

The Holy Spirit's Work

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[0 : 00] We're continuing our study in *Delighting in the Trinity* by Michael Reeves. We're down to our last three weeks. I have two weeks here on the Holy Spirit, and then a week for a concluding chapter, and we'll be done.

Well, we are studying *Delighting in the Trinity*, and it is important that we realize that this is not just a study on the Trinity, just a theological study.

It's about how we can and how we should delight in the Trinity. The point is, and what Michael Reeves, I think, main thrust is, and goal in writing this book, and really what our main goal for this class is, is that it would take us to higher levels of delight.

We're not just interested in informing our minds. We want to evoke delight and joy from our hearts. We delight in things that are wonderful. We delight in things that are beautiful. They evoke, they invite, they inspire delight in us.

[1 : 17] So, I see Dan and Catherine. I'm sure Dan and Catherine are delighting in their new baby, Kate. It's been a long time since I've had a baby, but I remember looking at those toes and looking at that nose, and they bring you such delight.

You just want to eat them up. And I don't know about you, but that's what I did. I pretended to eat that baby up. Why? Well, what is that? What is that desire to devour, that desire to hug and kiss and snuggle?

And those are expressions of delight. There is something about Kate that delights Dan and Catherine. In a good marriage, there's delight.

You look upon your spouse, and they're delightful. You take the hand of your wife, and you tell her she's the best woman, the best wife there is.

And I might disagree with you because mine's better. But the point is, that's what delight does. You see that delight in Proverbs 31. Her children arise.

[2 : 33] Now, you notice Dad isn't making them do this. Her children arise and call her blessed. Her husband also. And he praises her.

Many women do noble things. This is what he's saying to her. Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all. That's delight. Delight. And maybe she's beautiful, like Abigail.

But it's more than that. It's her character, her inner self. Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Now, you see what we're talking about.

We're talking about delight. Expressing expressive, happy enjoyment. There's something about babies and wives and husbands that you love that ignite delight.

And that is the point. The most delightful, the most enjoyable being in the whole universe, over the universe, is the Lord. Children delight in their father.

[3 : 44] Young children delight to play with their father. I'm imagining, we're not quite there, but I'm imagining college students, when they get money in the mail, and they say, wow, Dad really cares for me.

They delight in Dad. And the 20-year-old says, my Dad loves me. And there's feelings of delight.

That's what I'm hoping that happens. Well, God the Father is a father that we're meant to delight in. That we're to enjoy. And he is enjoyable. That is the real thrust of this study.

The Father is enjoyable. The Son is enjoyable. The Holy Spirit is enjoyable. Together they are enjoyable. The Father cares deeply and intimately for his children.

And when you think of that, of his care for you, his closeness to you, his enjoyment of you, that's the kind of God that he is. That delights us.

[4 : 50] That evokes delight. And the Son shows us the Father. That he's the one who dies to bring us into fellowship, to pay for our sins. That we might...

He brings us to God. To enjoy God. That we might have happy fellowship with him. So, what you see in the Bible, and what this class is showing us, is that creation and salvation are all about expanding the love and the delight of the Trinity to include us.

That what was in the Trinity now overflows. And it overflows in delight into creation and salvation. And so, when we fall, salvation is about bringing us to what we were before, but even to higher levels of enjoyment.

There are things now that we can enjoy about the Lord that would never have been experienced, that we could never have experienced if there had been no fall. We would never have seen and felt and experienced the patience of God, the grace of God, the humility, the love of God the way we can now.

But creation and salvation, it's about including us into this joy. So, Paul says... Pastor John referred to this last week. Paul says, we are servants of your joy.

[6 : 18] That's a good way of thinking about what is the role of pastors? What's the role of apostles? In one sense, the great mission of a pastor's life, of a shepherd's life, is to bring God's people to a state of joy.

Now, Paul and pastors and the other apostles are servants of joy only because the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are servants of joy first.

bringing our hearts to delight in God and his character, in his grace, in his love, in his mercy, where we not only know those things from a theological book, so to speak, but we know them as burning in our hearts.

Psalms 84 captures this essence of what God is doing in us and for us. So, would you turn there really quickly? Psalm 84... We could read this entire psalm, but it's just saturated with delight.

This is a believer in blossom. This is a believer with his heart filled with delight.

[7 : 41] We're just going to read the first two verses. I would really encourage you to read the entire verse. I mean, or the entire Psalm 10... Or verse 10, excuse me, says, Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.

What is that? That's delight. I'd rather be the doorkeeper in the house of God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. But look at verses 1 and 2. How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty.

So how lovely, how beautiful, how delightful is the place where you live, O Lord Almighty. My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord.

My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. What is so delightful about heaven? Why does he say this house, this place where you live is so beautiful?

Well, it's because he wants the living God. God is there. And so to live in the Lord's house is to live with the Lord.

[8 : 43] The rest of the psalm expresses that delight, the blessedness of the man whose heart's been captured. The delight of the man who God has caught in this net of delight.

He says later, blessed. Blessed. This is verse four. Blessed are those who dwell in your house. They're ever praising you. Now, I think we get the wrong idea of the wrong impression.

If what we think of heaven is, is it's just one big, long church service. And we all stand in our pews and we're just always praising God. That's not the point at all. The point is that they are with him. Blessed are these people who live in your house. First in the temple, but it's really pointing to heaven. The point is that they're with him. And he's always giving them something to praise him for. So just as in Proverbs 31, the husband and the children are living with this woman. And she's always doing something that says, look, she's doing it again.

[9 : 50] Look what she's doing now. And they praise her. That's what's going on here. This is a family setting. And so the husband, the children see her at work and they see her doing what she does.

And their hearts run out to her in delight. Well, to live with God as your father, you can't help. But you're going to be seeing God constantly at work, constantly blessing, constantly.

And you'll ever be praising. You won't help but sing. Well, that's life.

That's life as we were meant to live it. That is eternal life to know God. To know God like that. To live with God like that.

To enjoy God like that. Now, how does that happen? How does that begin below? And how does that happen in eternity? Well, that's what we're talking about for the next two weeks.

[10 : 48] That's the Holy Spirit's work. So the first thing, the Nicene Creed, which is a very orthodox creed that lays down some of the foundations of who the Trinity is.

This is what the church has always believed. The first thing the Nicene Creed says about the Spirit is that he is, quote, the Lord, the giver of life.

Psalm 84 calls God the living God. You see that in verse 2. Jesus Christ says, I am the life. Life is what God has in and of himself.

He doesn't depend on anyone to give him life. He doesn't need anyone to give him life. He has life in and of himself. And it's not just existence. It's life.

It's that sense of delight and joy and happiness in existing, in loving, in being loved. He has that kind of life.

[11 : 55] And. He does have life. Psalm 104, verse 30. When you send your spirit, they are created.

These the creatures and you renew the face of the earth. The Holy Spirit is at work in the world all the time.

Bringing life, bringing life wherever you see life. So where where do you see the Holy Spirit's delightful work? Well, you you see it everywhere there's life.

You see it in your garden. Is your garden coming up? I'm sure it is. All that heat and sunshine and rain that we're having. Our garden is blossoming as popping up.

Your flower gardens are blossoming and blooming. Things. Wherever there's life. So the deer running through your yard and then you, you yourself.

[12 : 56] You are not just a compound of chemicals and forces and DNA coming together. It's the spirit giving life. Now, remember Genesis one. The first person of the Trinity that we actually see different differentiated in any way is the spirit.

Remember Genesis one, how it begins in the beginning. God created the heavens and the earth. And now the earth was formless. And void.

And darkness was over the surface of the deep. And the spirit of God was hovering over the waters. A question for you.

What was the creation at first? What was the creation at first? That gives the three or four descriptions of what that that first primordial creation before there was any sort of life poured into it? What what did it look like? What was it like? What did it say? Roger. It was chaos. It was chaos. It was chaos. How do you see that?

[14 : 05] What are there? What are some other descriptors that I just read? Sorry, it was empty. It was with it was formless. Formless, empty.

Darkness. Hovering over the deep. The abyss. So that word, the deep that in the Old Testament is it evokes very frightening, chaotic, deep abyss.

You didn't want to go into the deep. You didn't want to go to that place. But the spirit was hovering over the waters like a dove.

And you get that picture again in Jesus baptism. And from the darkness and from the chaos, from the death and the deep abyss, the spirit gave life.

The spirit brought life. It's the very same thing that he did in the resurrection. Romans 8 11 says, if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who lives in you.

[15 : 28] Now, the spirit then is the life giver. He gives life to things that have no life. He gives life to things that are in the state of being empty and dark and formless and chaotic and frightening.

Now, that's not just true of natural things or of Jesus Christ. That is true of you. If you are a believer. If you have been born again, regenerated, those that same operation. Has happened to you spiritually.

Just as you will one day be raised from the dead physically. You were in this place spiritually. So we say born again or we say regeneration, but those are shorthand for something truly amazing.

When when Adam and Eve turned away from God. We need to understand what they were turning to. They were turning to Satan.

[16 : 41] Who is who is dark, chaotic, evil. They were turning back to death.

They they walked away from the living God and from life to death. And so in a very real sense. In Genesis one and two terms, they they're turning back to the abyss.

They're turning away from the living God. And so what happens now? Because Adam and Eve did that. Well, we come into the world.

Still born. Dead. We are creatures of the abyss. We are creatures of the formless and the dark and the evil.

We are creatures that are dead in our sins and our transgressions. And so we we come we come into the world turned away from the Lord, from the living God.

[17 : 46] And so naturally we love and desire other things. That's what it means to be turned in one direction or another. It's it's the things that you long for.

It's the things that you find a light in the things that you want. And so. We don't see any beauty in him. No, instead, we want ourselves.

And you will see that still in your life, believer. Every sin is about you turning away from God to yourself, from pleasing him to pleasing yourself.

Now, sometimes you do it consciously and very high handedly with rebellion. And sometimes just do it naturally. You don't even think about it. But that's what we do, don't we?

We just naturally serve ourselves. We naturally love ourselves. That's why the second commandment is love your neighbor as you love yourself.

[18 : 44] You need to broaden your circle of love to include someone just more than you. You need to include God and other people. So man is not wavering between God and himself. We're dead to God.

We're prisoners of death without hope. Without God. And that's why Martin Luther wrote. By my own reason.

Or strength. I cannot believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel.

The Holy Spirit is the giver of life. So this person in the abyss, in the darkness, away from God, he can't reason his way or pull himself away from that.

He can't reason himself into wanting something else. He doesn't have strength, he says, to even believe. But he must be called. And that call is not merely an invitation.

[19 : 45] It is a call of power. Where the Holy Spirit draws us to God. So the problem is our hearts. And this is where the Holy Spirit comes in.

And this is where he begins his delightful work of bringing you to God. Of giving you new birth. He does it by giving you a new heart.

New desires. New thoughts. New thoughts. Now I want the things of the Lord. Now that was the problem. Ezekiel says and Jeremiah says and Hebrews says.

That was the problem and the fault with the old covenant. It commanded things of people who for the most part had dead hearts. Now we need to make it clear.

There's nothing in the commands. There's nothing in the commands that actually meet the real need. And what I mean by that is everything God commands is good.

[20 : 50] It's reasonable. It's joy producing. It's the way to happiness. But no amount of good commanding makes a dead heart want to obey.

So God says this is his answer is not. Well, I'll make. I'll just tell him again. Or I'll say it louder.

He says, I will give you a new heart. I put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone. And give you a heart of flesh. The point is a stone for a heart is a dead heart.

An unresponsive heart. You can command a stone to do the best things. And it will not obey.

Command stone all you want and it won't obey you.

But flesh is alive. And he says, and I will put my spirit in you to move you. To follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. So the Holy Spirit comes in.

[21 : 54] He comes into a dark and deep and chaotic and evil place. And he begins to give life. So he's the giver of life.

Natural and gracious. So natural life and spiritual life. And he gives new hearts. Now, the tool he uses is the scriptures.

The scriptures read. The scriptures preached. The truth proclaimed. And through the scriptures. Through the word of God.

He opens blinded eyes to see that the Lord is really beautiful. Now, this might be something that this person has heard a hundred times before. But now the Holy Spirit takes the very same truth.

And puts it before that person's heart. Puts it before their eyes. And they see it. They see this truth. And they see for the first time that the Lord is really beautiful.

[22 : 55] And he wins their hearts to him. And so they too truly believe. He calls them. And they willingly come.

Because he's won their hearts. They willingly believe. Because now they see their sin. But they see, oh, there's a savior for sinners. And he's full of love and grace. He's not just going to judge me and condemn me.

No, he can save me if I come to him. And so he wins our hearts back to him. Now, that's what the Holy Spirit does. That's life. To know him. And to enjoy him.

To see his glory. To see his grace. To see his mercy. Now, we need to be clear. And this is what Michael Reeves spends quite a bit of time on in this chapter.

Is that the life that the Spirit gives us is not some abstract thing. This grace that he gives us is not some sort of abstract thing.

[23 : 53] And he says it's not some thing he gives us really at all. The Holy Spirit gives himself. God gives us himself.

So I will put a new spirit in you. And it's his spirit. I will put my spirit in you. And move you to follow my decrees. And be careful to keep my laws. So the life the Spirit gives is not some abstract thing. It's not some thing at all. It's himself. So God is life. Jesus says I am the way, the truth, and the life. The Spirit gives himself. That we might know. And enjoy him.

He gives us himself. And he gives us himself so that we can enter into that fellowship with God. With God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

So he's called the spirit of adoption. So we feel like sons. And we naturally say, Abba, Father. Those are words that come from a child's heart.

[25 : 00] From a young child or an older child. From a child's heart to a father that he loves and trusts. But we begin to see and experience and feel and know God that way.

And so naturally we begin to say, Abba, Father. We're baptized into the Trinity.

And that baptism into the Trinity is symbolized by the water baptism that we do in the name of the Father and the Son of the Holy Spirit. We're baptized into fellowship.

Into the life of God. To delight in and to enjoy him for our happiness. And so what happens? What happens gradually? And then what happens more and more as the Christian grows? As sanctification happens? What happens as we enter into heaven and then it's fully completed?

[26 : 00] Well, we begin to glorify him as we delight in him. We delight in his love. And when we delight in his love and we turn away from other lesser loves, we're saying, oh, he's supreme.

He's willy. His love is better than life. We delight in his love. And we show the world that we have a strength. And we have a comfort. And we have a secret fountain that they don't know about.

So we have peace that surpasses all understanding. The world can look on a Christian and say, I don't understand how they're doing this.

I don't understand how they're making it through. I don't understand why they can find comfort and peace in this situation. Paul says, you know, I've learned to be content.

Whether I have a lot or I have a little. Well, that's glorifying to God. When you have a little. And you're still happy.

[27 : 04] Or when you have a lot and your heart's not turned away from God. And so we have God. And so we say, he is my God.

So he gives himself. Thomas Goodwin, who he's a Puritan. He was a Puritan. And he really was a beautiful, happy theologian.

He said this. The sun does not only enrich the earth with all good things. But gladdens and refreshes all with shedding immediately. Its own wings of light and warmth.

Which is so pleasant to behold and enjoy. And in the same way. Does God. And Christ. The son of righteousness. Maybe that is a little bit complicated.

But what he's saying there is. The sun gives of itself. When you're sitting there in the sun. You feel its warmth.

[28 : 05] And you see its light. But what do we feel when we feel the sun? What do we see when we're looking at the light of the sun?

Well, the photons and the energy that comes from the sun. Is actually making its way all the way from space. All the way to us. That warmth that you feel.

Had its origin. 93 million miles away. And it came directly to you. It used to be in the sun. Now it's on your skin. It used to be far away. But now it's close.

And it's on your skin. And it's filling your eyes. That's what Thomas Goodwin is saying. The Lord is not happy just to be 93 million miles away.

And send us things. He comes himself. He falls on our skin. He comes into our eyes, so to speak. That's the generosity of God.

[29 : 04] God doesn't just want us to have his things. He wants us to have him. He doesn't just want us to have life. He wants us to have his life. He doesn't just want us to enjoy his things.

He wants us to enjoy himself. And so the new birth is the life of God coming into the soul of man. That promise in Ezekiel is that the Holy Spirit will come into you.

Will live in you. Romans 8-11. I already talked about that. The Spirit is living in you. He doesn't just impart life to you.

He gives you the life straight from himself. Now, so this is personal. God has a very active and personal interest in you experiencing life.

You experiencing joy. He doesn't just give us something. This is personal to him. And he gives not just of his things, but of himself.

[30 : 18] Now, listen to what Reeves says here. This is one of those truths that is a bit like silver. It's easily tarnished and covered with grime. When Christians talk of God giving us grace, for example, we can quickly imagine that grace is some kind of spiritual pocket money he duels out.

Even that old explanation that grace is God's riches at Christ's expense can make it sound like stuff that God gives.

But the word grace is really just a shorthand way of speaking about the personal and loving kindness out of which ultimately God gives himself.

Grace is God's grace. Grace is not something that God puts in an envelope and sends to us.

Grace is ultimately and finally God's kindness as he comes to us and helps us immediately. As he gives us life immediately. As he sheds light into our hearts immediately.

[31 : 24] As he encourages us immediately. It's God giving himself. It's Christ giving himself. So it is grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now medieval Roman Catholicism. Grace was really seen as some sort of stuff. And so they could pray. Hail Mary.

Full of grace. As if Mary was a bottle and grace was milk that filled that bottle. But that's not what it was at all. And that's really why they missed.

So much of the glory of the gospel. In 1537 there was a debate. And in the red corner is a cardinal. Cardinal said to Leto. And he is. He was sad. Sad to Leto in the red corner. In the blue corner was John Calvin. And Cardinal said to Leto's big argument was.

[32 : 25] Well if you preach that God saves people by his grace alone. People won't have any reason. To. To want holiness. After all.

If my holiness does not contribute. In any way to my getting saved. Then why should I bother? I've got grace after all. I've got grace already. I'm going to be saved already.

So what's the point? And Salito really thought that he gave Calvin a real uppercut with that. But it really was just a swing and a miss. Totally missed the point.

Calvin said. You miss what grace is. You fundamentally don't understand what salvation is. What is salvation? It's not just a get out of hell free card.

Or it's grace isn't something that God gives you to escape hell. Actually what grace is. It isn't something apart from Christ. It isn't something apart from God.

[33 : 24] From the Holy Spirit. And so what is salvation? We've heard a lot about it. But salvation is being brought to know. And to love. And to enjoy God.

Now if you're brought into the experience of now I know God. And I know him. And I love him. And I'm experiencing him. And I'm enjoying him. Then.

Then what is the motivation for holiness then? Well. God is holy. So be holy as I am holy. And holiness is the way that we don't grieve the Holy Spirit.

And so now I don't want to sin. Because I don't want to mess up this enjoyment that I'm having. I don't want to grieve God. I don't want to throw a wrench in our relationship.

So. We want holiness. So how does sanctification work? Well. We need to be clear. It's not about getting some.

[34 : 21] More of something. Into your life. Or into your heart. It's not like downloading. Grace. From your Bible. Into your heart. Or downloading.

Some grace. Through. Prayer. Grace is. Is always. Going deeper. Into. Our relationship. With God. It's always a movement. Toward God. It's always faith. Working through. Love. So. It is work.

There is effort. But. Every relationship. Has effort. Every good relationship. You need to not. Neglect it. And so what happens.

And this is what I mean. Is that. God shows us more. The Holy Spirit. The Spirit of holiness. Takes us further. Here. He takes us.

[35 : 21] Further into his word. Into his truth. And he opens it to me. And so. I can honestly say. I was blind to this. I didn't see something here.

And I'm a Christian. I was missing it. I was missing this aspect. Of who God is. Or I was missing this aspect.

Of what does it mean. To have a relationship. With God. What does this look like? And the Holy Spirit. Takes us. To his word. And he uncovers us. And he uncovers the truth.

And then. By faith. We turn again to God. And repentance. We turn away from sin. And by love. We begin. To live a new life.

He shows us more of our need. And he shows us more of himself. And he. And he takes us further. Into the Trinity. And. This is really important.

[36 : 15] That. To understand. Sanctification. Is always. It's always. Personal. It's always relational.

It's not transactional. It's not about getting something. It's not primarily even. David Pellison says. It's not even. Primarily about. Figuring out. Who your. What your idols are.

Or believing this truth. Or that truth. If you just understood. This one doctrinal thing. Then you would get it. And. Your sin would. Dissefate. Or whatever. Go away. Now.

All those things. Are part of it. Figuring out your idols. Is a great way. To figure out. Where you're. Not. Believing God. Not trusting him.

But we can't. Miss the point. It's. It's living more. Deeply. In a wise. Knowledgeable. True. Affectionate. Obedient. Trusting.

[37 : 13] Relationship. With the father. And the son. And the holy spirit. And so. Figuring out our idols. Putting off. And putting on. Reading your bible. Praying. All the means.

Of fellowship. Are all the means. Of grace. Those are means. Of relationship. There means. That we come. Closer to God. We see new things.

About God. And we enjoy. And we appreciate. New things. About God. And what happens. Is. We then have. A greater desire. To put to death. Our sin. And we do. And it's. It's work.

And it's hard. And there's temptation. And there's struggle. And all of the rest. But. Sanctification. Is never. Impersonal. It is always. Personally. Directed.

Towards. The Lord. So. I. Am running. Out of time. But I'm not. Running out of notes. How do I want.

[38 : 09] To wrap this up? I guess. We'll. We'll. End like this. What is the spirit.

Of God. Doing in us? What. What does he do. At the beginning. When he gives us. New birth. A new life. What. What is he doing. Through this process. Of sanctification. Where he. He's turning us away.

From sin. And darkness. And. And more. And more. Into this. Living. Outgoing. Outflowing. Relationship. With him. Well. The Holy Spirit. Is. He's. He's. Untwisting us.

We're all twisted up. We're twisted in. We're twisted in. On ourselves. We're obsessed. With ourselves. And the spirit. Comes. And he bends. Us. Outward. And he doesn't. Not so much.

By force. But by. I want to use the word. Temptation. By persuasion. By winning us. And so that we freely. And gladly.

[39 : 03] And happily. Move closer to him. Away from what was behind. And moving towards what is ahead. I press on. To know Christ.

Christ. So the Holy Spirit. He's a giver of life. And what he's doing. All the time. In your life. Believer. Is he's working. To untwist you. From being self-obsessed.

To Christ-obsessed. We're going to close. With a quote. From Spurgeon. If it's ever. The Holy Spirit's work. To turn our. It's. Excuse me.

It's ever. The Holy Spirit's work. To turn our eyes. Away from self. To Jesus. Jesus. But Satan's work. Is just the opposite of this. For he is constantly.

Trying to make us. Regard ourselves. Instead of Christ. Satan always. Wants to turn us. To the darkness. To the abyss. To the confusion. To the chaos.

[39 : 57] To ourselves. Instead of Christ. We shall never. Find happiness. By looking at our prayers. Our doings. Or our feelings. It is what Jesus is.

Not what we are. That gives rest. To the soul. If we would at once. Overcome Satan. And have peace with God. It must be. By looking.

Unto Jesus. Now that's what we are going to be doing. In the next hour. I want you to see it that way. That this is an invitation from God.

To come. To praise him. To enjoy him. To move closer to him. To have dealings with him. And it's as we do that. That he untwists us. And frees us from our sin.

And makes us to embrace holiness. Well. We are dismissed. And it's just. Thank you.