Dear Open Door Family,

It is so good to be home. Carol and I spent the last 8 days traveling from KC to Michigan and traveling around MI visiting different friends and family who have prayed for us down through the years. It was good to connect with them again and to share all that God is doing here at Open Door Bible Church. One of the reasons we made the trip was so that I could perform the wedding ceremony for the son of our dear friends, John and Sharon Shaw. As I performed the ceremony I had a chance (standing by the groom) to watch his face as he saw his bride in her wedding gown for the first time. To see the look of delight in his face as she walked down the aisle was very precious. It reminded me of the fact that we are all the bride of Christ and that He delights in us in the same way. Let's look at these verses which remind us of that fact.

Psalms 44:3 *(ESV) ...for not by their own sword did they win the land, nor did their own arm save them, but your right hand and your arm, and the light of your face, for you delighted in them.*

When this Psalm was written, the Nation of Israel was going through very difficult times. They had suffered defeat at the hands of their enemies. They had a sense that they were under God's judgment. So the first eight verses are a reminder of how God had worked in the past. I especially love vs. 3 where they acknowledge that the only reason they were able to enter and conquer the land of Canaan was because God was giving them the victory. It was not their sword, or their strength. It was the Power of God. Why? Why would God act powerfully for them? Because he *delighted in them*. I love that. They did not deserve to be *delighted in,* they were a sinful people who were constantly disobeying God. Yet God did delight in them. And as a result He showed His Power by delivering them from slavery and by giving them the Promised Land. Jumping to personal application, none of us deserves to be *delighted in*. But God in His Mercy and Grace demonstrated His love for us by sending Jesus to die for us. The words of this newer song ask a great question in light of God's delight in us.

Who am I? That the Lord of all the earth,
Would care to know my name, would care to feel my hurt.
Who am I? That the bright and morning star,
Would choose to light the way, For my ever wandering heart?
NOT because of WHO I am, but because of what YOU'VE DONE.
NOT because of WHAT I've done, but because of WHO YOU ARE.

We are like the nation of Israel; we disobey God, and we do not deserve His love and forgiveness. But He delights in us and saves us because of His Grace. It is ALL based on God and who He is.

PRAYER: Lord, God thank you that you *delight* in me. Thank you that because of that I can count on your strength and Power for everything that I face during the day. I cannot live the life of obedience that I long to live without Your help. Thank You for delighting in me!

Pastor Mark Kieft
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