



the habit of delight **EXPERIENCE**

INTRODUCTION

Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.
Psalm 37:4

From the beginning, God gave us a desire for delight and the means to experience it, so it's no wonder that delight comes naturally to us. We enjoy a moving book, a compelling movie, or a tasty meal; we lose all track of time to our hobbies or hanging out with friends; we experience a sense of delight in nature, on vacation, or caring for our home. As humans, we are led by what we love! So it's not a question of if we delight, but what we delight in. All around us, there are things that spark joy, spur delight, and move us deeply. We can and should enjoy these blessings, but we need to take it a step further - not just delighting in the gift itself, but taking it all the way by finding our delight in the ultimate gift giver - God Himself. Delight is encountering something good and allowing its goodness to awaken us to what we want, and what our heart and soul ultimately want is a connection with its Creator, Sustainer, and Provider.

This Summer at Port City, we will continue our rhythm of treating the Summer like a Sabbath. As we pull away from the pressure to hustle, perform, and achieve, we make room for something amazing to happen in our lives - we make room for delight. Sabbath is not just an invitation to rest; it's also God's invitation to delight! So, as we journey through Summer Sabbath together, we want to create a habit of delight. Over the summer, we will practice developing intentional rhythms of delighting in the Lord.

Below you'll find eight practices to help you better understand the concept of delight while experiencing it firsthand. Feel free to go at your own pace and in any order. You can pick one a week or perhaps you want to make a spiritual retreat weekend out of it or do the Habit of Delight while on vacation. How you engage with these practices is up to you. What matters most is your posture and openness to carving out moments for delighting in the Lord - it's the posture of your heart that opens the door for delight to enter.

Before we begin our journey, it's essential to know that there is no right way to delight in the Lord; it can be felt in various ways. Delight is not guaranteed in every song, sound, rest time, or struggle, but there will be an activity (or two) that sparks joy and spurs delight within you - pay attention to those. During each activity, we encourage you to consider how you experienced delight and what it taught you about delighting in the Lord. Some of these exercises may not be intuitive, natural, or even easy for you, but that's the point of learning a new discipline: we try new things and stay open to learning. And, lastly, delight is not just a fleeting emotion; it's a way of being, a posture towards life that says, "I choose to find God and His joy in the ordinary."

SING [WORSHIP]

Our worship staff developed a “Habit of Delight” playlist (link on our website at www.portcity.church/delight), full of songs that speak to delighting in the Lord, declaring praise for His goodness, faithfulness, presence and character. For this practice, we encourage you to listen to this playlist (put it on while driving, working around the house, or incorporate it into your devotional time). Pay attention to the songs that connect with you and then pick one to go deeper with.

- Spend some time looking up the lyrics of the song and reflecting on its words.
- What stands out to you? What specifically helps you to delight in God?

If what we delight in determines what we desire, then worship serves as the transformative bridge that connects our souls to the very heart of God - opening our eyes to His greatness+goodness.

STATE [ARTICULATE WHAT BRINGS YOU JOY]

Trying to capture why something or someone brings us joy and delight is easier said than done. Find a piece of paper or a journal and a pen to write out your thoughts on these questions:

- What brings you joy, what sparks a sense of peace in you, + what makes your soul come alive?
- How do these activities or things help you feel more connected to God?

Write out a prayer expressing your gratitude to God for these gifts you get to enjoy.

When you consciously express and communicate the aspects of your spiritual journey that bring you joy, you cultivate a sense of gratitude and appreciation for God's blessings in your life.

SENSES [ENGAGE THEM]

Find a space or activity that brings you joy and delight. It might be walking on the beach, being out in nature or a local park, taking a stroll in your neighborhood, enjoying coffee at a local roastery, or relaxing in a comfortable chair at home. Ask God to remove any distractions and for you to be present in the moment.

1. SIGHT

Look around and let your eyes settle on three objects or elements that remind you of God's presence and delight you. Allow your eyes to be open to the beauty surrounding you, recognizing it as a reflection of God's creativity and love.

2. SOUND

Close your eyes and focus on the sounds around you. Listen intently to the world outside or play gentle music that uplifts your spirit. Pay attention to what reaches your ears. Let these sounds inspire gratitude and remind you of God's symphony of creation.

3. TOUCH

If you have a small piece of food or drink nearby, take a moment to savor it slowly. Pay attention to the taste, texture, and flavors on your tongue. Acknowledge the pleasure and satisfaction that comes from nourishing your body. Offer thanks for the abundant provision of God's creation, the taste of His goodness.

4. TASTE

Bring your awareness to the sense of smell. Take a deep breath and notice any scents in the environment. Allow these scents to awaken your senses, filling you with awe and gratitude, which can transport us to cherished memories and evoke a profound connection with God.

Through tasting, touching, seeing, hearing, and smelling, we can encounter His goodness in every moment and invite the Lord to infuse our daily experiences with His presence.

STOP [SLOW DOWN]

As you look over today or tomorrow, where can you plan to stop for 10 minutes, 30 minutes, or 1 hour? You pick the length of time but make the plan, including the undistracted place where you will go when you intentionally stop to spend a few moments with God. Make a plan so you don't lose the time when it comes. Now, when the time comes, start by taking a few deep breaths, relax your shoulders and close your eyes for a minute if you can. Choose one of the breathe prayers from the list below to focus your mind and center your heart. Stop. Breathe. Be with Jesus. Take delight in being with your God.

- **BREATHE IN:** Today is the day the Lord has made **BREATHE OUT:** I will rejoice and be glad in it.
- **BREATHE IN:** Give thanks to the Lord **BREATHE OUT:** for he is good – his love – endures forever.
- **BREATHE IN:** The Lord is my shepherd **BREATHE OUT:** I shall not want
- **BREATHE IN:** Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High **BREATHE OUT:** will rest in the shadow of the Almighty
- **BREATHE IN:** The Lord is compassionate and gracious **BREATHE OUT:** slow to anger, abounding in love.

It is in these intentional moments of slowing down that we can discover the depth of His love, the whispers of His voice, and the tender nuances of His presence.

STRUGGLE [FIGHT FOR DELIGHT]

During trying times, it's easy to lose our focus, and in turn, lose our hope. We let our present circumstances erase our memory of God's past faithfulness. One way to fight for your delight is to remember, and that's what we want you to do with this practice.

- Take some time to think back over the past year and make a list of ways that God has provided for you, growth you've experienced, obstacles you've overcome, and the support of others. Once you have a list, read it over a few times. Thank God for what he has done and ask him to increase your trust and faith that He will continue to provide for your every need.
- Write down all the names of God and the qualities that define His character, finding a Scripture that speaks to each one. Look over the list, which one sticks out to you the most? Why? How have you encountered this name of God or how do you need to encounter it?

When we delight in the Lord, we can recognize His sovereignty over every situation, His unfailing love for us, and His unchanging faithfulness.

SHARE [TOGETHER | DOUBLE DELIGHT]

Delight is more profound and impactful when we share it with others. We want to experience this truth by leaning on a critical piece of delighting in the Lord - togetherness.

- Gather with at least one other person or it could be a few: share a meal, a cup of coffee, or maybe go for a walk. In your conversation, share the ways and things you are finding delight in this summer. Spend some time discussing what each of you have learned about delighting in the Lord through your experiences.
- Sometimes words aren't enough and don't capture why something brings you delight. Invite someone to share an activity that makes your soul come alive, or tag along with a friend and participate in an activity they enjoy.

SOAK UP [MEDITATING ON SCRIPTURE]

Today, we want to look at the words of David captured in Psalm 145 where he directs his praise to God, declaring God is full of love and that He satisfies those who trust in Him.

- Read Psalm 145 all the way through, while praying and asking the Lord to open your eyes, your ears, and your heart as you read.
- Read through the whole Psalm again. Take your time, slow down, and notice words and phrases that stick out to you..
- Now, grab a journal and a pen. Read through it one more time and make a list of all the things the Psalmist says about the Lord.
- Journal your thoughts to the following question: What is the story the Psalmist is telling through this song and what is your response to it?

As we immerse ourselves in Scripture, delight can bloom within us as we uncover the depths of God's love, experience His faithfulness, and align ourselves with His purposes.

SIMMER [MAKING DELIGHT A HABIT]

In order to continue building on how we've been practicing delight this summer, we need to prepare for the next season and make a plan for delight. To ensure the momentum built continues, get your journal out and start crafting out ways you can make delighting in the Lord a priority heading into the fall. Make a plan (even a simple one, it doesn't need to be complicated) and write it down.

Utilize the questions below as a starting point:

- What can you put into place to make room for delight?
- What do you need to say "no" to in order to say "yes" to ensure you develop a habit of delight?
- Reflect on the different ways you practiced delighting in the Lord. Which one brought you the greatest joy and helped you feel most connected to God? How can you be intentional about pursuing this practice even when your schedule changes?

Delight is not just a fleeting emotion; it's a way of being, a posture towards life that says, "I choose to find God and His joy in the ordinary."