

STRAIGHT OUTTA CONTEXT

WEEK 1 STUDY GUIDE

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SEPTEMBER 11-15, 2023



Monday, September 11, 2023

Read: Psalms 37:3-5

Scripture Verse: *"Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness." Psalms 37:3a.*

Today's Thought:

Ever since sin entered the world through our ancestors' disobedience to God, all mankind has been under the condemnation of sin because all have sinned. We read in Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Because of this great disobedience, evil appeared in man. Wickedness is in full swing, and the heart of man is crooked. Man is sinking day by day into evil. All of this is made possible because man forsakes the true God in favor of idols, things made by man's hand, or things created by God.

In verse 3 of psalm 37, the psalmist asks the people of God not to follow people who do evil, not to cling to them because their days are numbered. He asked God's people to turn from their evil ways, to trust in God and to do good. When people turn away from his evil intentions and trust God, it is a blessing for them and their country. We read in 2 Chronicles 7:14: "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." To trust in God is to recognize him as the only true God and to be ready to call on him in times of difficulty as well as in times of joy. It is to humble oneself before him, to recognize that "there is no one like him."

To trust God is to seek the face of God in all circumstances. In a word, it is to develop an intimacy between you and God. The real purpose of our existence is to constantly seek the face of God. Our life should be a life devoted to seeking the presence and favor of God. We should seek God with humility and boldness in our prayers, in the knowledge of his word, and in our relations with others. To trust in God is to lead a life according to the will of God. The psalmist invites us to trust in God, to surrender ourselves to God, to enter the way of life prescribed by God himself. He invites us to surrender our whole being to God, "spirit, soul and body." Trusting God is embracing anything that can help us grow as followers of Christ. To trust God is to accept Jesus Christ as our only savior and to recognize his power and authority over us. To trust God is to invite Jesus to take part in all our decisions, big or small. To trust God is to distance oneself from evil while attaching oneself to good. Finally, to trust in God

is to believe that in Jesus is life, that he was dead, that he is risen and that he will come to seek us to be with him forever. If there are all these blessings in trusting God, don't you have valid reasons to surrender your life to Him?

Lord, thank you for your grace and love. If in my days of ignorance, I walked away from you, now I trust you, take control of my life. My body, my heart, and my soul are all yours. Be my constant companion in all circumstances of my life.

- What does the word of God teach us in Romans 3:23?
- What caused the hardness of man's heart?
- What did the psalmist ask us to do?
- What does the Word of God tell us to do in 2 Chronicles 7:14?
- From the lesson, in a nutshell, what does trusting God mean to you?

Further Reading: 1 Timothy 4:10, Isaiah 50:10

Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Read: Psalms 37:3-5

Scripture Verse: *“Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness.” Psalms 37:3b.*

Today’s Thought:

We have just seen in part what it is to “trust in God.” We have said that to trust God is to recognize him as the one true God. It is to accept Jesus as your only Lord and Savior, while believing that he was dead, that he is risen, and that he will come to take us to be with him in his glory. In the second part of the verse, the psalmist invites us to do good. The practice of good is something that goes hand in hand with trust in God. In this part of the verse, the psalmist emphasizes the practice of good.

It is important that all Christians do good because the practice of good comes from God. He wants our well-being, our happiness, this is why he has done us good in his Son Jesus. In John 3:16 we read, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This is why God saved us. He saved us and called us to do good for all. Someone said, doing good is: “To show solidarity, to help, to love, to take concrete action in favor of others, to be generous with your money and your time, or to give of yourself.”

This implies that we must live in the love of God and of our neighbor. The Christian should hate evil. He must be allergic to evil. We read in Romans 12:9-10: “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to each other in love.” To do good, one must have the courage to call evil by its name. It was this weakness that Adam and Eve could not overcome that caused their downfall and put all of humanity in this predicament. The Lord warns us against evil. We must therefore neither practice it nor tolerate it. To attract us into evil, sometimes the devil presents it to us in disguise with excessive beauty, but it is only appearance. His plan is to drag us into evil to cause us to lose the glory, peace, joy, and happiness that are in Christ Jesus.

If we want to enjoy God’s blessings and benefits, we must keep our distance from evil. The love of God, of his word and of neighbor must be at the center of our life. To enjoy the constant presence of God, we must attach ourselves to the good. To cling to the good, one must repel the evil with a sincere love of God and neighbor. We read: “Do not weary

of doing good, for in due time we shall reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, do good to all, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Galatians 6:9-10. Brothers and sisters, if we truly trust in God, He will give us the strength to overcome evil and cling to the good for which God created us. With the true love of Christ within us, we will come to do good for all. So, we need to ask Jesus daily to remind us to walk in his footsteps, hold on tight to goodness, and reflect his love for all to see.

Lord, thank you for your word. I am aware that whenever I want to do good, evil gets in my way. Lord, give me the strength every day to overcome evil by doing good. May my life be oriented every day towards the good. Help me to follow in your footsteps, to cling tightly to good.

- What does the psalmist invite us to do?
- Where does the practice of good come from?
- What does John 3:16 tell us?
- What is "Doing Good"?
- How do we do good?
- What does the devil do to attract us to do evil?
- With what can evil be repelled?
- What should we ask Jesus each day?

Further Reading: Romans 12:13-21

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Read: Psalms 37:3-5

Scripture Verse: *"Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart." Psalms 37:4a.*

Today's Thought:

We have seen that the writer of Psalms 37:3 encouraged us to do good. Doing good is God's call to all believers. God calls us to do good; but we must always remember that we have an adversary who tries every day to drag us into evil. The apostle Paul said, "For I do not do the good that I want to do, but the bad that I do not want to do—I keep doing it. Now, if I do what I don't want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is the living sin in me that does it. Then I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is there with me." Romans 6:19-21.

It is easier for us to do evil than to do good because of the sinful nature within us, which opposes the will of God. The devil is the enemy of our soul. His purpose is to put things in our way that can get us off track to prevent us from enjoying God's presence all the time. His plan is to destroy our joy, love, and peace, to instill in us sadness and anxiety, anguish, depression to achieve his purpose. We read in John 10: 10: "The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. The enemy's plan is contrary to God's plan for us." His plan is to steal our love and destroy our joy and peace by creating in us desires contrary to the will of God. In the end, kill us. God's plan for us is to give us life in abundance.

To have this abundant life, the Christian must continually delight in the Lord. The joy of the Lord must be our strength. Someone says, "Rejoicing in the Lord means we are taking steps to have joy in Christ. Being proactive in our relationship with God is an amazing way to enjoy Him!" Nothing should come in your way to create obstacles between you and your God. Rejoicing in the Lord is putting God first in your life and in everything you do. God should be the Alpha and Omega of your life. When God is the Alpha and Omega of your life, you learn to turn your attention away from circumstances and not above Jesus. Our Lord Jesus is the real source of our pleasure. When we fix our eyes on circumstances and the things of the world, it can keep us from seeing the glory of Christ.

We read: "The god of this century has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot see the glory of Christ, the light of the Gospel which manifests the glory of Christ, which is the image of God." 2 Corinthians 4:4. Our God is greater than the circumstances and the things of the

world. Moreover, he is the master of time and circumstances. To rejoice in the Lord is to recognize Jesus his Son as Lord and only Savior and to accept his place in our life and draw closer to him every day to feel his presence. James 4:8 says, "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Wash your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, you who are double-minded." Isn't it a privilege not to be missed, an ineffable delight to draw near to God when you know he will draw near to you if you draw near to him? I encourage you to delight in the Lord so that the Lord can delight in you.

Lord, thank you for your word. I know that the enemy of my soul wants to take me off the track to make me fall to pieces. His whole desire is to take away from me the supernatural love, peace, and joy that I find in you. Take me in your arms and bring me closer to you every day. Give me victory and crush the enemy of my soul under your feet.

- Why does God call us?
- What is the enemy's plan?
- Why does the enemy come?
- What is God's plan for us?
- What does it mean to rejoice in the Lord?
- What does James 4:8 tell us to do?

Further Reading: Isaiah 61:10

Thursday, September 14, 2023

Read: Psalms 37:3-5

Scripture Verse: *"Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart." Psalms 37:4b.*

Today's Thought:

We have seen that to take pleasure in the Lord is to find pleasure in what God takes pleasure in. To rejoice in the Lord is to marry the thoughts of God, to occupy your thoughts with the word of God through prayer, reading your Bible, studying the Bible, listening to the word of God and fellowship with other believers. To rejoice in the Lord is to submit one's will to the will of God and to seek each day how to please God, how to live a life subject to his word. To rejoice in the Lord is to avoid any place where you cannot speak to God in your heart, where God cannot see you as his child. We read in Psalms 1:1-2, "Blessed is he who does not follow the wicked or stand in the way that sinners walk or sit with scoffers, but delights in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night."

The child of God is one who delights in the word of God. He is one whose desires are the desires of God and his heart beats at the same rhythm as the heart of God. His heart tunes to God, he goes where God asks him to go and does what God asks him to do. He is someone who lets himself be led by God, and he follows him straight as a sheep follows his shepherd. He lets God teach him his ways so that he can walk in his paths without detour. So, when we follow the ways of God, he will give us what our heart desires, which are according to his will. The desire of our heart should be the kingdom of God because everything we have in this world is there for a short time, and the worst after a while, we will leave them all. The word of God tells us, naked we came into this world, we will return naked.

We read in Job 1:21, "Naked I came out of my mother's womb, and naked I will go." For all of this, our heart's desire must first be the kingdom of God. We must be careful in how we serve God. The desire of our heart must be in harmony with the will of God. Our desire should not be in things on this earth because they can be rotten. We're not saying things on this earth aren't important to have, but they shouldn't be the desire of the Christian's heart. We read in Matthew 6:19-20: "Do not lay up treasure for yourselves in the earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves enter and steal. But lay up treasures in heaven, where

moths and vermin do not destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal."

So, your soul is the greatest treasure you have received from God. You must keep it pure more than anything else. There is no need to worry about your life, for your Father knows what you need. He will not leave you alone or forsake you. The Lord, the God of your soul, will not let your enemy triumph over your head because you are his child. If you make Jesus your delight, he will give you the desire of your heart. We believe that the desire of your heart is peace of mind, joy, and happiness. Right? The riches of this world, money, power, or fame cannot bring you the true pleasure and happiness or peace of mind that you seek. But I know that Jesus can give them to you if you rejoice in him, his word, and his promises.

Lord, thank you for your word. I know that I need the riches of this world while I am in this body. I know they are important in life, but you are more important than anything. Teach me every day to rejoice in you, your word, and your promises because all things in this world are perishable. May you and your word occupy my life, be the object of my thoughts and saturate my thirsty soul.

- How can the Christian rejoice in the Lord?
- What is pleasure in the Lord?
- How is the heart of one who delights in God?
- What should be your heart's desire?
- Why should such a thing be your heart's desire?
- What does Jesus promise us?

Further Reading: Matthew 6:30–34

Friday, September 15, 2023

Read: Psalms 37:3-5

Scripture Verse: *“Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act.” Psalms 37:5*

Today’s Thought:

We have seen that the Christian must delight in the Lord if he wants the desire of his heart to be fulfilled. We said the pleasure in the Lord is to marry the thoughts of God, to occupy your thoughts with the word of God through prayer, reading your Bible, studying the Bible, listening to the word of God and fellowship with other believers. We have also said that the desire of our heart must be in harmony with the will of God. Our desire should not be in things on this earth because they can be rotten.

Now consider verse 5, which says, "Commit your way to the Lord." He who claims to be a child of God must know that he no longer belongs to himself; he has a master to whom he must ask permission before deciding. The apostle Paul, after he gave his life to Jesus as his Lord and Savior, realized that he was no longer the master of his life. He no longer had full authority over his life, which is why he made this declaration of faith: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20. It is the declaration of someone who gives himself for the cause of Christ. He admitted that by his own wisdom he couldn't get to his destination, he didn't know the way, so he handed over the steering wheel to the owner and builder of the vehicles, the one who knew the way and had the ability to drive it and get to the destination. He gave the wheel to Jesus because the weather was bad, the road was steep, slippery, and foggy, he didn't have enough experience to drive on this road. So, he made the right choice. It is the choice of a wise and intelligent person who knew his limits.

In life, it is important to stop running here and there, to take your time to reflect on your life by saying to yourself: "Am I the owner of my life? Isn't there someone I should report to? Isn't there someone I should entrust my life to? These are questions you and I need to think about. It is not without reason that David said: "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act." So, entrusting your life to Jesus is an act of faith, submission and obedience to him and his word. It is an act of trust, assurance, and total surrender to Jesus to lead you as you follow in his footsteps as his disciples did.

Someone said, "To commit your way to the Lord is to build your life on the values of his Kingdom. It is aligning your time, talents, and treasures with His will and purpose." Brothers and sisters, if you give your life to Jesus today, I tell you, your life will never be the same. What do you base your confidence on? Here are some tips that can bring you complete success in your path: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones. Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine." Proverbs 3:5-10.

Lord, give me all confidence in you. Help me to dedicate my life to you in all circumstances, whether bad or good. In your mercy, change my heart and perspective, and guide me to a level of gratitude. Help me to believe that your ways are good, just, and true, and the best for my future.

- What should the child of God know?
- What has Paul achieved since giving his life to Jesus?
- What did the apostle Paul admit?
- What should we do, you and me?
- What is giving our life to Jesus?
- What does Proverbs 3:5-10 mean to you?

Further Reading: 1 Kings 8:61

Today is Friday. Saturday and Sunday are coming. "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked." Psalms 84:10. I encourage you, whatever condition, and circumstances you find yourself, remember your personal encounter with Jesus Christ or, at least, make the decision to allow the perfect Jesus to meet you today.

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