



Sermon Growth Guide

September 14, 2025

Desires of the Heart

Psalms 37:1-9

Key Verse: Psalm 37:4 “Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”

Big Idea: The deepest desires of our heart—love, acceptance, purpose, companionship—are only fully met as we walk with Jesus.

Foundations

We live in an age of constant offers promising happier, more fulfilling, more prosperous lives. Advertisements, articles, and podcasts create hunger for what we don't have while dulling our gratitude for what we do. It's a tough culture in which to address discontentment. One of the great things about the Psalms is that, though written thousands of years ago, their truth is still relevant. God is unchangeable, and so it seems, is human nature. Like the Israelites, we are tempted by power, prestige, and prosperity.

Psalm 37, like Psalm 1, is a psalm of wisdom. Both warn God's people against being deceived by the worldly success of the wicked. It can be confusing and frustrating to see evil prosper while flaunting both wealth and disregard for God. But as Eugene Peterson paraphrases: “Don't bother your head with braggarts or wish you could succeed like the wicked. In no time they'll shrivel like grass clippings.” This is a reassuring picture. Both psalms also give us an action plan: delight in God. Be still. Trust. Dwell. Dwelling is more than residing—it's a place of safety, protection, and belonging. Don't fret. Don't get angry. Plant yourself by streams of water, grow, and be fruitful, waiting patiently for God's timing. As N.T. Wright notes, the Psalms teach us humility and hope. God is still in charge. “Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”

Understanding God's Word

As a group, read Psalm 37: 1-9. Compare it to Psalm 1. What similarities do you see? Why do you think “trusting God” is commanded before “and do good.” (37:3) What might have been the desires of one's heart that the psalmist is writing about? Do you see a correlation between verses 3 -4 and verses 5-6? How does fretting lead to evil? (37:8). If time allows, look up Psalm 23:6, Psalm 27:4, Psalm 27:5 for a fuller picture of the word dwell.

Applying God's Word

Do you find yourself envious of those who ignore God's commands yet seem to get ahead? (37:1) How do you delight in the Lord? (37:4) What are the desires of your heart? (37:4) Does Augustine's prayer, “Order my loves,” bring you hope—or some anxiety? Consider the order of your loves. Be honest. What do you truly love? Where is it hardest to “commit your way to the Lord”? Has walking with Jesus met your deepest desires? If not, reflect together on how that might change.

Witnessing God's Word

In the sermon, Tim referenced Bruce Springsteen's song Everybody's Got a Hungry Heart. In the third stanza Springsteen sings, “Everybody needs a place to rest. Everybody wants to have a home. Don't make no difference what nobody says. Ain't nobody likes to be alone.” Our world is hungry, tired, and lonely. We know where our deepest desires are truly met—only in Jesus. What a great time to invite someone into your church home, whether it's MomCo, a GTW class, Alpha, Marriage Mingle, or Sunday worship. Who in your life is hungry, tired, and lonely?