SIMPLY

ENJOYING

GOD

Simple delight in the One who enjoys us

Murray Cresswell

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SIMPLY ENJOYING GOD

Preface

An easy to read devotional, exploring, not only why we can love God, but that we can also delight in Him and become believers who, with simple enjoyment, enjoy people and become enjoyable, or spiritually attractive, to fellow believers, and to those who do not know God - those who do not have an intimate, personal relationship with Jesus, and are unaware of the need to seek Him.

Scriptures unless noted otherwise are from The New American Standard Bible 1960 The Lockman Foundation
Scriptures noted NKJV are from The New King James Version 1982 Thomas Nelson
Scriptures noted NLT are from the New Living Translation 1988 Tyndale House Publishers Inc

Introduction

In a simple, readable format, the wonderful, life fulfilling, adventure of enjoying our God in a love relationship, can be discovered; instead of living a dull routine of just going to a church, just reading the Bible, or grudgingly doing what God has said we must do.
This wholesome adventure begins when we ask Jesus into our life, to be our personal Saviour and Lord, to take us from our sin filled hopelessness, into His will for our lives.
He guides and leads us to green pastures, quiet waters, and happy paths of righteousness because He loves us deeply and has 'a future and a hope and laid up for us,'(Ps 23:2-3, Jer 29:11) where we each can enjoy an intimate close walk, abiding in Him.
"Behold I stand at the door, and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him and dine with him and he with Me." Jesus - Rev 3:20 NLT

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1/ Preamble

"Then the Almighty will be your gold and choice silver to you. For then
then you will delight in the Almighty and lift up your face to God." Job 22:26

In this study we will travel through four challenging questions about
enjoying God in eighty-two short chapters, readings or devotionals, which can be read daily, or read simultaneously in longer readings.

1/ What is enjoyable about God? What causes us to delight in Him?

2/ How do we benefit from enjoying God? How does it enrich us?

3/ How can we enjoy God more? What do we need to think and do?

4/ Interspersed among the three questions we explore our fourth question,
Why so many believers do not enjoy God? This explores the many obstacles or numerous roadblocks, which prevent us delighting in Him.

(For my American friends please note that words such as favor, honor, splendor; are spelled with the 'u' after the 'o,' except when quoting a Scripture)

2/ Enjoying God and Loving Him

"Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart"
Ps 37.4

Quote "If you make the Lord the desire of your heart, He will give you your heart's desires." (unknown source)

Have you considered the simple enjoyment of God?

What is the difference between loving God and enjoying Him?

If you are married and deeply in love with your spouse, you will know that there are occasional times when you find, for you, no enjoyment in their quirkiness, temper, weaknesses, and their different perspective. We all wed a different person than ourselves in that they are not like us, and so we need to adapt to a foreigner. Always loving them, even if sometimes we do not enjoy them, yet at the same time ever so thankful they are not like us.
God is so very wonderful, but there are times when we do not enjoy the long waiting for answers to prayer, or His seeming distance, coupled with His annoying silences when He seems a million miles/kilometers away.
But God is a delightful, gracious, compassionate, loving, kind, Father who we can always delight in; because He knows, He cares, He believes in us. Every morning, we can rise, in confidence and joy, knowing that we are His special delight, that He is for us, that he has plans that are good for our life. Whereas love of God is the more important, prevailing and guiding wheel that steers our walk with Him, our

enjoyment of God is a lubricating oil that reduces the friction and allows a smooth simplicity and strengthening joy to permeate every part of our walk.

Quote "Rich are the moments of blessing; Jesus my Saviour bestows. Pure is the well of salvation fresh from His mercy that flows." Fanny J Crosby

"He delights in every detail of their lives." Psalm 37:23 NLT

GOD IS A GOD, OUR GOD, WHO CAN BE ENJOYED!

Joy verse "Come let us sing to the Lord. Let us shout joyfully to the Rock." Ps 95:1

"The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."
The Westminster Shorter Catechism

3/ Simply Take Delight

"Take delight in the Lord and He will give you your heart's desire."
Ps 37:4 NLT

We may emphasize the promise contained in this verse, for our 'heart's desire' to be given to us, however it is good to consider these words, 'take delight,' - that God is always a wonderful, delightful God who wants us to enjoy Him.
From one perspective we could say that our Father is an amazing, enjoyable, Person to find, to discover, and then know even more, and to enjoy His close friendship and care daily.This does not negate God's awesome, sovereign holiness, and that we fear Him in loving, reverential respect; but that He is an approachable Father, a Friend so filled with love, compassion, mercy, and faithfulness. Powerful and sovereign, kind and loving beyond words.
It is to our earthly and heavenly advantage to experience an enjoyable, experience with God that touches every part of our lives. We in turn reciprocate or offer back a responding love and delight in our God who declares His enjoyment of each one of us.

"…This I know that God is for me." Ps 56:9
"He will exult over you with joy." Zephaniah 3:17
"I shall delight in Your statutes." Psalm 119:16
"Your testimonies are my delight." Psalm 119:24
"Yet, Your commandments are my delight." Psalm 119:143

What is enjoyable about God?

4/ His Love

"I have loved you with an everlasting love, I have drawn you with loving kindness." Jeremiah 31:3
"For I am convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love. Neither death, nor life, neither angels or demons, neither our fears for today, nor our worries about tomorrow – not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below – indeed nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God, that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
Rom 8:38 -39 NLT

Gomer, Hosea's unfaithful wife, reduced to being sold as a slave, sees Hosea coming to her and buying her back for fifty shekels of silver. (Hos 3:2) Imagine how Gomer felt. Perhaps she said in her heart, 'Hosea you are such a fool coming back for me, I do not understand how you could still love me, yet I am glad to see you.'
This is an intense illustration of God's rich 'never give up' love. He shouts to us loudly in the same book, "Return to Me, I will heal your backsliding. I will love you freely." (Hos 14:3 NKJV) What love! 'Your love delights me, my treasure, my bride." (Song of Solomon 2:4) We enjoy His vast and immeasurable love as a responding love, for "we love Him who first loved us." (1 John 4:19)
God's love can be compared to a thirsty man at the shore of an enormous lake where he cannot see the distant shore. He drinks one, two, or three cups, and he is fully refreshed and strengthened with incredibly pure, life-giving water - but the lake is still full!
One hundred million men and women could also drink their cup of water, but the water level never changes.
Greater than this is the infinite level of God's love that remains unchanged. Nothing can separate, influence, diminish or increase His love thoughts towards us. "I though so unworthy, still am a child of His care. For His Word teaches me, that His love reaches me everywhere." (old chorus - unknown composer) With His love it is important to know that God has, in His character, all the fruit of the Spirit. One cannot give to others something that they do not have, and God bestows love, joy, peace long suffering, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control; to us, richly out of his loving heart

Prayer May Your love Lord, completely overflow us, that nothing else becomes more important

Quote "O the deep, deep love of Jesus, love of every love the best. Tis an ocean of blessing, tis a haven of rest, tis a heaven of heavens to me." S Trevor Francis

*Joy verse "Be joyful unto Him and bless His name." Ps 100:*4

5/ His Goodness

"The Lord is good to all. His mercies are over all His works. They shall eagerly utter the memory of Your great goodness." Ps 145:9,7
"The Lord is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes. He is close to those who trust in Him." Nahum 1:7 NLT

Enjoying God's goodness is so especially important to us in that it was the first attribute of God that was attacked by the devil, "Indeed has God really said.?" "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God..." (Gen 3:1,5) We interpret this as the serpent (Satan) saying, 'God is not good. He does not want you to be as great as Him or to live with no tangible need of Him'
God's goodness is the most attacked, most maligned, most misunderstood of all His attributes. When a house is destroyed by tornado or fire, or a marriage breaks up or in the worst event, a child dies; the cry goes out 'What sort of God would allow this to happen?' The only comfort in life's misfortunes is that life is unfair, yet God is good, and is a powerful refuge in times of sorrow, pain and evil.
The truth is no matter what happened or what is happening -good or bad in our life, God has good thoughts toward us, a good love for us, good daily provisions, good plans for us, good grace to us – so good in every way. His coming back in the Rapture (1 Thess 4:17) is a good and blessed hope for us, His future home for us in heaven is far over and above good -it is overwhelming and above anything we can see hear and imagine "From then will proceed thanksgiving and the voice of those who celebrate; And I will multiply them and they will not be diminished; I will also honour them and they shall not be insignificant." (Jer 30:19 NLT)
We can delight in coming anytime to "taste and see that the Lord is good." (Ps 34:8).

Prayer When we do good to others, help us Lord to remember it is because You have been good to us

Joy verse "I will rebuild you my virgin Israel.
You will be happy again and dance merrily." Jeremiah 31:4 NLT

6/ His Grace

"The Lord is gracious and merciful." Ps 145:8
"The Lord gives grace and glory." Ps 84:11
"Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive (falls short of) the grace of God." Heb 12:15 NLT

Someone has said "Love that goes up is called worship, love that goes out to others is called affection, love that stoops down to someone who is undeserving is called grace." Grace- the unmerited favour of God by which we come to enjoy a blessed

relationship, abiding in Jesus. Enjoy God's grace, never needing to remind Him that you do not deserve it. He delights in stooping down to lavish grace on us every day that He might show "the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph 2:7) By grace we live in an undeserved privilege, becoming such grateful people, saturated with favour, looking at the world through 'grace filled eyes.'
Peter, who is a trophy of God's forgiving empowering grace, urges us "to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Pet 3:18) Not law, not busy performance, not hard to reach standards, not religious monotony and drudgery; but free flowing, abundant, enjoyable, grace; richly lavished on us. We don't earn it, we have nothing to prove, it has nothing to do with us, and who we are;
Grace is not doctrine, it is a Person, our Lord Jesus, and it is all about His sacrificial performance in saving us. Grace pays us the same amount for one hour's work as others who have laboured all day.

Quote "I have found His grace is all complete. He supplies every need; while I sit and learn at Jesus' feet, I am free, I am free indeed." B E Warren

"But You Lord are a God, merciful and gracious," Ps 86:15
"Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim 2:1
"We believe that we are all saved the same way by the undeserved grace of the Lord Jesus ." Acts 15:11 NLT

Prayer Let us show grace to others Lord and to see the world through grace filled eyes

Joy verse "You fill me with joy in Your presence." Ps 16:11

7/ His Greatness

"Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised." Ps 48:1
"I will meditate on Your majestic, glorious splendour, and Your wonderful miracles." Ps 145:5
"For there is not a word on my tongue but behold O Lord You know it altogether." Ps 139:4 NKJV

"

God is great in every aspect – great love, great mercy, great faithfulness, great power, great love plus the other fruit of the Spirit; (Gal 5:22) and He is great in His sovereign control of this world and universe. "The Lord reigns. Let the earth rejoice. Let the many islands be glad, that our God reigns." (Ps 97:1)
The Psalmist repeats over and over God's enjoyable attributes, every one of which are defined by this word 'greatness.' This greatness is unfathomable. He is very much beyond, above, before, and will still exist, after time – and He does not bow down to its schedules and demands.
We can enjoy our mighty God who: held back a massive amount of water so that His children could walk through the Red Sea,
He who counts and names the stars, (Ps 147:5)
who waters the mountains, (104:8)

who knows of a sparrow's death
and the number of hairs on our head.(Matt 10:29-30)
As one song has stated 'He is big enough to rule this mighty universe, yet small enough to rule in our hearts' God's greatness is "greater than he who is in this world." (1 Jn 4:4)
In His temptation, Jesus at His weakest, was stronger than Satan at his strongest, dispelling the wicked attacks with His powerful handling of the Word of God.
We do not say to God, 'our problem is huge,' we say to our problem, 'our God is bigger, better, stronger, and much greater than any and every problem!'
"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God" Ps 147:2 NKJV

Quote "Great things he has taught us, great things He has done, and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son. But purer and higher and greater will be our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see." Fanny J Crosby

Prayer When I don't understand, Lord help me to trust You, because You understand.

Joy verse "You thrill me with all You have done for me…." Ps 92:4 NLT

8/ His Sovereignty

"For the Lord of hosts has planned and who can frustrate it. And as for His outstretched hand who can turn it back." Is 14:27
"But our God is in the heavens He does whatever He pleases." Ps 115:3
"The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the Lord." Ps 97:5
"The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord. He turns it wherever He wishes." Prov 21:1

We enjoy this attribute of God in that He is never once scratching His head thinking how such and such happened, or how to solve something else. He never says "Oops! I didn't see that coming!" The earth is never out of control and beyond God's ability to deal with it. "Behold the nations are a drop in the bucket." (Is 40:15)
God's sovereignty is seen in prayers not answered or delayed simply because He knows better and knows that there is a better, wiser way, or He knows that the answer which we so longed for, would hurt us. God, in His sovereignty even knew when each one of us would be born and when we someday chose somehow to come to know Him in salvation "Just as He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world that we should be holy, and without blame before Him in love." (Eph 1:4)
It has been said correctly about predestination, that we choose to enter the door of salvation then as we look back, God already has our name on the backside of that door. He has a good, perfect sovereign plan for each one of us. We can forever always delight in our God, because He is always totally in control for the good of all creation.

Quote " To all life Thou give to both great and small: In all life Thou live, the true life of all; we blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree, and wither and perish, but naught changes Thee." Walter Chambers Smith

Joy verse "They shall eagerly utter the memory of Your abundant goodness and will shout joyfully of Your righteousness." Ps 145:7

There are many obstacles or reasons why we do not enjoy God. Clearing ourselves of these roadblocks will give us deeper enjoyment, love and adoring uncluttered appreciation of all God is, and what He's not. In his beautiful homily, Paul described love by contrasting it with six internal unhealthy roadblocks, such as: envy, pride, parading self, behaving rudely, self-seeking, being touchy. (1 Cor 13:4-7) Heaven is described in Revelation 22 with five 'no mores,' such as: "no more sorrow no more pain…." When we recognize the harm inside these negative obstacles and ask God to take them away from us, we can then understand and grow in our delight of Him. These are interspersed among God's good, delightful qualities and the benefits of enjoying Him.

9/ 1st obstacle Not Understanding That We Can Enjoy Him

"Your consolations delight my soul." Ps 94:19
"Yet Your commandments are my delight. Ps 119:143

We were taught in the great stories in the Bible, how God did many mighty miracles, how He sent Jesus to die for us, how God loves us, knows us, answers our many prayers, stays with us always, protects and provides for us.
But we were never told that God is a Father that we can enjoy.
We missed reading between the verses in the Gospels that people enjoyed it when Jesus was around, unless they were the religious perfectionists.
The important teaching in the prodigal son parable is that he comes back and then finds a loving, gracious, enjoyable father who runs to him with joy, restoring him, instead of being a stern, punitive taskmaster. His mercy gave the son his job back and restored the father/ son relationship abandoned by the son. His grace provided a lavish, expensive party for his son.
Let us repeat this over and over, so that we can gain an eye-opening encounter of this vital truth, that God is a friendly, delightful God who takes pleasure in the loving relationship that He has with us, and who invites us to enjoy Him here on earth and throughout eternity. (By the way Jewish men never run.)

Prayer Let us never have the attitude of the brother of the prodigal son, work oriented, competitive and small minded lacking in grace

Joy verse "You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy" Ps 30:11

10/ His Mercy

"For He Himself knows our frame. He is mindful that we are but dust."
Ps 103:14
"The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger…" Ps 103 8 NKJV
"The Lord is good to all, and his mercies are over all His works." Ps 145:9

Mercy is a choice to withhold a penalty or a vengeance, to forgive, rather than hold a grudge against one who is undeserving of our mercy.
Jesus, in the rightful position of throwing the first stone, (John 8:7) chooses mercy and also says to us "Where are your accusers? Neither do I condemn you, Go and sin no more." (v 11) His mercies greet us fresh every morning (Lam 3:22 NLT), which, quoting one Bible teacher, 'is just as well because we used up all of yesterday's mercies.' His mercies are not a weak giving in to us, but strong and great - never to be overthrown, over run, prevailed against or even contraindicated. His mercy runs to our stark brokenness and with joy, places a ring on our soiled finger, a robe on our back, shoes on our feet. His mercies give us hope to carry on and relief from guilt and shame. "I, trust in the mercy of God forever and ever." (Ps 52:8) He will never need to recharge His mercy battery. It never runs out, for His mercies give us a reason to love, to hope in, and enjoy Him increasingly.

Quote "Mercy there was great, and grace was free, pardon there was multiplied to me. There my burdened soul found liberty, at Calvary." W R Newell

"Great are Your mercies O Lord;" Ps 119;156

"He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Ps 103:10

Joy verse "May all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You." Ps 40:11

11/ His Faithfulness

"It is good to proclaim Your loving kindness in the morning and Your faithfulness at night." Ps 92:2 NLT
"Your faithfulness reaches to the skies." Ps 36:5

Often, we are sincerely concerned about how faithful we are to God, hopefully never giving up, never leaving Him. But we can delight in this fact, that God is faithful to us – always. Sleepless, we can cry out to Him in the middle of night, and He is with us, true to His promise that He will never "leave us and never forsake us." (Heb 13:5)
He is a faithful God because He is a strong, loving God who forever believes in us. He considers faithfulness to be so valuable, because He Himself is so faithful, so true to His word and so good.
He is faithful because He can do no less. One day He will reward us with these wonderful words, "Well done good and faithful servant." (Matt 25:21 NLT) God sees

and rewards our faithfulness for He himself possesses it.
A common thought is repeated in Psalms. “Lord, the heavens glorify and praise Your wonders, Your faithfulness also.” (Ps 89:5) Because God never gives up on us. His faithfulness is a great truth that brings comfort, not a fear of being abandoned, It is a truth we can enjoy, in the same way His mercy is brought to us every morning.

Quote “Father like He tends and spares us; well our feeble frames He knows;
In His hands He gently bears us, rescues us from all our foes .” H F Lyte

Joy verse” Then I will go to the altar, to God my joy and my delight” Ps 43:4

12/ 2nd Obstacle Problems with Our Earthly Fathers

“As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities us.” Ps 103:13
“He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever.” v 10.

Many Bible characters had inadequate fathers, such as Joseph, Jacob, David, Josiah. Some were not great fathers such as Samuel and Ahaz or they suffered from an evil son yet were a good father (Manasseh and Hezekiah). Even if our fathers showed exemplary character and did many things for us, our heavenly Father is greater, for He is always perfect. It may be that we suffered from an abusive dad, an absent, incompetent, cruel, or busy dad, yet we come to an all knowing, loving Father. “Just as a father has compassion on His children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.” (Ps 103:13) Scripture proclaims that God is: tender hearted, merciful, loving, understanding. As seen earlier in the story of the prodigal son, our Father runs to us when we return to Him, with our impulsive pleadings and improper thinking that He will accept us as a servant -not as a son. (Luke 15:21) Instead, He lavishes grace upon us with shoes, rings and robes, and impromptu ‘fattened calf’ party. (v 22) God is this kind of father.
A child goes up to his busy father who asks him ‘What do you want?’ ‘Nothing! I just want to be with you.’ In the same way we can simply enjoy being in the company of our welcoming, joyful, kind, and enjoyable Father who, Himself, delights in us and values us more than we will ever understand.

Personal story. It took a while to realize that my Heavenly Father was so much different from my earthly father, with his many short comings, and that I had nothing to prove and everything to gain when I simply received, and then joyfully discovered the enjoyment I could have in God. My only regret is that it should not have taken so many years to realize that I can not only love, but that I also enjoy Him.

Prayer Lord help me not to see you like an earthly father, but to respond to You as a loving, faithful, perfect Father in heaven

Joy verse “Shout joyful praises to God all the earth.” Ps 66:1

13/ His Kindness

"For His merciful kindness is great toward us." Ps 117:2 NKJV
"What is desirable in a man is his kindness." Prov 19:22
"As God's partners we beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God's kindness and then ignore it." 2 Cor 6:1 NLT

Kindness is a benevolent giving attitude, seen in acts and speech; a quality most enjoyed by others who encounter and benefit from it, especially those that are in need of it. How much we need a dose of God's active kindness instead of cold, hard yet fair justice for our faults and our sins. His delightful kindness is evident in His care of us when we do not do the flawless, the 100% perfect
He is ever so "mindful that we are but dust." (Ps 103:4) God is a gentle, kind, Friend to the widow, the orphan, the poor and needy, the brokenhearted, the greedy tax collector in the tree, the repentant returning son. A wise person observed that God is always attracted to weakness.
In His kindness God is never harsh or mushy, patronizing, or soft. In His tender, caressing, yet powerful kindness, God restores the poor and all who come to Him in their many needs. His kindness is like a safe calm harbour in which we sail into, to rest, to be restored in our soul, to be equipped for the rough seas outside the sheltering calm.
In our many mistakes and character imperfections, we do well, when we accept that our loving, kind God is so very much bigger than our faults and seeks to wrap us in His overwhelming kindness.

Quote "Low at His feet lay thy burden of carefulness, high on His heart He will bear it for thee, comfort your sorrows, and answer your prayerfulness, guiding your steps as may best for thee be." J H B Mansell

"With the kind You show Yourself kind." Ps 18:25
"The Lord is kind in all His deeds." Ps 145:17

Joy verse "But may the godly be glad and rejoice before God." Ps 68:3

14/ The 3rd obstacle Religion

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, has set you free from the law of sin and death." Rom 8:2
'It was for freedom that Christ has set us free therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject to a yoke of slavery." Gal 5:1

This is the enemy's main attack, his ace up the sleeve, binding and enslaving us with heavy performance-based rules and rituals that hurt people, who are failing to achieve godliness in their own futile, sweat laden, strenuous efforts. Jesus exposed

and reproached hypocritical Pharisaic religion and the religious, from the beginning of His ministry, saying bluntly yet truthfully "to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, our righteousness needs to exceed that of the righteousness of the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees." (Matt5:20) and then He took religion and nailed it on His cross (Col 2:14). Jesus is "the end – the fulfillment - of the Law." (Rom 10:4) Everything religion tries to gain, Jesus achieved at the Cross, being our "way, the truth and the life," (Jn 14:6), not the strict observance of ceremonial rites and very many abundant laws.

It is ever so easy to adopt religious thinking, even after we have freely experienced 'grace borne' salvation. But if we try to get right with our God in striving through back breaking, soul discouraging works; we will never discover the delight that one can find in a close relationship with God, uncluttered and free How futile it is to adopt a wrong, baseless ideology that God wants more than what Jesus has already provided for us.

There is no enjoying God in this frustrated, perspiration soaked, bondage of striving performance. The letters to the Hebrews, Colossians, Romans and the Galatians; could perhaps have a unseen message or subtitle -'How to be a Christian without being religious.'

Prayer When I start to let a religious mind set take over Lord help me to remember it is God's grace that brought me this far and grace that will take me home

Quote "What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought, since Jesus came into my life I have light in my soul which so long I had sought, since Jesus came into my life." R H McDaniel

Joy verse "Happy are those who hear the joyful call to worship." Ps 89:15

15/ His Works

"May the glory of the Lord endure forever. May the Lord rejoice in His works."
Ps 104:31 NKJV

"All Your works shall give praise to You O Lord." Ps 145:10
"Come, see the glorious works of the Lord." Ps 46:8NLT

How good it is to arise in the morning, to think beyond our tight schedules, and the conglomeration of things we need to do; to consider the wonderful, vast, works of God, to enjoy all He does in creation, in all the mercies and miracles He has shown to others, plus our own story of His great compassion, mercy and protection.
We rejoice in the stories: of His bringing His children through the Red Sea,
using a courageous queen to undo Haman's evil plot,
revealing the king's dream to Joseph and to Daniel giving them great favour in the eyes of both rulers,
delivering His children from Haman's evil genocide,
rescuing Paul from shipwreck and snake bite;
and many beautiful and powerful examples of His power and loving grace.

How good, how helpful it is for us to remind ourselves and delight in His deliverance, the way God answered a great deal of our prayers,
the way He overlooks our very many abundant faults, yet sees our numerous needs, plus His incredible power, wonder, love and faithfulness.
We cannot fully answer the very many questions that God posed to Job (ch 38 -40), but we can always proclaim with delight, out of a grace saturated relationship with Him, what an awesome, majestic God, whose amazing works have already been experienced in us, by us, through us, in so many past days.
We continue to delight in the present many examples of His incredible works, just when we thought we had experienced the absolute thrill of all that He is and does.
And in our future we can thank God for the best that He has for us and will do for each of us yet to come. Our best days are coming.
"More than the sound of many waters, than the mighty breakers of the sea, the Lord on high is mighty." Ps 93:4

Joy verse "But blessed are the people whose God is the Lord." Ps 144:5

16/ His Creation

"You take care of the earth and water it, making it rich and fertile. The river of God has plenty of water, it provides a bountiful harvest of grain, for You have ordered it so." Ps 65:9 NLT
"For You created all things and by Your will they are created." Rev 4:11
"For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God has made, they can see His invisible qualities – is eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. Rom 1:20 NLT

One of the most fascinating animals in all of creation, the giraffe, needs very high blood pressure for blood to reach its head. However, when it lowers its head, God designed valves in its neck that regulate the blood flow preventing a fatal brain haemorrhage. This is a marvelous design that cannot be explained by evolution Studying and exploring Ps 104 leads us to comprehend the great awesomeness of Gods' ability to create and manage the world and to delight it.
Consider the water in your cup, in a previous lifetime may have flowed under the Thames, Mekong, Mississippi, or Murray rivers many centuries ago. The year in and year out, continuous cycle of rain falling to the earth, evaporating in the sun, and then storing up in clouds; is unfathomable to our perspective.
We can enjoy a zoo trip or watch a nature documentary, even more than unbelievers, for we know the loving heart behind the phenomenal wonder and beauty of sea, stars, storms, forests, mountains, birds, mammals, fish, insects; and so many other mind boggling displays of His good, overflowing, immense, creative power, of which, in our bodies, are an example.
One example of God's care is in the migration of birds and whales and how He protects them in adverse weather conditions on their long journeys. He carefully sustains us in the same way in our migration through life.
"The sun will not harm you by day nor the moon by night. The Lord keeps you from all harm and watches over your life.The Lord keeps watch over you as you come and go, both now and forever."
Ps 121:6-8 NLT

Quote " Summer and winter and seedtime and harvest, sun, moon and stars in their courses above, join with all nature in manifold witness, to Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love." Thomas Chisholm

Prayer Help us Lord to realize that just as all parts of creation have a purpose in being on or above the earth, so we, individually, live, move and exist as part of Your good plan.

Joy verse "Let the glory of the Lord endure forever. Let the Lord be glad in His works." Ps 104:31

17/ The 4th obstacle Performance Based Acceptance

"Not that we are adequate in ourselves, but our adequacy is in God." 2 Cor 3:5
"Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh.?"
Gal 3:4 NKJV

Part of religion involves this unpleasant, 'not so merry-go-round' of thinking God will accept us, based on what, and how, we perform. What basis? This wrong focus on us, traps us into futile striving, and again, more striving.
Consider this scenario. How much would God love us if we were in a coma in an ICU doing nothing – not even reading our bible? This concept, based on our performance, would then say, 'God would not love us, He will not accept us.
But Scripture says otherwise- that God loves us with an "everlasting love" (Jer 30:3), that cannot give up on us, regardless of what we think, what we did, or failed to do.
What a relief to turn from this worthless thinking, focusing instead on God, His loving kindness, His grace, His goodness, His power to save and His care for us, and how enjoyable it is to have a close, intimate relationship with Him.
He does not keep a performance evaluation clipboard, cruelly examining what we do. He loves us as a gentle "shepherd that holds the lambs in His arm and gently leads the nursing ewes."(Is 40:11).
What is sadly true is that many believers still succumb to this enjoyment robbing malady, because they continually focus on themselves. We need, importantly, to grow, and continue to develop to become "complete in Jesus" (Col 1:28), growing up into Him, in our thoughts, attitudes, love and caring kindness, dependent on the Holy Spirit, and not fixed on our own endeavors. (Eph 4:15, 2 Pet 3:18)

Prayer Help us to realize that the only performance that has any value is what Jesus achieved on the Cross and that we are crucified, buried and risen with, and in, Him

Joy verse "Blessed is the one who takes refuge in You." Ps 34:8

18/ His Provision

"No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly." Ps 84:11.
"The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need." Ps 23:1 NLT.

Taking another look at Ps 104 reveals a beautiful view of God blessing His creation. We rejoice in that we are of no less value than the mountains, the cattle, the birds of the air, who enjoy God's provision for all that they need. An old writing declares we have the same right to be here as the trees and the stars.
Psalm 104 finishes with a great promise, "I will sing to the Lord as long as I live. I will be glad; I will be glad in the Lord." (v 33,34). Consider the water we drink, the food we eat, the roof we live under, the car or bicycle we use for trips and pleasure, the city or town we live in, our friends who inspire, cheer and comfort us, our health, our sleep and that we get up out of our bed when there are so many who

cannot do so today and some who will never get out of bed again.
Therefore, we do well to acknowledge and enjoy all that God has given to us.
He provides us more than material possessions, though they are so necessary.
He lovingly provides to us a heart that can enjoy Him, a searching deep within us for more of Him. To repeat Psalm 92:4 NLT, "You thrill me with all You have done."
And Ps 63:5 "You satisfy me more than the richest feast." (NLT).
Why not delight in God's good, benevolent, lavish, provisions, with an increasingly thankful heart, never taking them for granted, or forgetting them.

"The cold wind in the winter the pleasant summer sun, the ripe fruits in the garden, He made them one and all. He gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell how great is God Almighty, who has done all things well." C F Alexander

Joy verse "I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints will sing for joy."
Ps 132:6

19/ God's Protection

"The Lord protects all those who love Him. But he destroys the wicked." Ps 145:20

"For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways."
Ps 91:11

"The Lord has set apart the godly for Himself." Ps 4:3

Understanding and enjoying God's protection, is a matter of remembering that while our enemy seeks to "kill, steal, and destroy" us, (John10:10) God is stronger, greater, bigger and better than the devil, and surrounds us with His protection. Jesus is the stronger man in the parable who ties up the strong man and then plunders his house (Mark 3:27).
His will for our lives cannot fail. He will "complete the good work that He began in us." (Phil 1:6 NKJV) "The Lord will guard your coming in and going out" (Ps 121:8).
It is great to know we are invincible until Jesus comes for us. No enemy, no illness, can stifle, thwart or negate His plans for our lives and "Nothing can separate us from His love." (Rom 8:38) It is such a comfort that nothing can happen to us, until it first goes through God's permissive hand.' "Just as the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people, both now and forever." Ps 125:2 NLT

Prayer In personal, present, danger; help us to recall Your protection is greater than the enemy's desire against us

Joy verse "But I trust in Your unfailing love. I will rejoice because You have rescued me *Ps 13:5 NLT*

20/ The 5th obstacle Legalism

"The letter kills but the Spirit gives grace." 2 Co 3:8
"Why, as if living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations – 'Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,' which all concern things which perish with the using – according to the commandments of men?" Col 20-22

Legalism often involves childish rules that are not based on Scripture and has a wrong focus on what we do, how we do it, and what we cannot do. One lady in USA said to me, that as a child, her siblings and her had to take numbers out of a bag to use in a game because dice were evil and not to be used.
My good father had strict rules that prevented many things on Sunday because it was supposedly a more holy day than the other six days. People scornfully observe legalistic believers and then conclude that they do not want to live such a morose, dull, strict existence. Instead, they want to live without being tied down to traditions and dull, joy -sapping, restrictions .
Religion can make us unnatural and weird, yet the closer we are to God, the more natural we become. Legalistic believers have just enough of Jesus to be miserable, but not enough to enjoy His grace. Jesus understood this when He said, "Come unto Me all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt 11:29)
Come away from weary, ineffective rules and rigid performance-based slavery.
"Abide in Me drawing up all you need from Me." (John 15:4)
Non-believers often are attracted to Christianity when they see a free, cheerful believer who is not bogged down by legalism, and who walks a spontaneous, enjoyable, quiet, refreshing walk in, and guided by, the Spirit. Read 3 John and note the burdensome, unpleasant legalism of Diotrephes bullying people under him, stopping others from receiving other leaders, and talking disparagingly about those above him. Let us learn from his self-seeking, legalistic, bullying.

Joy verse "I will be glad and exult in You I will sing praise to Your name." Ps 9:2

21/ God's Wonderful Timing

"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." John 11:32
"Now Saul waited seven days according to the appointed tiet by Samuel, but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people were scattering from him. So, Saul said, "Bring to me the burnt offering and the peace offerings." And he offered the burnt offerings." 1 Samuel 13:8-9

Martha and Mary discovered in and beyond trouble and disappointment, that Jesus came when He chose to, not the day when they wanted Him to come. As Naomi found, when Boaz showed interest in Ruth, enjoyment of God's timing would come later, after great disappointment, when she looked back and discovered that God was at work in His time – right on time – right on His schedule. Perhaps in her heart. Naomi was praying God, I thought You did not care, but You were there all the time.' Ruth meets Boaz at the right time. Mordecai and Esther also found out

God had evil Haman under His control and in His hand. It is in these delays we find every path and circumstance God has used to bring us to the place and to the sure success each of us enjoy right now.
As said earlier God does not bow down to the demands of time, for He is so above and beyond it. God has His good reasons to do things His way, because He is perfect (Is 55:9) Unanswered questions are a necessary part of a vibrant healthy faith, and because we don't know it all, but we have a God who uses and skillfully works around time and will not serve it, but instead He governs over time to accomplish His plans and purposes.
God answers prayer sometimes straightaway and sometimes a good deal later Because He does not come when we expect Him and His delays are unbearable, let us not copy Saul's hasty error in 1 Samuel 13 when he offered that which he was not permitted to offer.

"And as soon as he finished offering the burnt offering, then behold Samuel came, and Saul went out to greet him." 1 Sam 13:10

Joy verse "Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord be glad." Ps 105:3

22/ God's Sense of Humour

"The Lord make His face to shine upon you…" Num 6:24
"I will rejoice in the God of my salvation…" Habakkuk 3:18

This concept may seem a strange thing to some, but God has a beautiful sense of humour, unseen, unfelt, unbelieved, by agnostics, mockers, and dull religious people.
His humour is seen in; babies learning to walk, kittens and puppies pouncing on seen or unseen prey, baby elephants trying to boss everyone around, dolphins surfing because they find surfing to be fun; plus, many other young animals clumsily tripping while playing. In their unrestrained and sometimes irresponsible delight, we also see God's unbridled delight in them and also in us. Avoid any thoughts of a dull, angry, joy killing God. He "delights over us with joy." (Zep 3:17)
He "directs our steps and delights in them." (Ps 37:23)
Not a humourless, legalistic, mean- hearted, 'joy sapping' Father; but a joyful God, who enjoys each of us with our habits, mannerisms, quirks, individuality, thoughts, clumsiness, facial expressions, favourite sayings, food preferences, hobbies, facial expression, the things that delight us, and more.
No one cannot give what they do not have in the first place, and our amazing, happy God gives us joy from His joyful nature and pleasure, that He Himself has. He is a joy giver, because He Himself possesses great, everlasting and abundant joy.

"Do not sorrow for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Neh 8:10 NKJV

Joy verse "These things I have spoken unto you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full." Jn 15:11

23/ 6th obstacle Liberalism

" If you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness and wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal 5:18 -21 NLT This loose living behaviour is seen in an foolish question, 'How much can I get away with and still be called a Christian?'
The 'sort of life' in the above verse includes all kinds of debauched, loose living, 'God doesn't mind what I do because He loves me,'and 'I will do what I want to,' which lead non-believers to conclude there is no tangible difference between living a Christian life and living without God. We must prevent this from becoming our attitude and action. The Bible says, "we are to shine a bright light into darkened lives and perverse living." (Phil 2:15).
"God's grace teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present age." (Tit 2:12). We are different! We are the only letter from God that people read, the only Jesus they see. Therefore, we do not participate in shameful ways of darkness, and even if worldly people and our family think we are weird, they still search for a real answer as to why they should know God. It has been said 'Live your life so that unbelievers will doubt their nonbelief in God.' Liberalism destroys an enjoyable walk with God in our 'we love Jesus, but we will do whatever we want' attitude. It seduces us into wrong thinking that life is all about us, not God, and not holy living that pleases Him, and not about other believers.

Joy verse "Let my meditation be pleasing to Him. As for me. I will be glad in the Lord.". *Ps 104:35*

24/ His Belief in Us

"…He who began a good work in you will complete it at the day of Jesus Christ."
Phil 1:6
"I am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day.'
2 Tim 1:12 NKJV

As seen before, God's good desire is to" perfect that which concerns you." (Ps 138:8) Jude wrote, "He is able to keep us from stumbling." (v24) God wants to bless us in our going out, our coming in, in our sitting, in our standing. "I cry out to God who will fulfill His purpose for me"(Ps 57:2 NLT). "The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, His ears are open to their cry (Ps 34:15)
The Lord loves our prayers and is very patient when we fail. We are His handcrafted "workmanship created for good works in Christ Jesus."(Eph 2:10) He is so glad

when each of us "walks in the truth." (2 Jn 4) His faithfulness toward us and the individual plan He has for us, is a steadfast, perfect, and loyal love that will never let us go because in love, He believes in us, as individual believers and members of His Body, the church. (1 Jn 3:1) "When I cry out to You, then my enemies will turn back; This I know, that God is for me." (Ps 56:9 NKJV)
"For I am the Lord Your God who upholds your right hand. Who says, 'Do not fear, I will keep you." (Is 41:13)
How blessed, how happy, it is for us to enjoy a powerful, all conquering God who truly looks down and believes in each one of us and has good plans for us that take us further than we could go individually.

Joy verse "If God is for us, who can be against us." Rm 8:31

25/ His Care of Us

"When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up – the flames will not consume you." Is 43:5
"I will fear no evil for You are with me, Your rod and staff comfort me." Ps 23:4

We have a sympathetic High Priest who understands us because He believes in us knowing just how much we can endure, while He trains us to be the best that we can be. Jesus knows well what temptation can do, for He endured every testing, but did not yield or quit. It has been said, 'Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.' God knows! God cares!
Jesus showed remarkable care and compassion to each man and woman in His: dining and enjoying sinners, to the short tax collector up a tree, the lady with a bleeding disorder, the blind man at the side of the road, the servant of the Roman centurion, to the lady accused of adultery, the widow bereaved in her son's passing, Peter chastened after his denial, and even the man who came to arrest Him and lost his ear.
We can enjoy His same care for us, for Jesus has no favourites. He cares for us because He cannot help but be concerned and sympathetic when we are: betrayed, abandoned, sick, hurt, persecuted, ostracized, misjudged and in trouble, due possibly to our faults and more probably other people's mistakes. He is deeply, compassionately, overwhelmingly, in love with us.

Quote "In all the world around me, I see His loving care, and though my heart grows weary I never will despair., The Hope of all who seek Him, the Help of all who find, none other is so loving, so good so kind." A H Ackley

Joy verse "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Rm 14:7

26/ 7th obstacle Comparing Ourselves With Each Other

"If you do your work well, you have the great satisfaction of a job well done and do not need to compare your work with others." Gal 6:4 NLT
"But when they (the Judaizers) measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding." 2 Cor 10:12

The heart that constantly compares can create many things which are not good such as jealousy, and envy, producing a root of bitterness. Perhaps this need to compare comes from rejection or insecurity in our hearts. These futile comparisons are based on how better others do many things better than us or look better than us. Or maybe unhealthy comparisons that may make us think that we are better than others. You may remember this misguided statement in a parable "Thank God I am not like others, especially that tax collector over there." (Luke 18:11).
In John 21 Peter asks the Lord What about John? - and was gently rebuked that what the Lord had for John was not Peter's business
As stated earlier, we and other believers are a good work started by, and that will be completed by, God (Phil 1:6). Our joy can be seeing others saved, joy in how they now love God, and joy in that they are doing things with His help to further the gospel and bring glory to Him.
Our delight in this can then lead us to encourage them to become the best person they can become and enjoy them without jealousy, prejudice, or needless comparison as to whether they are better than ourselves.

"Be happy with those who are happy, weep with those who weep." (Rom 12:15)

"…if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it." 1 Cor 12:26

Joy verse "You Lord have put gladness and greater joy in my heart, than those who have abundant harvests of grain and new wine." Ps 4:7

27/ He Delights in Us

"Others were given in exchange for you, I traded their lives for yours, because you are precious to me. You are honored and I love you." Is 43:4 NLT
"..for He satisfies the longing soul and fills the hungry with goodness." Ps 107:9.

Our God governs the universe and tells the sea where to stop, the land to reach, yet He looks at us, He knows our ways, (Ps 1:6) and He takes pleasure in us. Consider these happy verses: He "delights in our prayers." (Prov 15:8 NLT) "A good man will obtain favor from the Lord." (Ps 12:2) We see Jesus' rejoicing with Matthew, (Mt 9:10) and Zaccheus,(Lk 19:9), enjoying the everyday common rabble, and His enjoyment with children. (Mk 10:16).
God delights in us more when we do what is right, rather than offering sacrifice. (Prov 21:3). How enjoyable it is to rise every morning and say, 'I enjoy my loving, and good Father who always delights in Me.' His delight is seen in Numbers 6:24

"The Lord bless you, and keep you, the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you." 'He will take great delight in you He will quiet you with His love. He will rejoice over you with singing."(Zep 3:16)
This has been stated before and needs to be repeated over and over We need not think of God as a solemn, taskmaster with a clipboard, scowling over our imperfect performance. That is not the God of the Bible, - our God. Perfect - yes, but not a perfectionist who is critical over our imperfect 99% score, our inadequacies, our many weaknesses.

Quote "A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord, a wonderful Saviour to me. He hides my soul in the cleft of the rock, where rivers of pleasure I see." Fanny J Crosby

"The Lord favors those who fear Him." Ps 147:11

Joy verse "Serve the Lord with gladness Come before Him with joyful singing" Ps 100:2

28/ 8th Obstacle False Teaching

"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception according to the tradition of men." Col 2:8
"Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings." Heb 13:9
"Do not get involved in foolish discussions about spiritual pedigrees or in quarrels and fights about obedience to Jewish laws. These things are useless and a waste of time." Tit 3:9 NLT

We are told in Scripture false teaching will increase even more, quietly introducing insidious, blatant, and cunning doctrine, which has nothing to do with holy living; but instead filling men with hollow nonsense and vain arguing and disputations over words. The issue with false teaching apart from it being erroneous is that it clouds our thoughts, pollutes our perspective, clutters our daily lives, distracting us from the simple enjoyment in God. It even suggests that God is a God we cannot delight in.
Those who peddle false doctrine and unbiblical theories often produce a dull insipid religiosity, filled with mean spirited legalism, barren of the warm delight and love of God, obsessed with complex wrangling over legalistic, empty word, to the ruin of the hearers. (note 2 Tim 2 :140
An important question to ask when we are not sure about a strange new teaching. 'Does this new teaching help me in my closeness, my love to, and delight in Jesus? Adding a subsequent question, do the leaders of my church believe and teach this new doctrine?
After many tedious hours of training in close examining authentic bank notes an expert can easily spot a counterfeit bank note after so much studying the real thing. Our ability to distinguish and avoid counterfeit doctrine lies in our healthy grasp of what the Bible says, expertly handling the sword of the word sound in doctrine.
Do not let them waste your time in endless discussion of myths and pedigrees.

These things only lead to meaningless speculations which do not help people live a life of faith in God." 1 Tim 1:4 NLT

Joy verse "How joyful are those who fear the Lord and delight in obeying His commands." Ps 112:1

29/ His Compassion

"This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses for He faced all the same testing we face, yet without sin." Heb 4:15 NLT
"The Lord is merciful and gracious, full of compassion, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy." "The Lord is good to all." Ps 103:8, 145:8 NKJV

Jesus showed compassion on, and was moved to help, the multitudes. (Mk 8:2) Compassion is being moved with kindness, not unfeeling pity. Jesus went about each day experiencing the sting of temptation as mentioned early on. He has suffered and understands our experience what it feels to be hurt by others. He knows our sadness, our weakness, the easy lure of sin and what we are going through (even more than we understand why) and what we are feeling.
In the second verse it says God is slow to anger, this being a loving, kind, enjoyable, aspect of His good character. He is not a peevish, bad tempered, resentful, vengeful, God. In the words of a song 'He looked beyond our faults and saw our need.'
To paraphrase a beautiful song, 'God has all the time in the world for you, and He (lovingly knows) what temptation can do.' Our gentle Shepherd is not at all surprised at our weaknesses. He understands us when we confess, we cannot handle them. He can accomplish "infinitely more than we might ask or think," (Eph 3:20) He is our loving, compassionate, supernatural, power filled, Friend.
"My constant Companion, my Guide and my Friend, my Saviour, my Keeper is He
His love and compassion will nevermore end. In life or death, He keeps me."
Haldor Lilenas
Prayer You have lavished compassion onto me, so fill my heart, Lord, with similar compassion in listening to the hurting and needy people I meet each day.

Joy verse "Let your eyes delight in My ways." Prov 23:26

30/ 9th Obstacle Extremism

"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." Ph 1:21
"Until we all attain to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph 4:13

This unbalanced thinking causes us to become obsessed with one area which in balance may be a good thing to study and believe in. However it may be an obsession with an unbiblical unhealthy concept. Examples of this are: Hyper faith

(or faith in our faith), the nation of Israel and its people, which music genre in Christian music is or is not holy, dreams, goals, prophesying, and many more, which are over- emphasized though good in themselves.
These super spiritual devotees accuse others of not having faith or having supposed unconfessed sin, because they did not receive a healing, or that all sickness comes from sin; and they even think that other believers are inferior to them because they do not live to the same intense, holy passion, they themselves apparently have. Forever arguing over the topic of demons, spiritual gifts, the proper length of real praying and other 'God told me, extremes'; these people demonstrate proud arrogance and haughty 'better than others' attitudes, seemingly competing to be the most spiritual. They would even judge wrongly that any enjoyment of God is a shallow, and so childish, silly, concept for the immature.
But possessing a simple, humble, happy delight in God, which does not clutter our lives with the complicated and irrelevant or think itself superior to others, is so much healthier, so much better, for us, and for our true fellow believers as we show simple, thankful, and very grateful enjoyment.

"For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves." 2 Co 10:12

Joy verse "How amazing are the deeds of the Lord. All who delight in them shall ponder them." Ps 111:2

31/ What We See In Jesus

"And He is the radiance of His glory, and the exact representation of His nature and upholds all things by the word of His power." Heb 1:3
"Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son does not have life. And we know that the Son of God has come and given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." I Jn 5:12,20 NKJV

"If God, the wonderful heart at the back of the universe, is like that beautiful individual of enormous compassion and massive integrity, who went around doing good, healing, teaching, touching; He can have my heart without reservation."
(quote from an unknown source)
Jesus infuriated the religious hypocrites, yet the ordinary men and women loved His beautiful, authentic. sometimes easy to understand teaching, and to be so amazed and exhilarated by His teaching, (Matt 7:28) and His company. It is likely that Jesus went to the wedding at Cana just to enjoy others and have fun, in His socializing with ordinary village people.
We see in Him, a warm, loving, sympathetic, man; attracting children, easy to admire and easy to love, quick to forgive, inspiring in conduct.
We see Jesus in control of every situation: controlling the winds and waves, healing on the Sabbath, placing a coin in the mouth of a fish where Peter would catch it,

baking fish on the seashore, allowing a sinful lady to wash His feet with her hair, calling a despised tax collector out from a tree to a banquet; and many more examples.
Enjoying the Christian life is both living with and enjoying Jesus, our Saviour.

(Two very recommended books about Jesus are 'Rabboni.' by W Philip Keller and ' 'The Jesus I Never Knew.' by Philip Yancey)

"They said to each other "Didn't our hearts burn within us as He talked with us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?" Luke 24:32 NLT

Joy verse "The humble will delight themselves in abundant prosperity." Psalm 37:11

32/ 10th Obstacle Anger or Disappointment in God

"Master. Doesn't it seem unfair to You that my sister just sits there while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me." Luke 10:40 NLT
"Where are Your former loving kindnesses O Lord, which You swore to David in Your faithfulness?" Ps 89:49

Perhaps these words apply to us also. We are disappointed, we are frustrated, and very annoyed that God would take away a carefully thought-out plan, or some person we needed. We are angry that He did not answer our prayers offered time and time again, especially when a fellow believer received the same prayer answer instantly.
We mustn't think it unfair that God's ways are higher than our ways, "His thoughts are greater than our ways." (Is 55:8.) Spiritual maturity and a real life, having, simple delight in God start and grow when we allow God to control and oversee all events and circumstances in our lives even when we do not understand why.
Martin Luther said, 'A real Christian crucifies the word 'why.' God is allowed to be generous to the workers who began work at 5:00pm, paying them the same wage as the 7:00 am workers. (Matt 20:13-15) God, being an above all - perfect, sovereign, enjoyable God, does whatever He pleases, because He is God (Ps115:3) He does not need to explain why He does or does not answer our prayers or fulfil our deepest, longed for, desires
We surrender our agendas, our tantrums and our insomniac, frustrations, to our loving, powerful, good Father and then take delight in Him, knowing no matter what, He knows, He cares, He loves us. Martha in the words of a book title 'came to love Jesus late,' surrendering her frustrated perspective, her ideas on when Jesus should come and why He will not ask Mary to help her. She found in her Lord One who is sovereign, yet loving.
I was frustrated when I suffered a leg injury that had me on crutches and prevented me as a police chaplain travelling to Ground Zero New York to assist the officers. Had I been able to go I would have died soon after from the very toxic air from the collapsed buildings and soot from the jet fuel.
God often gives us something painful to prevent something fatal occurring later on.

Joy verse "Light shines on the godly, and joy on the upright." Ps 97:11

33/ What God is Not - Helps Us to Enjoy Him

"In hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised long ago."
Tit 1:2
"There is nothing too hard for You." Jer 32:17 NKJV
"Ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock! His work is perfect." Deut 32:3

By this heading, we mean the things God will not do and cannot be; If He did, He would be less than God. We enjoy God because He is perfect, and He will not and cannot condescend to give up one of His attributes to employ another.
Using eight examples: He cannot reject us when He promised He would never desert us (Heb 13:5) even though He feels distant sometimes. "Greater is He who is us than He who is in the world." (I Jn 4:4)
God cannot yield to the inept desires of the devil or yield to his evil plans.
He cannot fail, "who always leads us in triumph in Christ." (2 Co 2:14)
He cannot give up on us, "I will never desert or forsake you." (Heb 13:5)
He will not suspend His care of us because He is too busy with others,
He never has and He never will have, favourites, and will never stop His good plan and will for our lives, (Jer 29:11)
Our beautiful wonderful God will never fail to "watch over us and keep us," (Ps 121:3)
He will not let evil or harm overtake us. "The Lord will protect you from all evil."
(Ps 127:7)
As our lead verse states, there is no falsehood in God. There is nothing that can be said of God, that he failed or He couldn't withstand. These are His divine, perfect, characteristics in which we can unequivocally and joyfully delight in. We can parallel a statement such as 'Your word is truth,' adding on 'You never ever lie,' or 'You are faithful, so You will never leave us,' or 'You are a good shepherd so You never hurt us or mistreat us in any way.'

Joy verse "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning."
Ps 30:5

34/ 11th Obstacle Perfectionism .

"Assuredly I say to you Unless you are converted and become like little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." Matt 18:3 NKJV
"For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." Matt 5:20

Our parents inherited this affliction from their parents, always dissatisfied with anything less than ideal. Whatever happened to bring about this damnable bondage, it reduces us to terrible discontent and toxic hurtful frustration with any

effort that is not flawless, whether it was other's efforts or our own; often couched in this phrase, 'it is not good enough!
Jesus had little or no trouble from the roman soldiers (until His trial) but faced continual strife and nauseating enmity from religious perfectionists, and He dealt with them in needful harshness. How sad to have to be spoken to by God harshly. Someone has described perfectionism as a "tyranny of the 'ought's' One pastor counsellor says this counselling problem walks into his office more than any other. How dare we force unattainable perfection on ourselves and then with disguised brutality, load it onto the shoulders of others, robbing others, and us, of enjoying our kind and compassionate Shepherd who "gently leads those with young and who carries the lambs in His arms" (Is 40:11)
Let us avoid this tyranny of 'its not good enough,' and instead humbly, simply enjoy God with our responding love, never burdened down with a misery causing performance clipboard of unachievable standards, filled with the added problem of empty, insecure inadequacy. The answer to perfectionism is grace – simple and enjoyable, freedom saturated, empowering, grace, blessing our own perspective and efforts and in kindness saving others from our wearisome demands.

'He has brought us by faith into this underserved privilege..." Rom 5:2 NLT

"My grace is sufficient for you for My power is seen best in weakness."
2 Cor 12:9

Joy verse "The godly man will be glad in the Lord and will take refuge in Him."
Ps 64:10

35/ Enjoying God Because He Is a Rewarder

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."
Heb 11:6 NKJV
"But He who sows righteousness gets a true reward." Prov 11:18
"His master said to him," Well done good and faithful servant; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.' " Matt 25:21,23
"All who are victorious with Me: I will give fruit from the tree of life".
"..you will not be harmed by the second death."
" ..I will give some of the manna that has been hidden away in heaven."
"…To them I will give authority over all the nations,…"
"..they will be clothed in white I will never erase their name from the Book of life, but I will announce before My Father and His angels that they are Mine."
"..they will become pillars in the temple of My God, and they will never have to leave it." "They will sit with Me on My throne." Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26, 3:4, 12, 21 NLT

The above verses, plus many more, remind us that: for every large or small task, every time we read our Bible, prayed, witnessed to others, attended our church,

spoke a prayer in the service, preached a sermon, arranged the flowers, stacked chairs, visited sick brothers and sister, arranged emergency meals, served on the board, gave to missions, forgave an enemy, set a role model as a parent, endured cruel hardship; these small acts of serving God are superseded by the infinitely large reward He will lavish on us, and the crowns in heaven which we will then laat His feet.
With all the cruelty inflicted upon Paul unjustly, he still could say, "our present troubles (light afflictions) are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever (2 Cor 4:17 NLT)
Despite the enduring pain from the scars of the whip, the rod, and the stones, he could compare them with the forthcoming glory of the third heaven that He witnessed for a brief moment. (2 Co12:2-4)
As said before, our best days are coming, and they are extravagant infinite and undefinable, because that is who, and what, our generous God is, how He thinks, and what He is like. Let us thank God for our past in all He has done for us, thank Him for our present in what He is doing right now, and thank Him for our future, "the light of dawn that shines brighter and brighter until the full day" (Prov 4:18)

"For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise." Heb 10:36 NKJV

Joy verse "How I delight in Your commands. How I love them." Ps 119:47

36/_ 12th obstacle Critical Negative Spirit

"…Nor grumble as some of them did and were destroyed by the destroyer."
1 Co 10:10
"But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another." Gal 5:15 NLT

So easy it is to for all of us to pick apart, bicker, gripe, complain, and refocus onto what is wrong; not what we can be thankful for and blessed with. The pessimist's cup is half empty, the optimist's cup is half full, but the believers cup in Ps 23:5 is overflowing.
None of us live in an ideal world with ideal churches with perfect size, location, perfect friends, or pastors, Instead, it is important that we all live in, accept and enjoy the actual and real, working gradually and gently for the better.
It is also good to "make allowance with each other's faults..." (Col 3:13), simply because we have numerous faults ourselves, a log in our own eye, that we "with tender hearts, forgive one another as God in Christ has forgiven us." (Eph 4:32)
Start listing all that we appreciate and can be thankful for that which is around us: Our salvation, marriage, family, transport, church, food in the supermarkets petrol/gas in the fuel outlet, health, friends, country, city, town, ……Tell God all about them. Declare to others our many benefits with an attitude of gratitude.
Some readers may have been hurt by cruel criticism from others. Some critics

provoke so because they are weak, others may do so to control others out of deep insecurity. A question to confront the jibe or accusation - Was there any truth in it? Is there an area pointed out in the rebuke that needs correction? If it was non- productive and without foundation, let it drain away and not be defiled by their bitterness. Successful people seem to be always criticized more than the unproductive crowd with their multitude of unproductive words. When we choose to avoid envy and naïve misunderstandings, the result in our spirit is tender hearted magnanimity.
"I am not going to be tied up with hard critical feelings about your weaknesses, for I have some also!"

Joy verse "Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy." Ps 126:5

37/ A Refuge when Tempted

The temptations in your life are no different from what others have experienced And God is faithful He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so you can endure."
1 Co 10:13 NLT

We all face temptations according to our own peculiar weaknesses and our own strengths, which may be an area that those closest to us have no issue with. An example may be in controlling our tongues from uttering unwholesome words, (Eph 4:29) whereas our close friend may have trouble with their eyes and lustful thoughts, whenever they see a very attractive person of the opposite sex.
Enjoying God and growing in our love for Him assists us when we ourselves are weak, to run to Him, with a plea for help. I remember observing this in a cute, yet poignant Christian poster showing a kitten with its paw raised toward a goldfish in a bowl with the words that said, 'Lord, help me when I don't want to be good.'
"Therefore, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus…"
"Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb 10:20, 4:16)
God knows and understands our failings and as stated earlier "God in His perfect love understands with empathy the struggle we are having with temptations and the guilt we feel, after we fall. He can overrule the power inside a temptation so that we can then "overcome evil with good and not be overcome by evil." (Rom 12:21)

Quote "We have an anchor that keeps the soul, steadfast and sure while the billows roll; fastened to the Rock which cannot move, grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love." Priscilla Owens

Joy verse "Sing to God, sing praises to his name; Lift up a song for Him who rides through the deserts, whose name is the Lord, and exult before Him." Ps 8:4

What are some of the benefits and pleasures of enjoying God?

38/ Coming to Know Jesus More Intimately

'We love him because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19 NKJV
"I am my beloved, and His desire is for me." Song of Solomon 7:10
"His mouth is sweetness itself; He is desirable in every way. "
Song 5:16 NLT

When we enjoy God, we can then find delightful satisfying new things about our wonderful Friend in a new fresh way. There need not be dull and lifeless drudgery in stagnant theology, poring over stale facts about God. Rather a new exciting wonder filled discovery, saturated with awe at our delightful, powerful, loving, faithful, God and Lord. Using an illustration of the value and integrity inside a marriage, we come to love and learn more about the fascinating person we came to marry and enjoy, and dwelling with them we become even more like each other. So, it is with our beautiful Lord. "His ways are above our ways, His great thoughts above our thoughts," (Is 55:9) means we know and delight in a greater Person than ourselves – that we are not the 'be all and end all, 'the self-seeking total sum of our lives, captivated and hopelessly imprisoned by 'me-ism.'
As we lovingly "walk in a manner worthy of the calling" (Ep 4:1) to "walk in love just as Christ loved you." (Ep 5:1) rooted deep in Jesus; we delight in a God who so delights in us, so we also come to know Him abiding in Him so much deeper and deeper, knowing that He enjoys us, and very much wants us to warmly respond to Him with our sincere love and simple, yet deep, devotion.
This is described by Paul as "growing up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ." (Eph 4:15)

Quote "I'm so glad I learned to trust Him, precious Jesus, Saviour, Friend and I know that He is with me, will be with me till the end." Louisa Stead

"Abide in Me and I in you." Jn 15:4
"If you hear my voice and open the door I will come in and we will share a meal together as friends." Rev 3:20 NLT,

Joy verse "Let your eyes delight in My ways." Prov 23:26

39/ Balance in All Areas of Christian Life

"Better to have one handful with quietness." Ecclesiastes 4:6 NLT
"Better to have a good name than silver than gold." Prov 22:1
"…Give me neither poverty nor riches! Give me just enough to satisfy my needs…"
Prov 30:8 NLT
"A time to be silent and a time to speak." Ecclesiastes 3:7

An unbalanced life of extremism is filled with sadness, suffering from excessive actions and stubborn obsessive thoughts which also hurt others. A balanced life is healthy, and very positive, influencing others for their good; and an occasion for great delight and effectiveness. David asks himself, "Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart sad?' Then resorting to a more balanced attitude he states, "I will put my hope in God, I will praise Him again," (Ps 42:11 NLT) thus avoiding extreme thoughts.
In Gal 5:22, the fruit of the Spirit in their individual qualities proclaim a healthy balance. They keep us away from harmful, unbalanced extremes such as:
control and codependency over true love,
unbridled unhealthy frenzy over true joy,
inactive neutrality that sits on the fence over true peace,
permissive leniency over true long suffering,
a patronizing, mushy sweetness over true kindness,
sweet, yielding, softness replacing true gentleness,
unhealthy rigid, legalism, instead of true faithfulness,
fruitless self- effort based on works, instead of true self control,
and just being nice and not doing or being anything, instead of true goodness.
One example of this is in Jesus travelling from town to town constantly doing good, and always good, kind, sensitive; in His caring to the majority of those He met, yet to some He was not nice. As mentioned earlier, He needed to speak harsh words to the Pharisees, because that apparently was the only speech they could understand. He dealt firmly and severely with phony religiosity, perfectionism, halfhearted worship, their cruel treatment of others, when He saw these. (Matt 23:13-36)
Real balance in real spiritual fruit "glorifies the Father," (Jn 15:8) and can stir us to live an enjoyable, balanced life, which is attractive to God, and which hopefully may challenge many unbelievers to turn away from their unbelief.

"When anxious thoughts multiply, Your consolation's delight my soul." Ps 94:19

Joy verse "Her godly ones will sing aloud for joy." Ps 132:16

40/ 13th Obstacle <u>Obsession with Small Trivialities</u>

"Therefore, no one is to act as your judge regarding food or drink, in respect to a festival or a new moon, or a Sabbath day. Things which are a mere shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ." Col 2:16-17.

Paul also says to the Roman believers' "the kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Rm 14:17)
In the Spirit we have His righteousness, His joy, His peace but there are so many little bothersome trivialities that can distract us from "growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus." (2 Pet 3:18)
He must be the pre-eminent One in our life always, above all; above the genre of music played in churches, or which way we observe Communion, or whether we celebrate or abhor Halloween, whether we believe in Calvinism or Arminianism,

Which Bible version is the best, do we baptize in Jesus' Name or baptize in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; as well as many other distractions.
"For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." (Phil 1:21)
"In Him we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28).
How beneficial for us is to live beyond a cluttered, unenjoyable religion, a stifled treadmill of drudgery which our joyous, delightful Lord Jesus did not call us to, Perhaps we need a Mary spirit that listens without distraction and pours all onto our Lord, instead of dwelling amongst Martha's 'many things.'
"Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details. There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her." Lk 10:41-42 NLT.

"But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and useless." Tit 2:9

Joy verse "Counselors of peace have joy, but deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil." Prov 12:20

41/ Enjoyment of Life

"For His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness,"
2 Pet 1:4 NKJV
"Light shines on the godly and joy on the upright." Ps 97:11 NLT

Delighting in God gives us a special ability to see our life as God sees it. We do well to state to God, 'we know, we believe, we accept, who You say we are,' we can come to appreciate the differences, the many facets, of life – the world around us, the seasons in our own personal walk with God, plus our showing care and concern for others. Reading Psalm 104, again we see how the Psalmist responds to the wonder of God's creation– "Let the glory of the Lord endure forever, I will sing praise while I have my being." (v 31,33). To enjoy so much around us: creation, seasons, good, sound, qualities in others, healthy friendships, to stop and smell the roses, gazing at the night sky expanse, enjoying our own talents, while continually putting aside the wrong that dwells in each of us.
To enjoy the church God has given us to help us live a life that is pleasing to Him, to delight in the path that He has brought us through, despite various trials and to recollect so many fascinating people that each of us have encountered, the beautiful strong believers that have helped, challenged, inspired, and supported us through the years. It is as one hymn wistfully describes acceptance of our life.

Quote " Perfect redemption , all is at rest, I in my Saviour am happy and blessed
Watching and waiting, looking above, filled with His goodness, lost in His love."
Fanny Crosby

J*oy verse "An encouraging word makes an anxious heart glad" Prov 12:25*

42/ A Personal Story

I had grown learning to love God and His ways, nourished by His grace. loving my marriage, and learning to be a pastor. Outside a very large Californian amusement park, my wife and myself, were under a wrong and unusual thinking that believers do not, or should not enter in the big park, and enjoy the rides, shows and other events inside because Christians with integrity do not go to such places.
But when, after some rethinking, we did enter the park, with fearful concern that we had succumbed to the temptation and sin of worldliness. Yet as we spent the day enjoying and riding the many attractions, I was touched very deeply in my spirit by the Lord, who was firmly and gently saying 'You can have fun without feeling guilty. I want you to enjoy life, as long as I am your first and greatest desire, above everything else.
So, with a mixture of joy in my heart and tears in my eyes, I went and enjoyed the rides and delights of this amusement park and in other situations, I learned slowly to take pleasure in sports events, riverbank walks, trips, vacations; always loving and enjoying God more than these."…And besides You I desire nothing on earth." (Ps 73:25)
Where did the erroneous teaching come from that said that living the "abundant life" (John 10:10) was supposed to be a sorrowful, legalistic, dull, boring, monotonous, walk with no fun? It resembles the perfectionistic bullying of Pharisaism!
Jesus never endorsed misery but stated instead that inside an abundant life that our righteousness must exceed their hurtful, phony, hypocritical, righteousness. (Mt 5:20)

"The desire of the godly is only good." Prov 11:23
"The desire of the godly will be granted." Prov 10:24

Joy verse "For the despondent every day brings trouble, but for the happy heart, life is a continual feast." Prov 15:15 NLT

43/ A Better Understanding of Who We Are

"I say You are my God; my times are in Your hands." Ps 31:14-15
"You have hedged me behind and before and laid Your hand upon me." Ps 139:5 NKJV
"Remind me of how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me my days are numbered." Ps 39:4 NLT

Long before the creation of the earth, God predestined each of us in that He foreknew that we would become His redeemed children. There was always a God ordained path for us to be born, and to be born again, to live a set number of days on this earth and then go home to be with our God. We each have an opportunity to take satisfaction and delight in the short time God has ordained for us to be alive on earth, knowing there is a brighter, more glorious day up ahead with growing

confidence.
A very respected and godly man was born as a result of his mother being raped, yet beyond the terrible sin of the rapist, God had a good plan for this man, so not only did he grow up into what God had planned for him, but that he could enjoy life and become a great blessing to so many.
The same can happen with us, that we can know who God says we are, so we enjoy:
the purpose for which we were born,
the wonderful person we are becoming,
our great destiny and forthcoming inheritance;
beyond the joyful or bad experiences we have had in our lifetime.
God, in His sovereignty allows good, and not so good things to happen in our life, which eventually cause growth and blessing purposefulness and joy to come to us even though He did not create the evil or initiate it. This is a part of God's sovereignty known as concurrence. It occurred in the life of Joseph where God saw beyond and used the years in prison to his becoming prime minister of Egypt

"Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing." James 1:2-4 NLT

Joy verse "The Lord's blessing makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it"
Prov 10:22

44/ 14th Obstacle Worldliness

"Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of this world, makes himself an enemy of God." James 4:4
"Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you." 1 John 2:18 NLT
"Whom have I in heaven but You, and besides You I desire nothing on earth." Ps 73:25

The immoral woman mentioned in the earlier chapters of Proverbs, the adulteress and the evil harlot, all illustrate how the world tries to seduce us - "Come let us drink our fill of love" (7:18) - falsely saying with sly abandon that no one will be hurt. This is why James likens us to adulterers and adulteresses (4:4) But God has a holy jealousy, seen so often repeatedly in the prophets. Note Hosea 14:4 "I will heal their waywardness (backsliding) I will love them freely for My anger has turned away from them. I will be as the dew to Israel."
The key teaching in Ecclesiastes is that man is too big for this world, leaving us with a hunger for something bigger and fulfilling. The world can fill our eyes, ears, and thinking, with the vanity of worldly pleasures that leave us stretched, strained, obsessed , none the wiser, wearied with an aching in our souls, until there is a crying out with David "I stretch out my hands to You; My soul longs for You as in a dry land." (Ps 143:6). "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." (Ps 42:2)
World weary from the dizzy merry go round off fad after fad, endless governmental

elections with the 'ho hum' blather of repetitive politics, the latest 'must have' specials at numerous stores; we run back to God, and once again our soul is calmly restored and ever so satisfied beside still clean waters, instead of being defiled by old, stagnant dirty water, the best the world gives.

"And the cares of the world and the desire for other things choke the word and it becomes unfruitful." Mk 4:19.

J*oy verse "Bright eyes gladden the heart Good news puts fat on the bones."*
Prov 15:30

45/ Having a Greater Awareness of God

"He has made His wonders to be remembered." Ps 111:4
"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord. My soul will exult in my God."
Is 61:10

God shows Himself all around us when we see and observe His presence. Enjoying creation in all its variety and splendour, enjoying the small, still voice, those quiet whispers in our spirit, delighting in all He does and all He is, basking in the sun of His love, sensing that a direction that we want to take may not be the best.
"On the glorious splendour of Your majesty and on Your wonderful works I will meditate." (Ps 145:5)
"That I may know Him , the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to His death …" (Ph 3:10)
It is so enjoyable to learn and then increase our gratitude and delight in God, to gain a better awareness of Him, and perhaps using a daily journal, counting and listing the many things, the circumstances the past victories that cause us to be more appreciative of how amazing God is and how He takes us gently through the good and bad, and of the many ways He cares for us.
Just as God is not mentioned in the book of Esther, but very much at work behind the story for the good of all (except Haman and his family), He also is at work in the people we meet, the diverse and sometimes unpleasant circumstances that we may sometimes find ourselves facing, as He "works inside us to will and to work for His good pleasure." (Phil 2:13)

Quote "And He walks with me, and He talks with me, and He tells me I am his own. And the joy we share, as we tarry there, none other has ever known."
Charles Austin

Joy verse "Joyful is the man who finds wisdom and understanding." Prov 3:13

46/ 15th Obstacle Addictive Behaviors

"All things are lawful, but not all things edify. All things are lawful, but I will not be brought under the power of anything." 1 Co 6:12

Using the example of eating food, addictive behaviour often involves an imbalance of eating for comfort, or because of boredom, where we don't keep to healthy, happy boundaries on when to stop, because we are full. Or we do not say 'enough' but just one more biscuit or another full helping of coleslaw and salad, ice cream and chocolate.
Out of control over dependence on good or harmful things, behaviors, and thoughts, can be toxic to our enjoyment of life. "For what I will to do, that I do not practice but what I hate I do." Rom 7:15 Whether the addiction is food, drugs, control, excessive television watching; the key to knowing and monitoring just when enough is enough, results in balance and self- control then gives to us an enjoyment of life, instead of an unhealthy dependance – "being mastered by anything." (1 Cor 6:12)
We must say to ourselves 'We are helpless, We need God to help and empower us to stop' and only then somewhere down the long, unpleasant, soul stretching road; we will be able to say 'Lord we have come to a place where we enjoy You, enjoy people, and enjoy life in healthy, happy balance in all things we do.'
Repeating 1 Co 6:12 in the NLT "And even though 'I am allowed to do anything, I must not become a slave to 'or brought under the power of anything."

"Make me hear gladness and joy again." Ps 51:8
"Look down and have mercy on me. Give Your strength to Your servant, save me, the son of Your servant." Psalm 86:16 NLT

Joy verse "How amazing are the deeds of the Lord. All who delight in them should ponder them." Ps 111:2

47/ Enjoying the Purpose for Which We Were Born

" Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory, I have formed him, yes I have made him. " Is 43:7 NKJV
"..and who knows whether you have attained royalty for such a time as this."
Est 4:14

Quote "I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad; I found in Him a resting place, and He has made me glad. I looked to Jesus and I found in Him my Star, my Sun; and in that light of life I'll walk, till traveling days are done."
H Bonar

We can enjoy the knowledge that God holds us in this moment and that He has given us His plan for our lives and bestowed it to no one else. Consider carefully there is no one else who has our eyes, our personality, our habits, our smile, our likes and dislikes, our voice, and our perspective.
And God wants to use a wise and marvelous combination of our talents, feelings,

and thoughts that make up the person we are. He may have even removed others so that we could succeed in His plan for our life. (Is 43:4) One pastor stated it best this way, 'Success is knowing that God has used every path and every circumstance, to bring us to the place we are in, right now.' God knew and used our happy and sad times in life to shape us into life overcomers, and this can cause great delight.
Just as the massive airliners and birds take off against the wind, the tough times and horrid storms strengthen and lift us up and we learn to seek the Deliverer not just the deliverance.
The A.B.C of our walk with the Lord is that Adversity Builds Character, that we become strong through endurance and that we learn to fly by facing into the winds of trials and these lift us to higher altitude and attitude as we, "grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Pet 3:18)

Joy Verse "I will be glad and rejoice in Your unfailing love" Ps 31:7 NLT

48/ 16th Obstacle Spiritual Burnout

"O that I had wings like a dove. I would fly away and be at rest."
Ps 55:6
"For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me. My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer." Ps 32:4

A pastor can be visiting and supporting a church family in hospital who are making a very sad decision for life support to be turned off a loved one in the ICU.
After the emotional sensitivity given to this family, the phone rings from another joyful parishioner that they have just been accepted into a university. What joy!
Pastoral care can be an emotional roller coaster as can any form of service to God .
Working so very hard and not taking time out to relax and enjoy Him, can lead to burnout, where anything that we do, ceases to have any enjoyment. Where gloomy apathy, boredom, and dullness, become the norm, and fatigue, insomnia, and anxiety rob us day by day.
We strive in vain to live the words of Psalm 100:2 "Serve the Lord with gladness, come before His presence with singing." One poet wrote, 'many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.' Sometimes burnout may come from the seductive distractions of our world. Having experienced burnout, myself, I discovered over a period of time that it always involves an imbalance in activity v leisure. fun v responsibility, a lack of quiet still waiting on God, where the fatigue of achievement and social or personal status become more important than our content of character, thereby overruling any true delight in God.
Why not stop now. Why not leave stress, fretting, impatience, and the worldly. Simply to learn to be still, relax, refocus and let God restore our soul and simply enjoy our sweet relationship of love toward our wonderful Shepherd and again remembering what He says to us, "My power is perfected in your weakness."
(2 Cor 12:9.)
Recovery will take time, but God is for you (Ps 56:9), He knows, He understands,

just what temptation and weariness can do, In His joy which is our strength, and His power, and love, and our simple delight in life slowly comes back, as has been my slow, recovery experience.
Quote "Live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly, and leave the rest to God." (anon)

Joy verse "The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn which shines ever brighter until the full light of day." Prov 4:18 NLT

49/ Enjoying Others Not Expecting the Ideal From Them

"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you….."1 Co 4:3
"..bearing with one another and forgiving one another…" Col 3:1/3
"Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Heb 12:5

We can do better than unfair judging, in our care for one another in accepting the truth that our brother and sister in the Lord has a different perspective or framework of thinking, and a different way of seeing and reacting to things than the way we see, think, and do. We are a special creation, God's masterpiece, God's workmanship as they also are – no less and no greater – a special creation of God. (Eph 2:10)
We have the Holy Spirit giving us a guided privilege of building up each other. We learn to rejoice in their victories and thank God that they don't have to be like us, and that we do not need to become like them.
Funerals bring out many good memories of the deceased person, leaving us to think, 'Why did we not enjoy this person more while they were alive?' Or why did we focus on their imperfections or comparing ourselves unfavourably with them?
Death teaches us that we should enjoy friends and family before it robs us of their company and leaves with memories only. The brevity of life teaches us, beyond a pure healthy discipline coupled with our loving delight in God, to learn to be gentle with ourselves and to repeat this again, to enjoy our brothers and sisters while we still live with each other.
Give preference to one another in love." Rom 12:9

Joy verse "And the ransomed of the Lord will return and come with joyful shouting to Zion, with everlasting joy upon their heads." Isaiah 35:10

50/ 17th Obstacle Being Too Busy for God

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge cloud of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up." Heb 12:1 NLT

The wife of Topol, in the movie 'Fiddler on The Roof,' was asked by him, 'Do you

love me?' 'Love you! I wash your clothes, I prepare your food, I clean your house!' 'But do you love me?' 'I pick your vegetables, raise your daughters…'
There is a sad illustration in this marital conversation in each of the wife's answers. We can also be so busy for God with our running here, then running there, picking up a fast food takeaway, setting goals, achieving goals, setting up chairs, making sure the urn is full, buying yet another fast food takeaway, attending so many events. While these may or may not be needed, sometimes it is good to go into the lonely places, just as Jesus often did, and in quiet simplicity, commune with God.
"And in the early morning while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lonely place and was praying there." Mark 1:35 NASB
How profitable for us, by ourselves to also go out in quiet solitude and enjoy His presence, to tell Him what He means to us, and what a joy it is to belong to Him, to be loved, and to follow the wonderful life He has lavished on each of us – beyond so much activity, noise and blather which comes up short, and fails to bring healthy balanced Christian living into our soul.

"Arise, Come my darling, my beautiful one. Come away with Me."
Song Of Solomon 2:13

Joy verse "Yes, the Lord has done amazing things for us. What joy!" Ps 126:2 NLT

51/ Becoming More Enjoyable to Others

"For God who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." 2 Cor 4:6
"For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true." Eph 5:9 NLT

To become more enjoyable to others because we love and enjoy God is an achievable and productive example to our brothers and sisters in Jesus . Having a joy that soothes, cheers, and inspires others around us encouraging them to also delight in God. Christ in you the hope of glory Col 1:27 When we enter a house, a church, a room; the light in us can not only impact and attract many people, (and repel others unfortunately).
The fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22) can make us attractive but the excesses seen earlier in the earlier reading on 'Balance' (#38) can cause us to become irritating, super - spiritual, weird believers. One example of this is trying to control other people out of hurtful insecurity A better choice is to consider each other and self as part of a team.
Notice how much Jesus was enjoyed by so many hard-working common people, in His sensitive and loving socializing, while continually being a daily irritant to the arrogant religious authorities. (Matt 9:10) In 2 Co 13:11,
Paul lists four ways we can be an example to others of enjoying God: "be joyful, grow to maturity, encourage each other, and live in harmony and peace." A mature, balanced and enjoyable believer thinks about and cares for others concerned with

the spiritual health of fellow believers, using good. helpful words that build up and displaying actions that encourage from a selfless heart.

Joy verse "And from house to house they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart." Acts 2:46

52/ Helping People Delight in God.

"We were filled with laughter, we sang for joy and the other nations said 'The Lord has done great things for them.' " Ps 126:2 NLT
"When the righteous increase, the people prosper." Ps 29:2

There are fellow believers who as seen earlier never knew they could enjoy God or are trapped by legalism, performance-based acceptance, and other obstacles. A positive attitude and encouraging words can help our brothers and sisters around us to also enjoy God in addition to loving Him, and in addition to this, having the opportunity year after year to bless so many fellow believers.
To help them to flourish in their experience, their close relationship with God as an enjoyable experience –even when they are going through troubled seasons, knowing these sufferings result in growth, perseverance, seeing once again that adversity builds character. Some may have known dull religiosity, or they may be in a stressful, hard experience where they cry out, 'Why God, why!'
People can be helped to enjoy God by observing other quiet, secure, and well-balanced believers who have weathered good and bad and learned by experience to love and delight in God in all seasons. How wonderful it is to also become spiritually attractive to non-believers as a good role model inspiring them and stirring up the possibility of their coming to receive Jesus as their personal Saviour and encouraging them by our good example.

"And let us not neglect our meeting together as some people do but encourage one another, especially now as the day of His drawing near." Heb 10:25 NLT

Joy verse "O my son give Me your heart. May your eyes take delight in following My ways." Prov 23:26

53/ 18th obstacle Rejection Mentality

"Fear not you worm Jacob, You men of Israel. "I will help you says the Lord. Behold I will make you into a new threshing sledge with sharp teeth." Is 41:14 NKJV

This is a widespread form of insecurity with a super sensitivity to how others perceive and treat us, or even worse, ignore us. It is at the root of much shyness and loneliness. God accepts you, whether people do or don't.
Jesus experienced much rejection from His own people through His ministry. Run far

and fast from worthless rejection thoughts.
You are more valuable than you think! Come to the shelter of God who "heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds." (Ps 147:3) Because the One who loves us the most, has never and will never, reject us, we can be healed of human rejection
"I dwell in the high and holy place and with him who has a contrite spirit." Is 57:15
"Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget you, but I will never forget you. I have inscribed you on My palms." Is 49:15.
Our heart felt delight in God is sustained in our knowledge that He will never ever, reject us or purposely forget us.

"Then I will give them a heart to know Me that I am the Lord: and they shall be My people, and I shall be their God , for they shall return to Me with their whole hearts."
Jer 24:7 NKJV

Joy verse "..You have anointed my head with oil, my cup overflows." Ps 23:5

54/ Contentment and Satisfaction

"… being content with what you have for He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' " Heb 13:5
"Now contentment with godliness is great gain." 1 Tim 6:6
"For who in the skies in comparable to the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the Lord." Ps 89;6

The very well-known verse, Psalms 23:1, says, "The Lord is my shepherd, I will not lack or want)." One Bible paraphrase states this verse as follows," Because the Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need." As we grow in our faith, we find material gain shallow, suffocating and unfulfilling. We can even gather more money than we need and store up many possessions that are of no benefit to ourselves.
How much better it is to simply enjoy God and delighting in blessing others with things we no longer use or need. "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially those of the household of faith." (Gal 6:4) NKJV. Psalm 23 teaches us there is so much delight in the grateful attitude of a sheep who does not lack but instead rests in contentment. This gentle word, contentment, is the key word in this Psalm. We do not need to be concerned, and greedy, obsessed with material things, and succumbing to shop advertisements that urge us to spend money we don't have, to buy things we do not need, to impress people we don't even know.
Rather there is much gain, much profit in joyful, thankful, contentment in, and with, our meticulous, generous, good Shepherd, and be to thoroughly enjoy His amazing care.

Quote. "I would not ask for earthly store – Thou will my need supply; but I would covet more and more. The clear and single eye, to see my duty face to face and trust Thee Lord for daily grace." J J Maxfield

"Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am in." Ph 4:11

Joy verse "Let the people on Mount Zion rejoice Let all the towns of Judah be glad.."
Ps 48:11 NLT

55/ Enjoying God's Creation More

"For You created all things, and they exist because You created what You pleased."
Rev 4:11 NLT
"For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes have been clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and God head, so that they are without excuse." Rom 1:20 NKJV

How many times in Scripture are we told to consider the lilies, to go to the ant, to see the red sky at night or dawn, to consider the sparrow whose death is known by God, the grass that is here today and withers away or gathered, the lessons from the fig tree, the wind that blows where it wishes, the river and trees that clap their hands the hills and mountains that burst with song.
Proverbs employs many similitudes in nature to provide lessons to us: in the clouds that bring no rain, the flitting sparrow, the mother bear robbed of her cubs; and many more. God speaks to us in the wind, the roar of the sea, the rain, and the lovely peculiarities of each creature.
We love to enjoy kittens and puppies teasing each other at play, otters and penguins sliding on ice, the many varieties of both raucous and quiet bird songs at dawn…
What a wonderful world God has created for all of us to enjoy, if we take time to see and appreciate it. Understanding of God of nature helps us to enjoy the nature of God in His wise control of animals in their intuitive behaviour, seasons which give rain, cold or heat in sunshine. Even the hurricane pushes rain to arid areas and stirs up food from deep depths of the oceans.
In the words of a song, we can tell the rocks to be quiet for it is our turn to sing our praises to God, for, in, and beyond, His creation; He our source of delight, our simple enjoyment, our praise, our breath, our reason for living, our life! "For in Him we live, and move, and have, our being." Act 17:34

Quote "Heaven above is softer blue, earth around is sweeter green; something lives in every hue, Christless eyes have never seen. Birds with gladder songs overflow, flowers with deeper beauties shine, since I know, as now I know, I am His, and He is mine." George W Robinson

Joy verse "Those who trust in the Lord are joyful." Prov 16:20

56/ 19th Obstacle Shame and Past Hurts

"Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed." 2 Tim 2:15
"For you will forget the shame of your youth." Is 54:4

Shame based mentality and guilty thinking will always stop us from an effective, enjoyable walk with God, reducing us to vain comparisons with others and useless striving to compete to be the best believer, to the extent where we work against someone for whom Jesus died.
Often our shame can arise from someone or something around us that we did not have to be ashamed of or that we did not deserve. Two examples: we were born out of wedlock, or we were raised in a dysfunctional family, being told that all families have secrets not to be told to others.
Not only these but we all make unhappy mistakes, some which seem ever so unforgiveable, and we all have weaknesses and faults, and unintentional failures, that load a burden of shame and guilt onto us.
Innocent of any crime and undefiled by sin, Jesus died a shameful and undeserved death "despising the shame." (Heb 12:3) He took all our shame onto the cross and crucified it. Now we can live a resurrection empowered, shameless, enjoyment saturated, relationship with our Father and others. Thinking about the shame the prodigal son must have felt, only to discover his father warmly dismissing his speech, saying with indescribable joy, "lets kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast for this son of mine was dead but has now returned to life."(Lk 15:23 NLT) We too can replace clothes of shame with robes of forgiveness , shoes of relationship and our Father's ring of continual acceptance.

Joy verse "I will rejoice and be glad in Your lovingkindness, because you have seen my affliction." Ps 31:7

57/ Enjoying The Hope Of His Imminent Return

"For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness and devotion to God, while we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, will be revealed "
Titus 2:11 -13 NLT

Paul mentions the people who will receive the crown of righteousness 'who have loved His appearing 2 Tim 4:7.' We receive precious reminders that we will see our returning King, being snatched up with fellow believers, and one day, not only see, but also hear and finally understand in our hearts, the ever- glorious things God has

prepared for those who love Him. (1 Co 2:9
No matter what pain or sorrow is being experienced day by day, we can delight in the soon coming joy, the mind-blowing wonders, we cannot even begin to imagine.
Just one look at the face of Jesus will wrap up every question, every issue faced on earth. Peter brings this to our attention in his second letter asking "what holy and godly lives you should live, looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along." 2 Pet 2:11 NLT John adds "everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure." 1 John 3:3 What an immeasurable fulness of 'cup overflowing' joy, that this day will be! Every indication of our everlasting life destiny is that it will be overwhelming!
Nothing in photo or video prepared my wife and myself before visiting the Grand Canyon. It was more than spectacular, and ever so much larger than our previous thought and imagination of its size. We were speechless! So, it is on a superior, grander scale when Jesus takes us off this earth to meet with Him and the dwelling place He has prepared for us (John 14:2-3) We don't know when that day will be but it will be cloudy. ("We shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." 1 Thess 4:17)

Quote "When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation, and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart. Then I shall bow in humble adoration and then proclaim my God, how great thou art." Stuart Hine

"Even so come Lord Jesus!" Revelation 22:21

Joy verse "That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation." Ps 106:5

How We Can Increase Our Enjoyment of God

58/ Copying The Simple Delight Seen in New Believers

"Therefore, laying aside all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking, as new born babies, desire the pure milk of the word that you may grow thereby."
1 Pet 2:1 NKJV
"Both young men and virgins; Old men and children. Let them praise the name of the Lord." Ps 148:12-13

New believers are fascinating to watch and learn from:
in their excitement about their new faith,
the peace they now have,
the exciting words they read in their Bible,
the wonderful fellowship with people who actually love them (free from hypocrisy),
the new songs they now sing and enjoy,
and above all, they proclaim how wonderful their new Friend and Lord Jesus is to them.
One of many words sums this up - enjoyment.

I remember when I discovered Jesus as my personal Saviour, how I chose to walk three kilometers (or two miles) to high school instead of riding the bus, singing Christian songs such as 'I'm Gonna Keep On Singing,' by Andrae Crouch or 'Make a Joyful Noise' from Scripture on Song; and telling Jesus what a joy it is to know Him, not just about Him.
In addition to this I found the old hymns, which I suffered listening to them sung in my old church by people who had a form of religion, but no life giving, loving, close relationship with God, now had a wonderful, enjoyable truth in my spirit, for I had now received a "blessed assurance' and now I knew 'love divine' and 'what a Friend I now had in Jesus."
Is it possible that we possibly forgotten the days when we were drawing the fish symbol and writing 'Jesus loves me,' on the sand at the beach, or lake, in addition to the simplistic, and uncluttered delight in just knowing a real, loving, personal Saviour who never leaves us and always is beside us, even we don't feel it.

Joy verse "Then the virgin will rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old men together." *Jer 31:13*

59/ Meditating on How Blessed We Are

"Jesus replied, "But even more blessed are all who hear the word of God and put it into practice." " Luke 11:28 NLT

As we study through Psalms and Proverbs and many other books in the Bible, we discover this beautiful word 'blessed,' referring to our enviable, enjoyable, life satisfaction, not just a happiness, which can come and go like the ocean tides.
It is the first word in Psalms, that introduces us to a man who avoids negative people and instead delights in studying Gods' word.
"Blessed" in Psalms includes our being forgiven of transgressions, trusting in the Lord, ((40:4) dwelling in God's house,(84:4) being disciplined by God, (94:12) a healthy and respectful fear of God, (112:1) refuge in God, (34:8) walking in blamelessness, (119:1)
'Blessed' in Proverbs comes from helping the poor,(14:21) walking in integrity, (20:7) generosity (22:9) fear of doing wrong, (28:14) finding and applying wisdom, (3:13) keeping God's ways. (8:32) Without demonstrating the arrogance of the Pharisee who said , 'I thank God I am not like other men," (Luke 18:11) we can come to the joy saturated realization that, because of God, we have a better, a blessed and enjoyable life with living hope and enviable joy, even throughout many trials, all and only because, of His grace.
Consider the blessed verses from Prov 10:1 through the following chapters and may the enjoyable statements such as "The life of the godly is full of life and joy," (13:9 NLT) permeate and flow into all the thoughts of your heart. Repeating an earlier proverb (4:18) "The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn which shines even brighter (and brighter) until the full light of day." (NLT)

Joy verse "O Lord of hosts, How blessed is the man who trusts in You!" Ps 84:12

60/ Increasing Desire and Delight in God

"My beloved is to me a pouch of myrrh." Song of Solomon 1:13
"How handsome you are, my beloved." Song of Solomon 1:16
"In His shade I took great delight and sat down." Song of Solomon 2:3
"Scarcely had I left them when I found Him who my soul loves; I held onto Him and would not let Him go." Song of Solomon 3:4
"His mouth is full of sweetness. He is wholly desirable." Song of Solomon 5:16
"I am my beloved's, and His desire is for me." Song of Solomon 7:10

Spiritual growth has many aspects, the chief one being a growing intimate desire for God, clothed with love, girded with faithful loyalty, from grace to grace, faith to faith. We desired Him at salvation, and we want, we need, we yearn for, we desire Him, even more. As the lovely song states, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus Look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace." (unknown composer)
Nothing in the world, with all its trivialities, can compare with the One whom we love and long to know more and more. This is modelled for us so deeply in the increasing delight that the Shulamite lady discovers for her Beloved in Solomon's Song even after struggling through some difficulties and misunderstandings, that she had to work through

"His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me." (Song of Solomon 8:3)
"My own vineyard is before me. You O Solomon may have a thousand.." (8:12)
"I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me" (7:10) NKJV

Joy verse "Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You." Ps 40:16

61/ Enjoying Our Personal Spiritual Growth

"Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skills to recognize the difference between right and wrong." Heb 6:14 NLT

We don't often use the word, fun, to describe our walk with Jesus, but when we see how much we have changed for the better with new life, new hope and love for our Lord, it is an appropriate description. We are not yet where we will end up, but we are a very long way from where we used to be.
It is comparable to the changes we incur during extensive years of staying married, with changes both to, and in, ourselves, and in our spouse. Some enjoyable, indicators of spiritual growth include;
Increased love for God. (as in #62)
Increased desire for God- as seen in previous reading.
Increased desire to obey Him (1 John 2:3).

Increased desire to please God more than pleasing men (Gal 1:10).
Increased faith, looking to and trusting God despite unanswered questions.
Increased fruit of the Spirit. (Gal 5:22-23).
A decreased desire for all that the world offers (Ps 119:37).
Increased discernment. (Heb 5:14).
Easier to forgive the wrong that others do to us.
Becoming harder to be offended.
Increased concern for other's spiritual condition (Heb 3:13).
A desire to give rather than get (Acts 2:44-45).
Increased teachableness or being able to learn even more from God and life (Prov 12:1).
"...until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and to the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ." Eph 4:13 The best part of spiritual growth is that God cannot, and will not, abandon the "good work He began in us." (Phil 1:6) He will finish it and "will perfect that which concerns us." (Ps 138:8)

Joy verse "For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy,…" Ecc 2:26

62/I Love You Too (Reciprocating love)

"Long ago the Lord said to Israel, 'I have loved you with an everlasting love. With unfailing love, I have drawn you to Myself." Jer 31:3 NLT
"Keep yourself in the love of God…" Jude 10

A prominent Christian musician, many years ago, was in his driveway packing the car to leave to do weekend concerts. His five-year-old son said to him, "Daddy, are you going away?" 'Yes son," he replied, "but daddy will be back in two days." ''Daddy, I love you,' the little boy replied with a hug. His obvious response to the little fellow was 'I love you too son."
Later that day, sitting in the plane seat, the beautiful son to father exchange repeated over and over. 'Daddy, I love You, "I love you too son.' He then distinctly and quietly heard the voice of the Holy Spirit in his heart whispering, 'Barry, it doesn't get any more complicated than this.'*
We do well to remember that our walk with God is based on "I love You, my sweet, wonderful Saviour, my God.' 'I love you too My son.' 'I love you too. My daughter.' We enjoy a responding, or reciprocating love for Jesus "…because He first loved us" with His never ending, faithful, enjoyable, love."(1 Jn 4:18)
We love God's attributes, because of who He is, not just what He does, and has done, and will do for us. All the reasons why we enjoy God outlined in the first section of this book can produce in us a responding, and grateful love for such an amazing Saviour, in whom we have the blessed and truly incomparable privilege of walking and talking to Him each day.
(*Barry McGuire used by permission)

Quote "My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine, for Thee all the pleasures of sin I resign. My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art Thou, If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus tis now! W R Featherstone

Joy verse" Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation."
Is 12:3 NKJV

63/ Walking in the Holy Spirit

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things , and bring to your remembrance all things I have said to you."
Ps 134:3 NKJV

"For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith."
Gal 5:5 (NKJV)

The Holy Spirit is our very needed Friend, always alongside us to empower, comfort, guide, and remind us of Jesus. He is that still small voice that we hear and feel in our spirit when we quieten all other voices and instead listen in serenity to Him, sensitive to His promptings in our soul.
Delighting in God is therefore best seen in an enjoyable walk with the Spirit, instead of a laborious, droll, religious adherence to unnecessary rules. As we read in this comforting verse, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death." (Rom 8:2), we need to take special note of the words, 'life' and 'free.' Both are enjoyable gifts from the Holy Spirit. "For all who walk in, or led by, the Holy Spirit are children of God." (Rom 8:14)
He is lovingly, gently, soothing, correcting, quietly conversing always with kindness, and sometimes challenging us in some weak area. "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink but living a life of goodness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Rm 14:7 NLT
Recently I heard His small voice quietly urging me to check on a long-distance coach booking I had made and paid for on the phone. I am so glad I spoke face to face to the lady at the counter. She said we would not have been travelling without the paper tickets, which were then issued to us. I love the simplicity of that small voice from the Holy Spirit.

Joy verse "Yet will I rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation
The Lord God is my strength" Hab 3:18 NKJV

64/ Enjoying Three Necessary Disciplines (Bible, prayer and church)

"This is because Ezra had determined to study and obey the law of the Lord and teach those decrees and regulations to the people of Israel." Ez 7:10 NLT

We don't bend under the load of 'have to,' but rather the enjoyment of 'want to,' in that we chat to, and abide, in close loving fellowship, God often in these three areas, the first being: prayer - day and night listening intently, privately and publicly couched lovingly in a warm conversation with our enjoyable Confidante, Helper, Friend, Lover, Lord and Saviour. Paul in Eph 5:11 says "Pray at all times in the Spirit," and in 1 Thess 5:18 to "Pray constantly without ceasing," and in Col 4:2 to "Keep alert in prayer with an attitude of thanksgiving."
One of the most enjoyable methods of daily prayer is to go on a prayer walk with God alone or praying while driving. Praying can be varied in different ways and postures, with our Bible in front of us,
while watching sports games,
relaxing on a beach or riverfront
or travelling by train plane…. any time, any place,
having a friendly, and sometimes desperate, talk with God and listening to His still small voice.
praying for unsaved family and people around us,
Praying for our government, our pastor, our church leadership board,
our spouse, our children, our elderly parents
praying for others in the church who are going through a storm,
praying for missionaries and
praying for someone who you are thinking about right now, that God may have put on your heart for this reason, that they need your prayer right now.

Quote " Oh what peace we often forfeit, oh, what needless pain we bear – all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer." Joseph Scriven

Joy verse "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son." Rev 21:7 NKJV

65/ Reading Our Bible

Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us, And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled. Rom 15:4 NLT

Secondly, we lovingly explore our Word of God with enjoyment for our "delight is in the law, and on this law, we can meditate day and night," (Ps 1:3) and we can skillfully handle the Word of life out of an appreciative, teachable, heart.
We can also find new refreshing ways to read the Bible daily:
either chapter by chapter,
biographical studies of different people,
word studies, or subject studies, an example being thirty different topics in Proverbs and Hebrew words in Psalms.
We can enjoy the historical events and fascinating people from Genesis to Psalms.
Enjoy the cry of the prophets to the wayward people to return to a wholehearted and healthy walk with their God
Enjoy the life, teachings, miracles and sacrifice of Jesus through the Gospels, culminating in His great, victorious resurrection,
Delight in the unassailable spread of the church in the book of Acts, and the wholesome teaching toward real belief and real walk in the Epistles.
Let us not forget also the many verses throughout the Bible that talk of the soon coming again and the triumph of our King of kings in Revelation, together with the promise of our new, dwelling place and home.
One amazing study is the Old Testament verses that relate to Jesus in types, prophecy and actual appearances (theophanies). He said "all these were written concerning Me " (Luke 24:27,44)
May our reading of the Word not be an obligation, but a constant delight.

Joy verse "How sweet is Your word to my taste." Ps 119:103

66/ Attending our Local Church

"..not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." Heb 10:24
"How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, even faints for the courts of the Lord;.." Ps 84:1 NKJV

The third practice of going regularly to church, again not because we have to, but because we delight in going without a bad, complaining, negative, attitude, which seeks to find any reason or excuse not to attend.
David spoke joyfully of coming into the assembly of the Lord. "I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord ." And now here we are

standing within your gates O Jerusalem." (Ps 122:1-2) NLT
As we delight in God, we also come to enjoy church, instead of being distracted by many different activities on Sundays. It all comes down to consistent fellowship, worship, learning from the sermon, with simple enjoyment, instead of solemn religious monotony and insufferable, tedious and sad 'churchianity.'
So, we can learn and practice enjoying singing and worshipping with very delightful brothers and sisters,
the Bible readings, sermons, group bible studies, and praying for one another, seeing new people give their lives to Jesus.
We enjoy building each other up, using spiritual gifts the Holy Spirit has given us to bless others,
plus enjoying a humble, healthy relationship with the pastor;
and if our church employs these people, the associate pastoral team as well as the elders of our church.
I have noticed on occasions when I did not want to attend a church service, but I grudgingly dragged myself to it; I found that the worship and sermon were especially meaningful, and God was speaking to my spirit and refreshing me. Perhaps the best time to attend church is when we don't feel like going.

"I am like a green olive tree in the house of God." Ps 52:8

Quote " How happy is our portion here – God is love. His promises our spirits cheer. He is our Sun and Shield by day, our help, our hope, our strength, our stay. He will be with us all the way - God is love." Howard Kingsberry

Joy verse "Let all the towns of Judah be glad because of Your justice." Ps 48:11 NLT

67/ Enjoying Communion

"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said," Take, eat: this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 1 Cor 11:23 -25 NKJV

Correcting the complicated traditions and legalistic demands some have placed on the Eucharist or Lord's Supper, it is a source of delight to come and break bread and take the cup with each other, and with our Lord, in simple enjoyment in Him, with thankfulness at what He has done for us at the Cross, the presence we enjoy daily with Him, plus the promise that with delight we will drink wine that is new with Jesus in His Father's kingdom (Matt 26:29) In another meal Jesus enjoyed with His disciples and the multitude, He blessed and broke the loaves and fish and then instructed His disciples to "pick up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full." (Matt 14:20) When we eat and drink the emblems of His body and blood, in simple thankfulness, we also are reminded that everything leads up to the cross at which we die to and

that just as Jesus rose again from the dead, we too shall rise to be with Him forever. This is of first importance superseded by nothing else This is our sole boast.

Prayer We delight in reading Your life-giving Word, attending our church to worship, learn and encourage, and in constant thankful prayer; hungry for Your wisdom, guidance and empowering.

Joy verse "The godly will rejoice when they see injustice avenged." Ps 58:10 NLT

68/ Wisdom

"Long life is in her right hand, riches and honour in her left hand. Her ways are pleasant ways. All her paths are peace. You will walk in your way securely and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down your sleep will be sweet you will not be afraid." (Prov 3)

A wise man said the way we obtain wisdom is by pain. An example of this is finding a safe, sensible place to always put the keys to our house and vehicle after many long frustrating searches for them.
Wisdom is so very precious, so much to be sought after, and ever so enjoyable, and superior to our former walk. Psalms and Proverbs already teach us over and over that our wise, blessed life is so much better, than others, in our sensible, respectful fear of God. According to many verses in Proverbs, the way of the fool can hardly compare to a wise, walk with God replete with knowledge and understanding, simplicity and enjoyment.

"The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn which shines even brighter until the full light of day." Prov 4:18 NLT
"..that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Col 1:9 NKJV
What makes your lover so special...?" Song of Solomon 4:9 NLT

Prayer We delight in You Lord, but we are not wise. We ask You for the wisdom that only You can give.

Joy verse "I have told you these things so that you will be filled with joy. Yes your joy will overflow" John 15:11 NLT

69/ Solitude with God

"My soul waits for the Lord, more than the watchmen for the morning." Ps 130:6
"My soul waits in silence for God only." Ps 62:1

Though the sheep is in amongst a flock, there is a delightful sole enjoyment in Psalm 23, as it boasts of the meticulous care shown to him by His enjoyable, faithful, caring Shepherd who feeds, leads, quenches, restores, protects with rod and staff so that fear and evil must flee, and who prepares a table, anointing the head lavishly to the level of continual overflowing.
No wonder the sheep (and also ourselves) can say that God's great goodness and lovingkindness follow it/us daily and the future is secure and bright. It has been said that God does His best work in us when and only when, we are in solitude, where other voices and other activities quieten down and we then hear His still, small voice.
Solitude is not lonely - it is intimate delight in God. "Be still and know that I am God," (Is 30:15) declares our strength is found in ceasing to strive and in quietness and solitude – the "quiet waters" of Ps 23:2, and not the bluster, noise and the size of our church.

Prayer We walk in Your light so we have fellowship with other believers, but Lord help us to not avoid that necessary solitary time with You. There is none beside You.

Joy verse "I will joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning." Ps 59:16

70/ Simplicity

"But I fear lest somehow as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, that your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

2 Co 11:3 NKJV

What is simplicity in Jesus? What does it contain? How does it affect us?
Simplicity to avoid clutter and convoluted complexities that trip us up.
Simplicity to avoid becoming tied up with the trivial and the worthless.
Simplicity of a small child trusting their father without explanations.
Simplicity to run from all religious striving and burdensome demands.
Simplicity to run to God in danger and dark events knowing He cares, He knows, He will bring us through and use the event to bring the best out for us.
Simplicity to delight in and enjoy all that God is, even when we think that He should do it another way.
Simplicity that attracts and helps other believers come to enjoy God
Simplicity that helps unbelievers come to know God through our hope, our love, and our spiritually attractive, tangible walk with Him
Simplicity that brings to us an attractiveness that even causes some unbelievers to doubt their non-belief in or inability to trust in God.

Simplicity to enjoy God can come by changing in a tangible transformation from the obstacles mentioned earlier in this book, to instead arrive at a delightful, non religious, 'child – like" enjoyment of God.

Joy verse "The hopes of the godly result in happiness." Prov 10:28

71/ Copying a Child's Simplicity

"Assuredly I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven .Matt 18;4-5 NKJV

The simplicity of a little child is seen in their trust in daddy and mommy, their easy going acceptance of others making friends without regard to skin colour or how rich or poor their family is, their innocence, wide eyed wonder, insatiable inquisitiveness, sense of fun and humour, their simple ability to play on their own, and their ability to get over upsets, how they see things as this is this, and that is that, (sometimes rather bluntly).
Simply enjoying God comes down to an uncomplicated, happy, trust and easy hope as seen in a little child, not getting upset because they don't understand why daddy does or doesn't do what they hoped or imagined, because all that matters is his love and care of them. (Owning a dog, or being owned by a cat, can also give us an example of some of this behaviour with a care free, 'whatever' approach to each day)

Prayer 'Lord please remind us day by day not to 'be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Jesus.' (2 Co 11:3 NKJV)

Joy verse "To enjoy your work and accept your lot in life – this is indeed a gift from God." Ecc 5:19b

72/ Personal story

When my wife, Sally and I first met, we sensed in our spirits that we had found our right life partner, and it was plainly obvious that marriage was God's plan for us.
We however made it complicated in that couples do not become engaged four weeks after coming to know each other.
On a trip away we went to a Sunday church service where, in an informal testimony time, a young Maori lady who was new to the faith spoke charmingly of how simple her new relationship with God is, and how He talks to her, and how she loves spending so much time with Him.
The key thought that challenged us was her simplicity and we came away from the church meeting wondering why we were making something so simple, so complicated. .
So, with wise counsel from our pastor to not get married straightaway, we became engaged four weeks after first meeting each other, and we entered marriage fifty- four weeks later. Sally and I have recently celebrated our 45th anniversary.

Joy verse "…We have happy memories of the godly." Prov 10:7 NLT

73/ Look What The Lord Has Done

"Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them." The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad." Ps 126:2b -3 NKJV

A look back at our past may reveal unpleasant memories, recalling mistakes that we made, and evil deeds and words said by others.
We also need to see the great hand of God, inspiring, protecting, stirring us to reach out to Him to be our Saviour, our life coach, our guide, our reason for living, not a crutch but the very ground we walk on.
I was in a situation in my teenage years where I felt uneasy and insecure and never able to speak publicly. But my gracious Lord performed a 'great thing for me' when He quietly and gently showed me that I could preach with the power the Holy Spirit was bringing up from inside me, and that I could also become a pastor, caring for people for thirty five years and to also enjoy a beautiful -long lasting marriage, living in Australia, New Zealand and United States of America. Above all these and more, I could enjoy and benefit from an intimate love walk with God, learning, and still learning even more to give Him all the praise and all the glory each and every day.
To quote an inspiring Christian poster from long ago, 'Lord I need more of Your enabling strength to endure all my blessings!'

"Once far from God and dead in sin, no light my heart could see; But in God's Word the light I found, now Christ lives in me. O what a salvation is this that Christ lives in me." El Nathan

Joy verse "The life of the godly is full of light and gladness." Prov 13:9

74/ New Thinking New Perspective '

"Enlarge the place of your tent. Stretch out the curtains of Your dwellings, Lengthen your cords, strengthen your pegs." Is 54:2
"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God." 2 Co 3:5

Though we have come to understand the lavish grace of God more, we do well to confess inadequacy in our enjoyment of Him where we need to enlarge our concept all He is and all He has done. God is much more infinite, so much beyond all we know of Him, and even trying to comprehend the truth that nothing can separate us from His inexhaustible love, both now in the present and in our glorious future with Him. Often what we pray for is too small, or to illustrate this, taking only $100.00 out of a bank account that has $200 million to withdraw. A larger perspective of God can also affect how much we obey Him, even when we do not understand where He

is taking us,
As quoted by a great pastor, the hoofbeat of the obedient sheep is always found in the larger footprint of the shepherd. We delight to obey God in quiet, loving, trust, and this radiates out to others influencing them challenging them to also love, obey, to trust in, to enjoy God.
So leaving behind our small, futile, imaginations and dark negative thoughts, we grow with changing thinking, feeding on the timeless Scriptures, enlarging, stretching out to 'strengthen our pegs,' to constantly thank God for all we have been through every day, as His goodness and merciful love follows us each and every day.
With a new perspective, we take time in life's hustle and bustle to enjoy Him along with other believers, in joyful experiences or adverse traumas we may be facing.

Prayer No matter what life throws at us, we ask Lord that we will always have an attitude of gratitude for all You have taken us through and all that You will guide us to and through

Joy verse "Fear not O land. Be glad and rejoice! For the Lord has done marvelous things." Joel 2:21 NKJV

75/ Keeping Out Of a Rut

"He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs were one thousand and five. Also, he spoke of trees, from the cedar tree of Lebanon, even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall; he spoke also of animals, of birds, of creeping things and of fish." 1 Kings 4:32-34 NKJV (spoken of King Solomon)

Solomon in his heyday sought out knowledge of many things in his kingdom, and "built houses, planted orchards, water pools…" (Ecclesiastes 2:4-5) keeping busy learning and creating and enjoying new ventures.
Looking around us, there is so much more to discover and to learn from, including new places to travel to new skills to develop, new, fresh ways to do that which we already have learned.
Inside God's word there are new discoveries to explore plus new books to read, new hobbies,
new Bible study courses to enroll in and graduate from,
discovering locations in the Holy Land to visit on You Tube or in library books,
Middle Eastern customs to gain an understanding of,
a music instrument you always wanted to learn;
and many opportunities in life to delight in.
Take todays date and ask what could you learn by this date three years ahead in the previous examples – another language learnt,
a music instrument played fairly well,
a degree in sociology or business management,
a book written.

An example of discovering what a Scripture passage is referring to, is in a beneficial book "A Shepherd Looks At Psalm 23," by W Philip Keller, which helps us understand Middle Eastern sheep and shepherding.
There need not be any room for boredom as we live by the Spirit, guided by Him, and growing in all aspects, in multitude areas of growth and enjoyment.

"A time to plant, a time to harvest. A time to search and a time to quit searching. A time to tear, and a time to mend…" Ecclesiastes 3:2, 6-7a

Joy verse "…This is our God! We trusted in Him and He saved us! Let us rejoice in the salvation that He brings" Is 25:9 NLT

76/ The Reveal, Reverse, Restore Test

"You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position, so I could save the lives of many people." Gen 50:19 NLT

"This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of Hosts." Zec 4:6

A method that God uses to mature us is in His revealing a plan that He has for us, or an opportunity for us to bless many. Somewhere along the path God allows us to experience a reversal – where everything seems to go wrong.
In His good timing God will restore us to a much bigger opportunity or place than first revealed to us This happened with: Joseph in his first dreams, then the reversal - (prison), then the restoration (Pharaoh's place including his father and brothers bowing down to him,)
Moses in his impetuous killing the cruel overseer, fleeing, then restored forty years later,
David anointed, then having to hide from Saul for a whole year before coronation,
Paul needing to stay in Tarsus up to fourteen years before Barnabas searched for him to help in Antioch; and many more characters.
This question surfaces, especially when we have seen this happen to us in our own lives, Why would God reveal, reverse, and then restore? So that we might grow through the process to understand "Not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord." (Zec 4:6)
One result is that we learn to trust God with our numerous unanswered questions and after some soul-searching time, we start to enjoy the wonderful way God has worked in and for us, to be used for Him, and delighting in His way, not ours.
Avoiding "feel good easy believing" we also delight in our increased spiritual maturity after our soul has been fertilized by sorrow in our being "patient in tribulation." Rom 12:9

Joy verse "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling Ps 2:11 NKJV

77/ Ways To Help Us Become More Enjoyable To Others

We can make ourselves more likeable by the following points:
Become genuinely more interested in people. Rm 12:10
Use their personal name.
Smile
Be good listeners. Prov 18:13
Talk in terms of their interests. Do not merely look out for your own personal interests but also the interests of others. Ph 2:4
With sincerity make others seem important.
Winning an argument is easy. Do not engage in one. Prov 20:3
Show respect for other's opinions instead of saying 'you are wrong'
If we are wrong, we should admit it. Eph 4:2
Let the other person do most of the talking. Prov 17:27
Give honest, sincere appreciation. Col 3:15
If we need to give constructive criticism we first begin with a compliment.
Treading softly will bring a 'yes' response.
A gentle answer soothes anger but harsh words stir up anger Prov 15:1,4

Joy verse "Be glad! Rejoice forever in my creation!" Is 65:18 NLT

78/ Ways We Can Enjoy Reading God's Word

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom… Col 3:16 NKJV

Variety in daily reading your Bible includes:
1/ Underlining every reference to Jesus through Acts and the Epistles.
2/ Making a list of subjects in Proverbs such as: speech, God, being teachable, understanding, wisdom, the fool, anger, generosity, friendship, speech ….
3/ Looking for key words in a book, examples being: praise/worship in Psalms, 'in Him' in Ephesians, 'love' and 'know' in 1st John, 'immediately' in Mark.
4/ Biographical sketch of key characters: examples being: David, Jacob, Paul.
5/ Reading a short book in a modern translation, examples being NLT, The Passion or the Message paraphrases. Example Colossians or Ruth in one sitting.
6/ Placing words from a verse in a second translation, beside the same verse in your main translation. Example placing NKJV words into your NLT.
7/ A key word study through the Bible, examples being grace, faith, believe…
8/ Noting the Old Testament passages that occur in the New Testament and inserting the use of that verse beside the first occurrence. Example Hebrews 1:3 quotes Ps 110:1 . Matt 2:26 quotes Micah 5:2
9/ Memorizing short passages such as a psalm or 1 Cor 13:4-9 or Matt 5:2-10
10/ Listing references through the Epistles regarding Christian living starting with Romans 1;2 These refer to our relationship with God, with others, with ourself.

Joy verse "Always be joyful, Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances."
1 Thess 5:16-18

79/ Encouragement to New Believers

"I always thank my God when I pray for you, Philemon, because I keep hearing about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all of God's people."
Philemon 4-5 NLT

How wonderful that you have crossed over from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col 1:13) and your desire to read your bible and fellowship with other believers. This book is useful to encourage you to keep things simple, and to continue to enjoy God all the way through to graduation day, when 'God will complete the good work He began in you," "perfecting all that concerns you. (Phil 1:6, Ps 138:8)
Be careful to avoid some older believers who, for some strange reason, envy your simplicity, your delight, your hunger for the Word, your happy singing in church, and the radiance of your happy testimony. Some believers have just enough of Jesus to be miserable, just as some folks are so poor all they have is money.
Eph 6:12 says we fight the enemy, not these people, so continue growing, glowing, and becoming an encouragement to others in your enjoyment of God.

Joy verse "But let all who take refuge in You rejoice. Let them sing joyful praises forever Ps 5:11 NLT

80/ Enjoyment of God Could Become An Obsession – A Caution

Enjoying God is a help, but it must not become the plumbline, the measuring rod as to whether we engage in things God has said we must do. As stated earlier, delighting in God is a lubricant." to our love of God and not the steering wheel.
Jude says "But you beloved, keep yourself in the love of God." (v 21)
We need to keep as far as possible from 'feel good' belief that says, if we do not enjoy this or that activity so we will not do it For example, we may not enjoy doing a good deed the way we used to, so we think we need to quit.
We do not enjoy church and sharing with others, so we again feel we need to choose not to go – "forsaking the assembling together of ourselves as is the manner of some." (Heb 10:24)
We are no longer enjoying God because He did not answer our prayer the way we thought He might, so until we get over our tantrum, we will not pray.
The main point is this – above our feelings and disjointed perspective, we are God's servants and His adopted children, and He loves us and enjoys us. Therefore, no matter what we feel and whatever should have happened, we go out and live

fruit-bearing lives and do good, - regardless of whether we enjoy it or not. Discipline is an ugly tree, but it bears sweet fruit. One of these sweet fruits is to grow beyond our trials, adversities and our bitter, sorrowful, disappointments; to obey God more deeply and to say,'we learned, we grew, we changed, we have grown more Christlike through it.' To say,'we have grown stronger and more needful of God because of many trials and the griefs that have taught us to trust God even more,in the proper respectful fear of God, plus our enjoying Him in our love for Him.'
This is a delightful, profitable, path, sometimes pleasant, but other times unpleasant, but ever so blessed! It is also possible that other believers may not understand, agree and accept another believer enjoying God and may judge us as immature.
Continue to show good to each other when we have the opportunity as an example to all.

81/ Some Beautiful Hebrew Words To Learn About Enjoying God

"How malats - sweet - are Your words to my taste." Ps 119:103
"Let my meditation be arab – pleasing- to Him." Ps 106:34
"It is good to sing praises to our God for it is naim - pleasant - and praise is becoming." Ps 147:1
Anog – "Delight - yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart." Ps 37:4
"How yadid - lovely - are Your dwelling places." Ps 84:1
"My soul kasaph - longed and even kalah - yearned - for the courts of the Lord." ."Ps 84:1
"For the Lord takes ratsah - pleasure - in His people." Ps 149:4
"Esher - Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord." Ps 84:12
"I shall shaa – delight - in Your commandments." Ps 119:47
"Your law is my shaashuim – delight." Ps 119:77
"Your testimonies are the sason - joy - of my heart." Ps 119:111
"Your word is very pure therefore Your servant aheb – loves - them." Ps 119:140
"For You O Lord have made me samach - glad - by what You have done. -
I ranan - sing for joy - at the works of Your hand." Ps 92:4
"And beside You I chaphets – desire - nothing on earth." Ps 73:25

82/ Summary

It is my prayer that you have gained some fresh new revelation on the need to enjoy God, though it is not a panacea for all wrongs in our walk with Him. Delight in God does not give us a perfect walk, for there are times of teeth gritting 'I cannot cope' pain, seeing doubt and confusion, drinking the cup of many disappointments.

Simply enjoying God lubricates our loving relationship with Him, and with others helping us put aside the complexities of dull religion and lifeless servitude.
Come away! Enjoy becoming the special person, the workmanship God has designed us to be, with no need to compare ourselves with others.
In each day enjoy whatever is true, honourable, right, pure, lovely, excellent, and admirable," (Phil 4:8) no matter what is happening! It is so good to find our blessed enjoyment quietly and simply in God when we cannot comprehend why He did not answer our prayer, or why He allowed our precious spouse or child to be taken from us in death.
Though it is difficult, our prayer might be as simple as this 'I do not know or understand Lord, but I quietly trust You and rest in enjoyable abiding in You and simply enjoying Your comforting embrace and presence.'
Make a practice daily of simply, quietly, delighting in, obeying, constantly conversing with, and listening to our Help, Friend, Lover, Saviour and Lord; who for an unknown wonderful reason, enjoys us and wants to surprise us in giving us far more than we have ever hoped for. Rom 5:2

Lord. Surprise me today with Your love, and in Your love, and for Your glory!!

About The Author

Murray Cresswell grew up in Wellington New Zealand and became saved at age17 years. He graduated from a two-year Bible college diploma course and then studied to become an enrolled nurse where he met and married Sally, an English born registered nurse. Murray entered ministry after another year in a Bible college in Adelaide South Australia and ministered in pastoral work in Melbourne Victoria, before continuing in California, Florida, Tennessee, Nevada, and Utah. On returning to Adelaide Murray pastored a large senior's group for eleven years in a church in Paradise Adelaide before retiring in 2022.
He was awarded Police Chaplain of the year in 1992 with the Los Angeles Police Department
Murray also graduated with an Advanced Diploma in Bible Counselling from Light University (USA)in 2007
Married to Sally in 1981

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