

## ***“Don’t Fret!”*** ***Psalm 37:1-6***

INTRO:

This **Psalm** begins with a simple command — ***“Do not fret.”*** What do these Words mean? Although I like to kid about this, it doesn’t mean we must not play guitar. It really speaks of our confidence in God in face of the apparent prosperity of evil folks.

While most of us readily recognize the wisdom of the adage, *“Why Worry When You Can Pray,”* some of us are prone to practice its opposite, *“Why Pray When You Can Worry.”* Contrary to what we may think, the Psalmist did not write **Psalm 37** for us who are victims of the worry bug. Actually, the Psalmist wrote to those who look the prosperity of the wicked, the struggles of the righteous, and then wonder where God is in all of this. He opens with the negative command, ***“Fret Not.”*** Then David gives us three positive things we ought to be doing instead of fretting. So, our road map for our study today has two parts.

***I. Fret Not (v. 2-3)***

***II. Trust, Delight, and Roll (v. 3-6)***

***I. Fret Not (v. 2-3)***

A. Often while reading the **Psalms**, I try to imagine what kind of music that accompanied each Psalm. To my mind, **Psalm 23**, had to be set to some soft, beautiful, flowing melody that flowed along like a brook over rocks. The music for **Psalm 51** surely was written in a minor key. This **Psalm** may have opened with a loud banging chord to carry the first words to our hearts! ***“Do not Fret.”***

1. The word ***“fret”*** means literally ***“to cause a fire to burn.”*** The implication from the structure is that ***“fretting”*** is something that we are to quit doing to ourselves and it is an ongoing activity. With this booming chord that I imagine, the singer sings ***“stop causing yourself to burn with anger because of evildoers”***

2. Why would we be tempted to ***“burn”*** because of evil doers? The second phrase, as is common in Hebrew poetry, rhymes the thought and takes away any question that might rise in our minds. ***“Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.”*** Who me? I would never be envious of sinners? It is this very anger and envy that out politicians thrive on when they seek election to power.

B. Honestly we often find ourselves in the sandals of the Psalmist who wrote, ***“But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no pangs in their death, But their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as***

***other men, Nor are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them like a garment.”*** (Psalm 73:2-6).

If we don't watch out, we can make ourselves burn with envy over the apparent blessings of the evil ones!

C. How do we avoid fretting? First, remember their end (v. 2). They have no future, only the present.

## ***II. Trust, Delight, and Roll (v. 3-6)***

After you have reminded ourselves of their fate, there are three specific actions we should do in place of fretting! This is an important exercise. We tend to think the Bible just tells us to stop doing things, it also tells us to start doing some positive things. These are three positive commands. Each command is paired with a promise. If we will do what He asks, He will bless us!

A. First, we must, ***“Trust in the LORD and do good.”*** This is a command. So, instead of fretting or burning in envy and anger over the wicked and being envious of their apparent good fortune, we need to actively place our confidence in the LORD and act out our faith by doing good and not the evil that we might be tempted to do to gain what the evil ones have. While this seems simple an obvious on the surface, it is not easy to do. Think about how often the Lord has to exhort us to trust Him.

How do we learn to do this? Here are some suggestions.

***FIRST, LEARN TO PRAISE GOD MORE.*** Praise is rehearsing who God is and what He has done. Reminding ourselves that God is the blessed controller of all things and that He is holy helps us know that God is at work and has a plan in the midst of the hardest circumstances.

***SECOND, REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR THE ABILITY TO TRUST.*** Remember the man and his demon-possessed son who were waiting for Jesus when He returned from the Mount of Transfiguration? ***Mark 9:23, 24: “Jesus said to him, ‘If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.’ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, ‘Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!’”*** Lord, I want to believe. Help me to overcome my unbelief.

***THIRD, REMIND YOURSELF OF THE PROMISED BLESSINGS FOR THOSE WHO TRUST.***

Jeremiah 17:7-8 is one example.

***“Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD and whose trust is the LORD. For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit.”***

B. So, Instead of fretting we are to trust. Second, we are also to delight in the Lord.

***“Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.”(Psalm 37:4).***

The word ***“delight”*** means ***“to take extreme delight or pleasure in someone or something.”*** How do we ***“delight ourselves in the LORD?”*** The root of delighting in God must be a growing relationship with God himself. David calls upon us to ***“Taste and see that the LORD is good!”*** in **Psalm 34:8**. We cannot delight in Him if we do not know Him. So, clearly establishing a relationship with God is primary if we are to delight in Him.

C. So, instead of fretting we are to trust in the LORD, and to delight ourselves in the LORD, and finally, we are to roll. The Hebrew verb translated ***“commit”*** actually means ***“to roll some object upon another, or away.”*** It is used for rolling ourselves or our troubles on the LORD and so to trust Him or to commit one’s behavior or life to the LORD.

1. I like this picture because often we cannot understand what it is to commit our ways unto the Lord. It is literally rolling our lives over upon Him. Don’t fret! Give your life with all of your needs to the LORD and let Him deal with them!

2. This readily brings to mind the exhortation that Peter gave us in the end of his first letter. **1 Peter 5:7** ***“Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”*** The participle ***“casting”*** is again a visual word. It is used of the disciples throwing their outer garments over the donkey as kind of a saddle for Jesus to ride upon in His triumphal entry! Take your anxieties and cares and cast them, or roll them on Jesus. Take your life and roll it over on Him too. He can carry the load and He will bring to pass what is His will.

So, when we look at the wicked around us and we are tempted to fret and covet. Here is what we should do:

trust,  
delight,  
and  
roll.

How much have you and I rolled on Jesus lately?