

Everything Your Heart Desires
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

“Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart” (Psalm 37:4).

Do you have everything your heart desires? Most of us would say no. But why not? God wants you to have them and tells you so in His Word. Let us first consider a few basic questions:

- Do you believe God loves you?
- Do you believe God wants the best for you?
- Do you believe God knows what is best for you.?

All three questions can be answered in the affirmative because God sees the complete picture, both time and eternity. In contrast, our culture does not distinguish between what we want and what is good for us. But God alone knows and wants what is truly beneficial.

Therefore, if I do not possess everything my heart desires, the problem may lie with me. My *foolish heart* may want something that will harm me physically and emotionally. My *selfish, sensual heart* may want something that would wreck my spiritual life and my relationship with both God and others. God loves me too much to permit that to happen.

Of course, I can rebel and say, “I want what I want, regardless of God’s will!” And God will grant me the freedom to go my own selfish way. But I must bear responsibility for my own wilful actions, and in the long run, they will lead to disappointment and disaster. Guilt is the jam we get ourselves into by eating forbidden fruit.

So, if I experience unhappiness and discontentment, perhaps I am grasping for things beyond my reach, beyond my means to obtain or my ability to perform. In other words, I am looking for answers outside the will of God. Therefore, when we do not have what we desire, we can conclude that our desires may be wrong.

But Psalm 37:4 says that, “He will give you the desires of your heart.” God will put into your heart the desire for things He wants you to have, and remember, He wants you to have the best.

Delight Yourself in the Lord

So, how does God put right desires in my heart? The answer lies in Psalm 37:4: “Delight yourself in the Lord!” How do you delight in someone? Surely it means to experience great pleasure and joy in his or her presence. That happens only when we know that person well. So, to delight in the Lord we must know Him better through daily prayer, worship, Bible study, confession and other spiritual disciplines.

This answers our deepest longings. The heart that delights in the Lord finds its truest joy

in the very One who is the end of our search and not the means to some further end. Any joy less than God's is too small to really satisfy. So, when I live in close fellowship with the Lord and delight in Him, He puts the desire in my heart for things best for me. Then, and only then, can I have everything my heart desires

“Deny yourselves lesser joys so you don’t lose the big ones. Don’t settle for anything else than full and lasting joy.” John Piper