

Words of Delight
(Jeremiah 9:23-24)
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Note: The text below was prepared for oral delivery rather than for publication in print. As such, be aware that sentence fragments are intentionally used and that this document has not been edited to correct the errors in grammar, sentence structure, etc.

A. Introduction:

1. Text today from a favorite passage, Jer. 9:23-24
2. Turn 1st to Eccl. 12 ó King Solomon, author, very distinguished among the kings of Israel
 - a. Wise ó I Kings 4:31: “...*wiser than all men...*”
 - b. Rich ó I Kings 10:23: “...*exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom...*”
 - c. Mighty ó Powerful king who reigned over a vast kingdom. Influential ó people came from all over to seek his counsel. I Kings 10:24 ó “*all the earth sought ... to hear his wisdom...*”
 - d. Eccl. is a sermon in print by King Solomon whose chief subject is the true way (God’s way) of eternal life, and the happiness and blessedness contrasted with the ways of man in his natural wisdom (and with respect to the pleasures and riches of this world ó Solomon concluding that man’s way to eternal life is vanity ó futile.
 - e. Read Eccl. 1:1-2 and then 12:8
 - f. This very wise, rich, and mighty king concludes that all which he could bring to bear regarding the weightier issues of eternal life counted for nothing / vanity / futility. He concludes that man moves rapidly down the road to eternity to face God’s justice and that man, in his mightiest state is found altogether lacking what he needs.
 - g. Eccl. 12:9 begins “*And moreover...*” I.e. ó Or better that you hear the conclusion of the matter and he continues (read through vs. 10)
 - h. Vs. 10: “*acceptable words*” in the Hebrew means “words of delight.” It is imperative that we find out these “acceptable words,” these “words of delight” in our respective lifetimes. These words that convey truth about God; “*upright*” (unmixed or unadulterated with the vain doctrines and ideas of natural man); And accordingly, I’ve titled today’s message, “Words of Delight.”

B. Jer. 9:23-24:

1. Note why I chose to introduce this passage from Jeremiah by beginning with the passage from Eccl. Comment on the last phrase of Jer. 9:24 ó “...*in these things I delight.*” Reading these verses in Jeremiah 9 is like taking an open book quiz ó the answer clearly set before us.
2. Read vss. 23-24.
3. “...*glory...*” = boast, rejoice, base his hope upon
4. “...*understand and know...*” ó (Refer to Jn 17:3). Knowledge excludes itself (our wisdom) as a condition of our salvation. Refers to those glorying, not what they glory in.

5. Those described in vs. 23 comprise a group that is mutually exclusive with those described in vs. 24. This is descriptive of the two ways all men approach God (Grace and works, the two categories of religion and these two opposites cannot coexist).

C. Grace (vs. 24), God's way.

1. **“Exercisedö** = make or do, to execute, accomplish, finish ó **“in the earth”** = Christ in His incarnation ó in what He accomplished in His life and death on earth!
2. **“Lovingkindness”** ó This speaks of His purpose to save ó mercy; God's electing love is unconditional (an öelection of graceö) but always remember that election is unto salvation in Christ ó that is the sense of how His lovingkindness is exercised **“in the earth.”**
3. **“Judgment”** ó pronouncement of a judicial sentence (God the Father killed Christ, God the Son, for sin that was charged or imputed to Him).
4. **“Righteousness”** ó Just satisfaction made ó how God can be a loving Savior and still be a just Judge. (Refer to the phrase öJust God and a Saviorö that we are to look to for salvation in accordance with Isa. 45)

D. Works (vs 23), the way of natural religion:

1. Don't discount that this way of salvation is the way that is natural to us all which is consistent with God's declaration that we all must repent or perish. Who really imagines that gaining eternal life is based on:
 - a. How smart, or
 - b. How powerful, how influential or
 - c. How rich?

Not anyone perhaps that we know; yet many believe these temporal circumstances give evidence of God's eternal blessings and favor toward us.

2. Glorying in my wisdom
 - a. In the way that seems right to us (Quote Prov. 16:25). This is what we all did and many still do when they imagine that salvation is conditioned in some way, to some degree on the sinner, rather than Christ alone having met all the conditions of the sinner's salvation.
 - b. We glory in wisdom when we imagine that anything other than (or in addition to) the imputed righteousness of Christ could gain God's blessing and favor and / or remove His just wrath against sin.
3. Glorying in my might ó When I once believed (as most still do) that salvation was conditioned upon me, the sinner, (my acceptance, my faith, my decision, etc.) then I was unwittingly relying upon my power to save myself. I was glorying in my might
4. Glorying in my Riches ó Many are inclined to believe that their station in this life is evidence of God's eternal favor and thereby, glory in their riches. And even if one credits God with enabling them to meet the condition for their salvation, let us recognize that this is to presume that you now possess or have been given the wherewithal / the riches to save your self. That too, is how one might glory in their riches.

E. How is such ðgloryingö in these things manifested in our day?

1. Vast majority of so-called ðChristendomö believe in the doctrine of universal redemption, believing that God loves everyone and Christ died for everyone.

a. While adhering to that doctrine, I too imagined that I was glorying in Christ, consistent with basing my hope in those things set forth in vs. 24. However, this was not upright (or unmixed) thinking:

(1) Love ó I thought I was resting in the love of God exercised by Christ, but what kind of worthless love from One so powerful, so wise, so able would allow the vast majority of the objects of that love to perish?

(2) Judgment ó And while I may have thought I was looking to sins having been judged in Christ, the reality of my doctrine exposed that sin was not really taken care of by Christ and justice was not upheld. What sort of unjust monster would punish sins in God the Son and still send sinners to hell whose sins had already been paid for?

(3) Righteousness ó And while I may have thought I was looking to the righteousness of God in Christ, the reality of my doctrine exposed that I was looking at ðanotherö righteousness ó going about to establish one of my own. (Read Rom 10:1-4); When any believe that even one person for whom Christ died will perish, they reveal that they didn't really see Christ's work on the cross as a finished satisfaction. They do not see His work as it is ó as righteousness having been exercised ó the providing of a perfect satisfaction to God's justice.

b. God won't tolerate it ó He will not share His glory. Psa 147:10-11 tells us that “*...he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.*”

c. Clearly, my former hope (as with any others of like mind) was based upon:

(1) my wisdom (a way of my own imagination),

(2) my might (conditioned on me ultimately),

(3) and my riches (having sensed within the very blessings of God in my vain imaginations)

2. Tunnel of Time ó Some, unlike me in my former religion, do rightly conclude that Christ did not represent everyone in His work on the cross. And yet, many of these fall back upon a ðtunnel of timeö theory wherein they imagine that God sent Christ to die for them as a result of having foreseen some goodness in them ó foreknowing what their response would be to what they presume to be the conditions of salvation which they, the sinner, must meet (e.g. ó God knew they would believe, etc.). Let us recognize, that any of this mindset are still glorying in: (1) their wisdom (contrary to the truth that God is no respecter of persons, Rom 2:11), or (2) their might (that which God foresaw in them), and (3) their riches in having made such a false presumption of something good in them. And so any assurance they have of salvation is just that ó a false presumption.

E. How is such “glorying” in these things manifested in our day? (Con’t.):

3. Insufficiency of Christ Alone ó Many manifest that they glory in these things as they conclude that what Christ accomplished in the earth is insufficient. They may rightly conclude that they must have Christ’s work of righteousness imputed to them, but some indicate that this alone is insufficient ó that they must find a righteousness within themselves. As an example, some agree that Christ’s finished work, His righteousness, is the ground of our salvation but they go onto say that His work is merely the foundation and there remains a completing work to be done by or in the sinner. Consider how this is contrary to Christ’s parable of the house built on the rock and the house built on the sand. In that story, the only distinguishing characteristic of the house that would stand under the deluge of God’s judgment was in the foundation, that ground ó in other words, what their hope was built upon.

Those who seem so close to the truth of God’s way of salvation, but cling to one last strand that would enable them to look within for their hope rather than to the cross alone are still glorying in their own wisdom (for this too is another way), in their own might (looking within, their eyes diverted away from the cross), and they imagine they will achieve heaven based upon that found within which God has enabled them to do (their own riches).

Galatians 6:14 ó ***“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,…”***

F. Conclusion:

1. Read Jer. 9:24: ***“But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.”*** ó This is what God delights in and what His preachers set forth ó the words of delight!
2. Read I Cor 1:26-31: ***“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: ²⁷But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; ²⁸And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: ²⁹That no flesh should glory in his presence. ³⁰But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: ³¹That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”***

I pray that is where you’ll place your trust. For in the Lord (in His person and work) is where God finds pleasure or delight and no where else.

Footnote from the author: While this sermon was prepared and delivered by me, I often utilize the commentaries, study helps, and teachings of others to supplement my own prayerful study of the scriptures. Since this document was not originally prepared for publication in print, please excuse and recognize that it was unfeasible to properly identify and credit all of the various original sources used to develop the content herein. Ultimately, it is my sincere and foremost objective to accurately present the gospel of God’s grace found in the only infallible source, God’s word itself ó the Bible.