though your hands are not working iniquity, your heads may be plotting it. A tree may be full of vermin--yet the pretty leaves may cover them--that they are not seen. Just so, the pretty leaves of civility may hide you from the eye of man--but God sees the vermin of pride, unbelief, and covetousness in your heart! "You are they," says Christ, "who justify yourselves before men--but God knows your hearts!" Luke 16:15. A man may not be morally evil--yet not spiritually good. He may be free from gross enormity--yet full of secret enmity against

God. He may be like the snake, which though it be of a fine color--yet has its sting!

2. If you are only negatively good, God makes no reckoning of you. You are as so many ciphers in God's Arithmetic--and he writes down no ciphers in the book of life! Take a piece of brass, though it is not so bad a metal as lead or iron--yet not being so good as silver, there is little reckoning made of it, it will not pass for current coin. Just so, though you are not profane--yet not being of the right metal, lacking the stamp of holiness upon you--you will never pass current. God slights you, you are but a brass Christian.

3. A man may as well go to hell for not doing good--as for doing evil. He who bears no good fruit--is just as much fuel for hell--as he who bears bad fruit! Matt. 3:10, "Every tree which that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." One may as well die with not eating food, as with poison! A ground may as well be spoiled for lack of good seed, as with having tares sown in it. Those who were not active in works of Christian charity, were sadly sentenced: "Depart from me you cursed, etc. for I was hungry--and you gave me no food," Matt. 25. 41,42. It is not said "that you took my food away from me"--but "you gave me no food." Why were the foolish virgins shut out? They had done no hurt, they had not broken their lamps. Yes--but they "took no oil in their lamps," Matthew. 25.3. Their lacking oil was the indictment! Therefore let not any man build his hope for heaven upon negative goodness. This is building upon the sand--and the sand is bad to build on; it will not cement. But suppose a man should finish an house upon the sand--what is the outcome? The flood comes, namely, persecution--and the force of this flood will wash away the sand and make the house fall. And the wind blows--the breath of the Lord as a mighty wind will blow such a sandy building into hell! Be afraid then to rest in the negative part of religion, launch forth further--be eminently holy. So I come to the next words--but "his delight is in the law of the Lord--and in his law does he meditate day and night."

2. What is meant by delighting in the Law of God?

The words give a twofold description of a godly man.

First, He delights in God's law.

Secondly, He meditates in God's law.

1. "His DELIGHT is in the law of the Lord." The great God has grafted the affection of delight in every creature. Every being has, by the instinct of nature, something to delight itself in. Now the true saint, not by intuition--but divine inspiration, makes the law of God his delight. This is the badge of a Christian, "His delight is in the law of the Lord." A man may work in his trade--and not delight in it, either in regard of the difficulty of the work, or the smallness of the income. But a godly man serves God with delight; it is his food and drink to do his will.

For the explanation of the words, it will be inquired,

1. What is meant by "the law of the Lord." This word, Law, may be taken either more strictly or more largely.

(1.) More strictly--for the Decalogue or ten commandments.

(2.) More largely--

[1.] For the whole written word of God.

[2.] For those truths which are deducted from the word--and center in it.

[3.] For the whole business of piety, which is the counterpart of God's law--and agrees with it as the transcript with the original. The Scripture is a setting forth of God's law--and piety is a showing forth of God's law. I shall take this word in its full latitude and extent.

2. What is meant by DELIGHT in God's law. The Hebrew and Septuagint both render it, "His will is in the law of the Lord." That which is voluntary, is delightful. A gracious heart serves God from a principle of sincerity; he makes God's law not only his task--but his recreation; upon this scripture-stock I shall graft this proposition.

Doctrine. That a child of God, though he cannot serve the Lord perfectly--yet he serves him willingly. His will is in the law of the Lord; he is not a pressed soldier--but a volunteer. By the beating of this pulse, we may judge whether there is spiritual life in us, or not. David professes God's law was his delight, Psalm 119:77. He had his crown to delight in, he had his music to cheer him--but the love he had to God's law--drowned all other delights; just as the joy of harvest and vintage, exceeds the joy of gleaning. "I delight in the law of God," says Paul, "in the inner man." Romans 7:22, the Greek word is, "I take pleasure in the law of God." That is--"the law of God is my recreation!" It was a heart delight--it was in the inner man. A wicked man may have joy in the face, 2 Cor. 5:12, like the dew which wets the leaf; but the wine of God's Spirit cheers the heart. Paul delighted in the law in the inner man.

3. Whence the saint's spiritual delight springs.

The saint's delight in the law of God proceeds,

1. From soundness of judgment. The mind apprehends a beauty in God's law. Like a magnet--the judgment draws the affections. "The law of God is perfect," Psalm 19.7. The Hebrew word for perfect, seems to allude to a perfect, whole body, which has perfect lineaments. God's law must be perfect, for it is able to make us wise to salvation, 2 Tim. 3.15. The Septuagint renders it, the law of the Lord is pure--like beauty which has no stain--or wine which is purified and refined. The soul that looks into this law, seeing so much luster and perfection, cannot but delight in it. The middle lamp of the sanctuary being lighted from the fire of the altar, gave light to all the other lamps. Just so--the judgment being lighted from the Scripture, it sets on fire the lamps of the affections.

2. This holy delight arises from the predominancy of grace. When grace comes with authority and majesty upon the heart, it fills it with delight. Naturally we have no delight in God; "Therefore they say unto God--depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of your ways!" Nay, there is not only a dislike of God--but antipathy to God! Sinners are called haters of God, Romans 1.30. but when grace comes into the heart, O what a change is there! Grace preponderates, it files off the rebellion of the will--it makes a man of another spirit! It turns the lion-like fierceness, into a dove-like sweetness! It changes hatred into delight! It puts a new bias into the will! It works a spontaneity and cheerfulness in God's service. "Your people shall be a willing people in the day of your power," Psalm 110.8.

3. This holy delight in true piety is from the sweetness of the end. Well may we with cheerfulness let down the net of our endeavor, when we have so excellent a draught. Heaven at the end of duty, causes delight in the way of duty.

Use 1. Showing a characteristic difference between a child of God and a hypocrite. It shows us a discriminating difference between a child of God and an hypocrite--the Christian serves God from a principle of delight, the hypocrite does not. "The law of your mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver," Psalm 119.72. With what delight does a covetous man count over his thousands? Yes--but God's law was better to David than thousands! A child of God looks upon the service of God, not only as his duty--but his privilege.

A gracious heart loves everything that has the stamp of God upon it. Scripture is his delight. "Your words were found and I ate them--and your word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart," Jer. 15.16. Prayer is his delight, Isaiah 56.7. "I will make them joyful in my house of prayer." Hearing is his delight, Isaiah 60.8. "Who are these who fly like doves to their windows?" The gracious soul flies as a dove to an ordinance, upon the wings of delight! The sacrament is his delight: On this day the Lord makes "a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined," Isaiah 25.6. A sacrament day is a soul-festival day; here Christ takes the soul into his banqueting-house--and displays "the banner of love over it," Cant. 2.4. Here are heavenly delicacies set before us. Christ gives us his body and blood. This is angels' food, this is the heavenly nectar, here is a cup perfumed with the divine nature; here is wine spiced with the love of God. The Jews at their feasts poured ointment upon their guests--and kissed them; here Christ pours the oil of gladness into the heart--and kisses us with the kisses of his lips. This is the king's bath where we wash and are cleansed of our leprosy! The withered soul, after the receiving this blessed supper, has been like a watered garden--or like those Egyptian fields, after the overflowing of the Nile--fruitful and flourishing. Do you wonder that a child of God delights in holy things? He must needs be a volunteer in piety.

But it is not thus with an hypocrite; he may be forced to do that which is good--but not to will that which is good; he does not serve God with delight. Job 27.10. "Will he delight himself in the Almighty?" That he has none of this delight, appears thus--because he serves God grudgingly; he brings his sacrifice with a wicked mind, Proverbs 21.27. Such an one was Cain. It was long before he brought his offering, it was not the first-fruits; and when he did bring it, it was grudgingly; it was not a free-will offering, Deut. 16. 10. It is probable it was the custom of his father's family to sacrifice; and perhaps conscience might check him for forbearing so long; at last the offering is brought--but how? as a task rather than a pleasure; as a fine rather than a sacrifice. Cain brought his offering--but not himself. What Seneca says of a gift, I may say of a sacrifice; it is not gold and silver makes a gift--but a willing mind, if this is lacking, the gold is only parted with, not given. Just so, it is not prayer and hearing which makes a sacrifice--but it is a willing mind. Cain's was not an offering--but a tax; not worship--but penance.

Two cases of conscience resolved

But here are two cases to be put.

Case 1. Can a regenerate person become spiritually weary

--and not delight in God?

1. I answer, Yes--but this delight in God is not wholly extinct. This lassitude and weariness in a child of God may arise from the in-dwelling of corruption, Romans 7.24. It is not from the grace which is in him--but the sin which dwells in him--just as Peter's sinking on the water was not from his faith--but his fear. Yet I still say--that a regenerate person's will is for God, Romans 7:15. Paul found sometimes an indisposition to good, Romans 7.23--yet at the same time he professes a delight in God, verse 22. "I

delight in the law of God, in the inner man." One may delight in music, or any recreation--yet through weariness of body, be for the present dulled and indisposed. Just so--a Christian may love God's law, though sometimes the clog of the flesh weighing him down, he finds his former vigor and agility abated.

2. I answer, That this spiritual faintness and weariness in a regenerate person is not habitual; it is not his constant temper. The water may ebb for a while it is low-tide; but there is soon a high-tide again. Just so, it is sometimes low-tide in a Christian's soul. At this time, he finds an indisposition and irksomeness to that which is holy--but within a short time, there is a high-tide of affection--and the soul is carried full sail in holy duties! It is with a Christian, as with a man who is very ill; when he is sick he does not take that delight in his food as formerly; nay, sometimes the very sight of it nauseates him. But when he is well--he goes to his food again with delight and appetite. Just so, when the soul is distempered through sadness and melancholy, it finds not that delight in Scripture and prayer as formerly; but when it returns to its healthful temper again, now it has the same delectability and cheerfulness in God's service as before!

3. I answer, That this spiritual weariness in a regenerate person is involuntary. He is troubled at it; he does not hug his disease--but mourns under it. He is weary of his weariness! When he finds a heaviness in duty, he goes heavily under that heaviness; he prays, weeps, wrestles, uses all means to regain that alacrity in God's service, as he was accustomed to have. David, when his chariot wheels were pulled off, and he drove on heavily in piety--how often does he pray for quickening grace! When the saints have found their hearts fainting, their affections flagging, and a strange kind of lethargy seizing on them--they are never at rest until they have recovered themselves--and are arrived at that freedom and delight in God, as they were once sensible of.

Case 2. The second case is--Whether a hypocrite may not serve God with delight? I answer--he may. Herod heard John the Baptist gladly, Matt. 6.20. and those who fasted for strife and debate, "did delight to know God's way," Isa, 58.2. An hypocrite may, out of some flashy hopes of heaven, show a delight in goodness; but yet it is not such a delight as is found in the regenerate, for his delight is carnal. A man may be carnal while he is doing spiritual things: It is not the holiness and strictness in piety, which the hypocrite delights in--but something else. He delights in prayer--but it is rather the showing of gifts he looks at, than the exercise of grace. He delights in hearing--but it is not the spirituality of the Scripture he delights in; not the savor of knowledge--but the luster. When he goes to the word preached, it is that he may rather feast his mind, than better his heart; as if a man should go to an apothecary's shop for a pill, only to see the gilding of it, not for the operative virtue. The hypocrite goes to the word to see what gilding is in a sermon, and what may delight the intellect. Hypocrites come to Scripture as one comes into a garden to pluck some fine flower to smell--not as a child comes to the breast for nutriment. This is rather curiosity than piety.

Such were those in Ezek. 33.32, You "are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument." The prophet being eloquent, and having a pleasing delivery, they were much taken with it, and it was as sweet to them as fine music--but it was not the spirituality of the matter they so well liked, as the tuneableness of the voice. It was a sharp--yet seasonable reproof of Chrysostom to his hearers, "This is that," says he, "which is likely to undo your souls--you hear your ministers as so many minstrels, to please the ear, not to pierce the conscience." You see, a hypocrite's delight in piety is carnal; it is not the being nourished up in the words of faith, which he minds--but the eloquence of speech, the rareness of notion, the quickness of imagination, the smoothness of style: he strives only to pluck from the tree of knowledge. Alas, poor man, you may have the star-light of knowledge, and yet it may be night in your soul.

Use 2. Trial of a Christian's delight in God. Let this put us upon a holy scrutiny and trial, whether we have this delight in piety? It is life or death as we answer this.

Question. How may this spiritual delight be known?

Answer 1. He who delights in God's law, is often thinking of it; what a man delights in, his thoughts are still running upon; he who delights in money, his mind is taken up with it; therefore the covetous man is said to mind earthly things, Phil. 3.19. Thus if there is a delight in the things of God, the mind will be still musing upon them. O what a rare treasure is the word of God! It is the field where the pearl of great price is hidden! How precious are the promises! They are the conduit which holds the water of life; they are like those two olive branches, "which pour out golden oil," Zech. 4.12. These seal up pardon, adoption, and glory! "O Lord, by these things men live," Isaiah 38.16. Where there is a delight in the law of God, the mind is wholly busied about it.

Answer 2. If we delight in piety, there is nothing can keep us from it--but we will be conversant in Scripture, prayer, sacraments. He who loves gold will trade for it. The merchant will compass sea and land to make money his proselyte. Men will not be kept from their sales. If there is a delight in holy things, we will not be detained from an ordinance, for there we are trafficking for salvation. If a man were hungry, he would not stay away from the market, because of the aching of his finger. The ordinances are a gospel market, and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, will not for every slight occasion stay away. "I was glad when they said, come let us go up to the house of the Lord," Psalm 122.1. You who are glad when the devil helps you with an excuse to absent yourself from the house of the Lord, are far from this holy delight.

Answer 3. Those who delight in piety are often speaking of it; "Then those who feared the Lord spoke often one to another," Mal. 3.16. Where there is grace infused, it will be effusive. "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious," Eccl. 12.10. David delighting in God's testimonies, "would speak of them before kings," Psalm 119.46. The spouse delighting in her beloved, could not conceal her love--but breaks forth into most moving, and no less elegant expressions: "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chief among ten thousand, his head is as the most fine gold," etc. The disciples whose hearts were upon Christ, make him the whole subject of their discourse as they were going to Emmaus, Luke 24.19. The primitive Christians who were fired with love to God, did speak so much of heaven, and the kingdom prepared, that the emperor suspected they meant to take his kingdom from him! Words are the looking-glass of the mind--they show what is in the heart! Where there is spiritual delight, like new wine, it will have vent. A man who is of the earth speaks of the earth, John 3.31. He can hardly speak three words--but two of them are about earth. His mouth, like the fish in the gospel, is full of gold, Matt. 17.27. Just so--where there is a delight in God, "our tongues will be as the pen of a ready writer." Psalm 45. This is a scripture touchstone to try men's hearts by. Alas, it shows how little they delight in God, because they are possessed with a dumb devil; they speak not the language of Canaan.

Answer 4. He who delights in God, will give him the best in every service. Him whom we love best, shall have of the best. The spouse delighting in Christ, will give him of her pleasant fruits, Cant. 7.13. And if she has a cup of spiced wine, and full of the juice of the pomegranate--he must drink of it, Cant. 8.2. He who delights in God gives him the strength of his affections, the cream of his duties. Says he, "God shall have the best!" Hypocrites care not what they put God off with; they offer that to the Lord which costs them nothing; a prayer that costs them no wrestling, no pouring out of the soul. 1 Sam. 1. They put no cost in their services. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, Gen. 4.8. It is observable, the Holy Spirit does not mention anything that might commend, or set off Cain's sacrifice. When he comes to speak of Abel's, he

sets an emphasis upon it, "Abel brought several choice lambs from the best of his flock," verse 4--but when he speaks of Cain, he only says, "he brought of the fruit of the ground." Some sorry thing, perhaps pulled out of a ditch! God who is best, will be served with the best. Domitian would not have his statute carved in wood or iron--but in gold. God will have the best of our best things--he will have our golden services. He who delights in God, gives him the the choice sacrifices--the purest of his love, the hottest of his zeal! And when he has done all, he grieves he can do no more, he blushes to see such an infinite disproportion between Deity and his poor duty.

Answer 5. He who delights in God, does not much delight in anything else. The world appears in an eclipse; Paul delighted in the law of God, in the inner man--and how was he crucified to the world! Gal. 6.14. It is not absolutely unlawful to delight in the things of the world, Deut. 26.11. "You shall rejoice in every good thing which the Lord your God has given you." None may better take the comfort of these things than believers; for they have the best right to them; and they have the dew of a blessing distilled, "Take two talents, said Naaman to Gehazi," 2 Kings 5.23. So says God to a believer, take two talents, take your outward comforts, and take my love with them. But the children of God, though they are thankful for outward mercies--yet they are not enthralled with these things; they use them only as a convenience for their passage; they know they need them as a staff to walk with--but when they shall sit down in the kingdom of heaven, and rest themselves, they shall have no use of this Jacob's staff. Believers do not much pray for these fleeting earthly things. Their delight is chiefly in God and his law.

Is it thus with us? Have we this low opinion of all sublunary comforts? The astronomer says, that if it were possible for a man to be lifted up as high as the moon, the earth would seem to him but as a little point. If we could be lifted up to heaven in our affections, all earthly delights would seem as nothing. When the woman of Samaria had met with Christ, down goes the pitcher, she leaves that behind! Just so, he who delights in God, as having tasted the sweetness in him, does not much mind the pitcher--he leaves the world behind.

Answer 6. True delight is constant. Hypocrites have their pangs of desire, and flashes of joy, which are soon over. The Jews did rejoice in John's light for a season, John 5.35. Unsound hearts may delight in the law of the Lord for a season; but, they will quickly change their note, "What a weariness is it to serve the Lord!" The Chrysolite, which is of a golden color, in the morning is very bright to look on--but towards noon it grows dull, and has lost its splendor; such are the glistening shows of hypocrites. True delight, like the fire of the altar, never goes out; affliction cannot extirpate it, Psalm 119.145. "Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me--yet your commandments are my delight."

Use 3. Exhortation. A persuasive to this holy delight in piety. Let me persuade Christians to labor for this holy delight. "Let your delight be in the law of the Lord." And that I may the better enforce the exhortation, I shall lay before you several weighty considerations.

1. There is that in the law of God which may cause delight; as will appear in two things. There is in it,

1. Truth.

2. Goodness.

1. Truth. The law of God is a book of truth, Psalm 119.160. "Your word is true from the beginning." The two Testaments are the two lips by which the God of truth has spoken to us. Here is a firm basis for faith.

2. Goodness. Nehem. 9.13. "You gave them true laws, good statutes." Here is Truth and Goodness; the one adequate to the understanding, the other to the desires. Now this goodness and excellency of the law of God shines forth in nine particulars.

1. This blessed law of God, is a love letter sent to us from heaven, written by the Holy Spirit, and sealed with the blood of Christ! Isaiah 62.5. "As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you;" and Hosea 2.19. "I will betroth you unto me forever in righteousness and in loving kindness, and in mercies." Is it not delightful reading over this love-letter!

2. The law of God is a light "which shines in a dark place," 2 Pet. 1.19. It is our pole-star to guide us to heaven; it was David's candle and lantern to walk with, Psalm 119.105. Now light is sweet, Ec. 11.7. it is sad to lack this light. Those heathen who have not the knowledge of God's law--must needs stumble into hell in the dark! Hierom brings in Tully with his oratory, and Aristotle with his syllogisms, crying out in hell. Those who leave the light of the word, following the light within them, as some speak, prefer the shining of the glow-worm before the radiance of sun.

3. The law of God is a spiritual looking-glass to dress our souls by. David oft dressed himself in this glass, and got much wisdom, Psalm 119.104. "Through your precepts I get understanding." This looking-glass both shows us our blemishes--and takes them away. The law of God is a looking-glass to show us our faces--and a laver to wash away our blemishes.

4. This law of God contains in it our evidences for heaven; would we know whether we are heirs of the promise, whether our names are written in heaven? we must find it in this law book, 2 Thess. 2.13. "He has chosen us to salvation through sanctification." 1 John 2.14. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;" and is it not comfortable reading over our evidences?

5. The law of God is an armory, out of which we must fetch our spiritual artillery to fight against Satan. It may be compared to the "Tower which David built for an armory, whereon there hang a thousand shields of mighty men," Cant. 4.4. It is called the "sword of the Spirit," Eph. 6.16. It is observable, when the devil tempted our Savior, he runs to scripture for armor, "it is written!" Three times Christ wounds the serpent with this sword! Mat. 4.4, etc. It is good having our armor about us, when the enemy is in the field.

6. The law of God is our spiritual remedy-book. When there is any disease growing in the soul, here is a remedy to take. If we find ourselves dead in duty, here is a remedy, Psalm 119.50. "Your word has quickened me!" If our hearts are hard, here is a remedy, "Is not my word as fire!" Jer. 23.29. This is able to melt the rock into tenderness. If we grow proud, here is a remedy, 1. Pet. 5.5. "God resists the proud." If there is any fresh guilt contracted, here we have a sovereign medicine to take, John 17.17. "Sanctify them through your truth." The law of God is like a garden of spiritual medicines, where we may walk and gather any herb to expel the poison of sin.

7. The law of God is a divine treasury to enrich us! Here are the riches of knowledge, and the riches of assurance to be found, Col. 2.2. In this law of God are scattered many truths as precious diamonds to adorn the hidden man of the heart. David took the law of God as his heritage, Psalm 119.111. In this blessed mine is hidden the true pearl of great price! Here we dig until we find heaven!

8. The law of God is our cordial in fainting times; and it is a strong cordial, Heb. 6.18. "That we might have strong consolation." They are strong consolations indeed, which can sweeten affliction, which can turn water into wine, that can stand against the fiery trial. "This is my comfort in affliction, for your word has

quicken me," Psalm 119.50. The comforts of the world are weak consolations; a man has comfort in health--but let sickness come, where is his comfort then? He has comfort in an estate--but let poverty come, where is his comfort then? These are weak consolations, they cannot bear up against trouble; but the comforts of Scripture are strong consolations, they can sweeten the waters of Marah. Let sickness come, the comforts of Scripture can allay and stupify it, "the inhabitant of the land shall not say--I am sick," Isaiah 33.24. Let death come, a Christian can outbrave it: "O death, where is your sting?" 1 Cor. 15.55. Is it not comfortable to have such a cordial lying by, as can expel the venom of death?

9. The law of God is manna. This heavenly manna suits itself to every Christian's palate. What does the soul desire? quickening? strengthening? He may find all in this manna!

2. Delight in piety crowns all our services. Therefore David counsels his son Solomon, not only to serve God--but to serve him "with a willing mind," 1 Chron. 28.9. Delight in duty is better than duty itself; as it is worse for a man to delight in sin, than to commit it. So delight in duty is to be preferred before duty: "O how love I your law," Psalm 119.97. It is not how much we do--but how much we love; hypocrites may obey God's law--but the saints love his law. Love carries away the garland.

3. Delight in spiritual things evidences grace; it is a sign we have received the spirit of adoption. A sincere child delights to obey his father. He who is born of God, is enobled by grace, and acts from a principle of sincerity; grace alters the bias of the heart, and makes the stubborn rebellious heart, into a willing heart. The Spirit of grace is called a free Spirit, Psalm 51. not only because he works freely--but because he makes the heart free and cheerful in obedience; a gracious heart does not act by constraint--but by free consent.

4. Delight in piety will make the business of piety more easy to us. Delight makes everything easy; there is nothing hard to a willing mind; delight turns piety into recreation; it is like fire to the sacrifice, like oil to the wheels. Like wind to the sails--it carries us full sail in duty! He who delights in God's way, will never complain of the ruggedness of the way; a child that is going to his father's house, does not complain of the difficulty of the way. A Christian is going to heaven in the way of duty; every prayer, every sacrament, he is a step nearer his Father's house! Surely he is so full of joy he is going home, that he will not complain of bad way. Get then this holy delight. Beloved, we have not many miles to go--death will shorten our way, let delight sweeten it!

5. All the duties in piety are for our good. We shall have the benefit; "If you are wise, you shall be wise for yourself," Proverbs 9.12. God has twisted his glory and our good together. "I gave them my laws so they could live by keeping them. Yes, all those who keep them will live!" Ezek. 20.11. There is nothing the Lord requires--but it tends to self-preservation. God bids us read his word, and why? this word is his will and testament wherein he makes over a great estate to be settled upon us, Col. 1.12; 1 John 2.25. "And this is the promise that he has promised us, even eternal life."

He bids us pray, and this duty carries food in the mouth of it, 1 John 5.14. "This is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." Ask what you will, he will sign your petitions. If you had a friend who should say, "Come to me whenever you desire, and I will furnish you with money," would you not delight to visit that friend! God will give to more than half the kingdom, and shall we not delight in prayer? God bids us believe, and there is a honey-comb to be found in this precept, "Believe and you shall be saved." Salvation is the crown that is set upon the head of faith! Well may the apostle say, "his commandments are not grievous." O then, if piety be so beneficial, if there is such gold to be dug

out of this mine, it may make us delight in the ways of God. What will entice us--if not self-interest?

6. How did Christ delight in the work of our redemption! "Lo, I come, I delight to do your will, O my God," Psalm 40.7,8. It is by expositors agreed that it is spoken mystically of Christ; when he came into the world to sacrifice his life for us, it was a free-will offering. "I have a baptism to be baptized with," Luke 12.50. Christ was to be, as it were, baptized in his own blood, and how did he thirst for that time? "How am I straitened until it be accomplished!" Did Christ so delight in the work of our redemption--and shall not we delight in his service? Did he suffer willingly--and do we pray unwillingly? Did he so cheerfully lay down his life for us--and shall not we give up our lives to him? Certainly if anything could make Christ repent of shedding his blood, it would be this--to see Christians so reluctant in duty, bringing it rather as a penance than a sacrifice.

7. Delight in God's service makes us resemble the angels in heaven. They serve God with cheerfulness; as soon as God speaks the word, they are ambitious to obey. How are they ravished with delight while they are praising God! In heaven we shall be as the angels; spiritual delight would make us like them here! To serve God by constraint, is to be like the devil; all the devils in hell obey God--but it is against their will, they yield a grudging obedience; but service which comes off with delight--is angelic! This is what we pray for, that "God's will may be done on earth--as it is in heaven;" is it not done with delight there?

8. His delight in God's law will not breed surfeit. Carnal objects often cause a loathing and nauseating; we soon grow weary of our delights; hence it is we change from one earthly vanity to another. Too much pleasure is a pain! But spiritual objects do not cloy or tire the soul; the more we study in the law of God, the more delight we find. And in this regard David might say, the words of God's mouth were "sweeter to his taste than honey," Psalm 119.103. because one may soon surfeit upon honey--but he can never surfeit with the word of God. He who has once, with Jeremiah, "found the word and ate it," Jer. 15.16. will not be cloyed with it! There is that savouriness in the word, that a Christian cries out, "Lord, evermore give me this bread!" There is that sweetness in communion with God, that the soul says, "O that I might be always thus!" He who delights in God, does not complain he has too much of God--but rather too little: he opens and spreads the sails of his soul to take in more of those heavenly gales, he longs for that time when he shall be ever delighting himself in the sweet and blessed vision of God!

9. Without this holy delight we weary both ourselves, and God. Isaiah 7.13. "Will you weary my God also?" Our delighting in God would make him delight in us. But when we begin to say "what a weariness is it to serve the Lord," God is as weary as we are; he is even sick of such services. When duties are a burden to us, they are a burden to God! When a man is weary of a burden, he will cast it off. Let all this quicken delight in God's service.

Use 4. Showing how a Christian may arrive at this delight in God's Law. For the attaining this blessed delight in the law of God, three things are requisite.

Direction 1. Set an high estimate upon Scripture; what the judgment prizes--the affections embrace. He who values gold, will delight in it. We are apt, through unbelief, to entertain slight thoughts of piety, therefore our affections are so slight. David prized God's statutes at a high rate; "More to be desired are they than gold, yes, than much fine gold," Psalm 19.10. and hence grew that inflamed love to them; "I will delight myself in your statutes," Psalm 119.16.

Direction 2. Pray for a spiritual heart. An earthly heart will not delight in spiritual mysteries; the earth puts out the fire. Earthliness destroys holy delight; get a spiritual palate, that you may relish the sweetness of

the Scripture. He who tastes the sweetness of honey, will delight in it. "If so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious," 1 Pet. 2.3. It is not enough to hear a sermon--but you must taste a sermon; it is not enough to read a promise--but you must taste a promise. When you have gotten this spiritual palate, then God's word will be to you "the joy and rejoicing of your heart," Jer. 15.16.

Direction 3. If you would delight in the law of God, purge out the delight of sin; sin will poison this spiritual delight. If you would have God's law sweet, let not "wickedness be sweet in your mouth," Job 20.12. When sin is your burden--Christ will be your delight!

Use 5. Thankfulness. Holy delight should cause thankfulness.

What cause have they to be thankful, who can find this spiritual delight in God! How did David bless God that he gave the people hearts to offer so cheerfully to the building of the temple; "Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?" Their willingness was more than their offering; so should a Christian say, "Lord, who am I, that I should offer so willingly? Who am I that I should have your free Spirit, and should serve you rather out of choice than constraint!"

It is a great blessing to have this promptitude and alacrity in God's service. Delight animates and enlivens duty; now we act to purpose in piety. Christians are never drawn so powerfully and sweetly, as when the chain of delight is fastened to their heart. Without this all is lost; our praying and hearing is like water spilt upon the ground. It loses both its beauty and reward. Then bless God, Christian, who has oiled the wheels of your soul with delight, and now you can "run and not be weary." For your comfort, be assured you shall not lack anything your heart can desire, Psalm 37.4. "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he shall give you the desires of your heart."

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