Psalm 37. 8th —

Man is a creature of want — Let him rise from the vale of poverty by honest and laborious efforts — by redeeming the time and assiduous attention to business — Let his cottage be converted into a stately mansion, adorned with furniture and trappings of the most costly kind — Let his table groan beneath the load of luxuries of every kind and quality — That can gladden the heart of the voluptuary — When he sleeps let him recline on softest down and beneath a gilded canopy — When sadness would intrude for a moment let the merry sound of music trill upon his ear, as it rolls in mellowing tones from the Eolian Harp or in lively strains from the violin, to cheer and exhilirate his hours as they roll him down the stream of time to his eternity — Let his barns be filled with plenty — his coffers with gold and his dwelling with every comfort that heart could wish — Such an individual has gained the world — lives in plenty — wades in wealth, and soars in fame — Such an individual many would suppose is perfectly happy — their time gliding sweetly away made up of peace and pleasure. But enquire into the experience of such a man more minutely — Mark the seat where contentment should dwell, and you will find an aching void the world can never fill — his mind is constantly on the stretch for something which he has never yet realized And why this anxious care, this restless solicitude when plenty seems to crown his board, and riches have brought to his enjoyment every pleasure that the world can afford. Why does discontent fill his mind, and his bosom heave with

anxiety and distress? It is because he has not realized the desires of his heart — When he has labored in vain to obtain happiness in the things and pursuits of the world — When he has discovered that earth's cup is poisoned and no fruit of an earthly sort can feast a soul of heavenly origin, the enquiry then arises, where shall I find to my soul? where shall I satisfy my longing desires? To such an enquiry — to such an individual, I would reply in the words of our text — "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee, the desires of thine heart".

If we would be happy our desires must be founded upon ~~the~~ christian duty, the observance of which will secure to us the desires of our heart.

We learn from this subject in the first place,

<u>That God is the source of all our happiness</u>

Man was originally created to ~~know, love, serve~~ enjoy the smiles of heaven, and to glorify his Maker — For this purpose the human soul was endowed with reason understanding, will, judgment, memory, and the affections thus nobly endowed, the first man was placed in the garden of Eden, bearing the image of God, which consisted of "righteousness and true holiness" — His soul was then the habitation of the Deity — his passions yielded in humble subjection before the Lord — love stood before the ~~altar~~ altar and pouring on the sacred incense kept up the hallowed flame

Holiness ~~stood before the~~ guarded every avenue of the temple and shut the gates to every vile intruder — hope lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven and showed by the intensness of her countenance where her anchor was fixed, fear with reverential awe bowed down before the sanctuary where yet no veil had hid the presence of the Deity, joy tolt its raptures in hosannahs of never ceasing praise — Memory unfolded the volumes of divine mercy while conscience yet unsullied beheld as God's vicegerent the hallowed service and gave its approbation as the voice of God — Such was man when he came from the plastic hand of his Great Creator —

In this condition our first Parents were perfectly happy and permitted to enjoy all the fruits of Paradise with one only prohibition — Not of a certain tree they should not eat, annexing the penalty, in the day they partook thereof they should certainly die When this injunction was made Satan immediately commenced his mischievous design to frustrate the glory of God, and ruin the condition of man — After many insinuations, he succeeded in beguiling the woman to partake of the interdicted fruit — She gave also to her husband and he did eat — This dreadful act is beautifully described by one of the English Poets.

"Her rash hand in evil hour &c"

the glory of man in that fatal hour departed – the crown dropt from his head – his pristine holiness was shrouded in the abyss of misery, and the ~~penalty~~ curse of God came upon the man and the woman, according to the penalty annexed ~~to the penalty of~~ that law which he had given them for the trial of their faith – they died a spiritual death immediately and were hastening on to ~~ruin~~ eternal death, the pains and agonies of which continue to rack and torment the soul forever –

But the Almighty in the greatness of his compassion did not leave his fallen creature, his moral representative in this dreadful condition – He saw and O amazing love he came to our relief – Jesus Christ, the son of God, became the Great Mediator between God and man, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish but have everlasting life and no other means of escape could have been provided for there is no other name under heaven given whereby we can be saved – He trod the wine-press of God's wrath alone – and through his death and sufferings the world of mankind are placed upon conditions of salvation, & by repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ we may regain our Paradise lost – and by faithful obedience until death we may leave the world in sure and certain hope of a blessful immortality at the right hand of God.

From these two circumstances – the original purity & happiness of man, and his restoration to the forfeited favor of God on the terms of the gospel after his awful apostasy we are furnished with the strongest proof of the assertion with which we commenced – viz. That God is the source of all our happiness – a refuge in distress, a present help in time of need –

In proof of the same glorious truth, we are taught to believe that God is an <u>ever-present friend</u>. To those who love and serve him – Mankind are almost universally inclined to cultivate friendship with each other – For this purpose visits are paid – civilities exchanged – correspondence is opened, and sometimes a great deal of flattery and deceit are brought into use.

2. God is also an able friend –
3. He is a constant friend
4. And finally he is an immortal and everlasting

Such being the character of God, we should delight ourselves in his favor, his friendship and approbation. In order to this we should,

1 Seek an acquaintance with him – All are not his favorites – Altho he is good to all, & his tender mercies over all his works – Altho he maketh the sun to rise upon the evil & good, & sendeth rain upon the just & the unjust, he

is nevertheless angry with the wicked every day –
Therefore seek the Lord while he may be found
– and be consistent – Let the wicked forsake his
way and the unrighteous man his thoughts
But the godly peace must be pre=
served, as well as obtained – As ye have rec.
Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in him.
In order to this delight thyself in the
Lord –
1 In the performance of prayer –
2. With prayer watchfulness should be united
3. In searching the Scriptures –
4 The word delight is expressive of the
highest pleasure and enjoyment –
III In this text we are encouraged with the
The promise of success – He shall give the
the desires of thy heart –
This passage must be understood with some degree
of qualification
1. Our desires must be innocent –
2. They must be spiritual
3. Expressed –

Improvement

1 Ungodly Man What are thy desires?

2. Luke warm Christian What do you desire?

3. My Christian brethren What do you desire?

Skeleton on 37 Psalm 4V.
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Jas: A. Liddell