

There are many, many verses that describe the joy, pleasure, delight, gladness and happiness of God in himself, his people, his creation, redemption, etc. Here are nearly 350 that I have compiled. It is not by any means an exhaustive list, but is simply what I have found in my Bible study, reading and research *and* remembered to put in the list. I am seeking to compile every verse in the Bible on the subject, so if you find any other verses related to the gladness of God *please* e-mail them to me at richard.liantonio@gmail.com. The footnotes contain technical details giving further explanation why or how a given verse portrays the happiness of God's heart, when it may not seem obvious in all English translations of the Bible.

1. Genesis 1:3 – the light of God’s smiling face shines at the dawn of the universe
2. Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31—delight in creation<sup>1</sup>
3. Genesis 2:8, 10, 15 – God places Adam in the garden of His pleasure<sup>2</sup> as a manifestation of His delight in creation and as a context for God and humanity to enjoy each other
4. Genesis 4:4—God enjoyed (looked with favor) on Abel’s sacrifice of faith (Heb 11:4)
5. Genesis 6:8 – Noah finds “favor in the eyes of the Lord”<sup>3</sup>
6. Genesis 8:21—Noah’s sacrifice and fellowship with God is a sweet (pleasing) aroma to God
7. Genesis 21:6 – God has made laughter
8. Exodus 29:18, 25, 41—sacrifices (i.e., worship; communion with people) is sweet (pleasing)
9. Exodus 33:12-17 – Moses finds favor in God’s sight (see note Gen. 6:8)
10. Exodus 34:9ff – Moses finds favor in God’s sight (see note Gen. 6:8)
11. Leviticus 1:3, 4; 19:5; 22:27, 29; 23:11— accepted (gladly received) through the sacrifices
12. Leviticus 1:9, 13, 17; 2:2, 9, 12; 3:5, 16; 4:31; 6:15, 21; 8:21, 28; 17:6; 23:13, 18—sacrifices

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<sup>1</sup> The word translated “good/good thing” in these verses is the Hebrew word טוב (*tov*). Though often translated “good,” such a translation is very vague. Often the word means “*pleasurably good*,” that is, good in the sense that it creates happiness and awakens an experience of pleasure. It is sometimes used in other ways such as “morally good” but that is far from the primary understanding as seen in the recurrence of pleasure-related ideas in both its etymology and in the most basic lexical definitions. It seems to be etymologically derived from an Arabic word meaning (as a verb) “*to be pleasant, delightful, delicious, sweet; to be pure, clean, cheerful and happy*” and an Aramaic word meaning “*glad, joyful*.” The same word (*tov*) can be used as a verb, adjective and noun. As a verb, its basic definition is “*to be pleasing, good; to be glad, joyful*.” As an adjective it is used in a multitude of ways but its primary definitions are “*pleasant, agreeable to the senses; pleasant to the higher nature, giving pleasure, happiness, prosperity, and so agreeable, pleasing, well*.” As a noun, it means, “*a good thing, benefit, welfare; welfare, prosperity, happiness*.” cf. BDB, 373-375

<sup>2</sup> The word “Eden” means delight. It is the same root word that occurs in Psalm 36:8 with reference to the river of God’s pleasure.

<sup>3</sup> In Hebrew culture, one looked primarily to the eyes as the “meter” so to speak of one’s emotions (whereas today one may look to expressions with the mouth/smile). To “find favor in the eyes” means to look in someone’s face and see an expression of acceptance and gladness on their face. It is similar to saying that he “found a smile on God’s face.”

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13. Leviticus 23:2, 4, 6, 37, 39, 44 – they are appropriately called the “Lord’s feasts” for “the feasts belonged to God alone; for he alone is [fully] happy and blessed.”<sup>4</sup> They were primarily his celebrations that He invited to people to participate in.
14. Numbers 6:25 – see note for Isaiah 60:1-2
15. Numbers 14:8 – the taking of the promised land a sign of God's delight – it strengthened then to overcome the fears and difficulties of conquering a land full of giants.
16. Numbers 24:1 – it pleased God to bless His people
17. Numbers 24:17 - the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament – dates to 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.) translates this verse – “I will point to him, but not now; I declare him blessed (happy), but he draws not near; a star shall rise out of Jacob, a man shall spring out of Israel; and shall crush, the princes of Moab...” – this verse seems to be Messianic (i.e., referring to Jesus)
18. Numbers 15:3, 7, 10, 13, 14, 24; 18:17; 28:2, 6, 8, 13, 24, 27; 29: 2, 6, 8, 13, 36—sacrifices are sweet to God
19. Deuteronomy 7:7 – the Lord was pleased to affectionately attach himself to Israel
20. Deuteronomy 10:15 – the Lord had a delight in loving his people (spec. the Patriarchs)
21. Deuteronomy 28:63
22. Deuteronomy 30:9
23. Judges 6:17-21 – Gideon finds favor<sup>5</sup> in the eyes of the Lord
24. 1 Samuel 2:26 – Samuel grows up in the favor and pleasure of the Lord
25. 1 Samuel 12:22—the Lord is pleased to make us his people
26. 2 Samuel 15:25 – David returning to Jerusalem will be a sign of favor in God’s eyes (see note Gen. 6:8 and 2 Sam. 19:15 when David returns to Jerusalem)
27. 2 Samuel 22:20—he delivers and saves us because he delights in us
28. 1 Kings 3:10 – the Lord is pleased with Solomon’s heart and request for wisdom
29. 1 Kings 10:9 – even the queen of Sheba gets a revelation of the Lord’s delight in his people
30. 2 Kings 10:30 – The Lord received pleasure in Jehu eradicating all traces of Baal from Israel<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Philo, *Special Laws* II 53

<sup>5</sup> The Greek word for “favor” is *dektos*, which means “to be met with approval in someone’s company; to be pleasing because of being approved (BDAG, 217).” The Hebrew word is *ratson*, which likewise carries the ideas of goodwill, favor, acceptance, and pleasure (BDB, 953). In essence, favor is pleasure displayed in freely receiving someone and showing them goodwill. I liken it to the smile of God over us.

<sup>6</sup> What is translated “done well” in most English translations is from the verb form of **בָּטַח** which is the same root discussed in the note for Genesis 1:4. It means “to do well or pleasing.” Basically, what Jehu did was pleasing to God.

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31. 1 Chronicles 16:27—his dwelling place is full of joy and gladness
32. 1 Chronicles 17:27 – The Lord is pleased to bless David and his family
33. 1 Chronicles 29:17 – the Lord delights in uprightness (not perfection but uprightness – David claims this uprightness for himself and he was far from perfect – it is not perfection but a posture of heart that is committed to obey God yet even when one stumbles he or she returns to God with confidence)
34. 2 Chronicles 2:4 – see note with Leviticus 23:2
35. 2 Chronicles 9:8 – repeat account of the Queen of Sheba’s epiphany in 1 Kings 10:9
36. Ezra 3:5– see note with Leviticus 23:2
37. Ezra 6:10—sacrifices as sweet unto God
38. Ezra 8:22 – the hand of God is “favorably disposed,” i.e., inclined to manifest gladness and favor to His people
39. Nehemiah 8:10—God's own joy makes us strong
40. Job 33:26 – If we pray to God He will be favorable<sup>7</sup> to us and we will see His face with joy (His joyful face)
41. Psalm 2:4 – God laughs in the certainty of his purposes and triumph over evil
42. Psalm 4:6 – Lift up (let us see) the light of your countenance (your smile)
43. Psalm 5:4-7—if those God does not take pleasure in cannot stand before Him, and David comes into God’s house, therefore David is declaring that God takes pleasure in him.
44. Psalm 5:12—He surrounds us with his favor as with a shield
45. Psalm 16:3—the people of God are the excellent ones in whom Jesus rejoices
46. Psalm 16:6 – Jesus experiences pleasure the inheritance the Father gave Him
47. Psalm 16:9-11—infinite gladness radiates out of the throne of God
48. Psalm 18:19—God rescued David because He delighted in Him *even in his weakness*
49. Psalm 19:1-6—the glory and gladness of God displayed in creation, especially the sun
50. Psalm 21:6
51. Psalm 30:5—His anger lasts a moment but his smile (favor) is over us forever
52. Psalm 30:7—His gladness towards us strengthens us and enables us to stand firm
53. Psalm 30:11—He makes and gives out garments of joy
54. Psalm 31:16
55. Psalm 32:7 – the Lord sings songs of deliverance all around us

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<sup>7</sup> See note for Judges 6:17

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56. Psalm 34:15 – the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous<sup>8</sup> – i.e., he takes pleasure in them
  57. Psalm 35:27
  58. Psalm 36:8—The river of God’s pleasures
  59. Psalm 36:9 – The light (i.e., gladness) of God
  60. Psalm 37:13 - God laughs in the certainty of his purposes and triumph over evil
  61. Psalm 40:13 – The Father has pleasure in raising Jesus from the dead<sup>9</sup>
  62. Psalm 41:11
  63. Psalm 42:8 – the Lord sings over us at night
  64. Psalm 44:3
  65. Psalm 45:2 – gracious (delightful) words are on his lips<sup>10</sup>
  66. Psalm 45:7—Jesus is the happiest man in the world
  67. Psalm 45:8 – the music of His people makes Him glad
  68. Psalm 45:11 – Jesus sees His people as beautiful (i.e., pleasing and enjoyable to see and/or hear)
  69. Psalm 46:4—the river of God’s gladness makes the city of God glad
  70. Psalm 47:5 – God ascends with a joyful shout
  71. Psalm 48:11 – Jerusalem is beautiful to God (i.e., pleasing and enjoyable to see and/or hear)
  72. Psalm 48:2—God is the source of joy for the entire earth
  73. Psalm 51:6 – God delights in truth to be in the innermost part of man<sup>11</sup>
  74. Psalm 51:16-17 – He delights when we come to him in the simple honesty of our brokenness
  75. Psalm 51:18—God prospers and builds up the people of God in his good pleasure
  76. Psalm 51:19 – He delights in “right sacrifices” – all types of worship accompanied by honest recognition of our brokenness and need of forgiveness

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<sup>8</sup> The righteous are not simply those who are *perfect*. *Righteous* stands in opposite to *rebellious*. The righteous includes people who are weak but still commit to resist sin and claim the righteousness of Jesus.

<sup>9</sup> Psalm 40 was understood by the author of Hebrews to be a Messianic Psalm, as seen in the quotation of Ps. 40:6-8 in Heb. 10:5-7

<sup>10</sup> The word commonly translated 'grace' in this verse, is the Hebrew word *hen*. In the Old Testament it often carries the idea of *favor* more than *grace*. It means when one is favorably disposed to another individual, when upon seeing such a person, their eyes light up in favor and delight, hence where the expression, 'light of the face' comes from. It refers to a combination of the eyes widening (lightening up) and a smile coming to the face (TDOT V, 24-5).

<sup>11</sup> The word translated “desire” in many English translations is the Hebrew word **יָפֶתַח**, *haphets*, which in its most basic definition means “to delight in” but can also be translated “to desire.”

77. Psalm 59:8 - God laughs in the certainty of his purposes and triumph over evil
78. Psalm 60:6—when God speaks in his holiness, He rejoices and exults
79. Psalm 68:16 – God has delighted in making his dwelling on the mountain at Jerusalem<sup>12</sup>
80. Psalm 72:17 – all nations will call Jesus ‘blessed’ (*ashre – happy*)
81. Psalm 80:3—God’s salvation and deliverance is understood as his smile over His people
82. Psalm 85:1 – see note with Judges 6:17-21
83. Psalm 89:15 – see note with Isaiah 60:1-2
84. Psalm 102:12 – the time to favor Jerusalem (see note with Judges 6:17-21)
85. Psalm 104:31
86. Psalm 104:34 – the Psalmist understood that his rejoicing would be pleasing to God – his happiness in God would make God happy
87. Psalm 106:5—the joy of God’s nation
88. Psalm 108:7 – God speaks in gladness
89. Psalm 115:3 – God’s pleasure used to express His omnipotence
90. Psalm 118:27 – the Lord’s light shining on Jerusalem
91. Psalm 119:135
92. Psalm 135:3-4 – praising the Lord is pleasant to Him because we are His treasured possession
93. Psalm 135:6 - God’s pleasure used to express His omnipotence
94. Psalm 141:2—prayer is like incense to God
95. Psalm 147:11
96. Psalm 149:4—the Lord delights in His people
97. Proverbs 3:12
98. Proverbs 3:4
99. Proverbs 8:30-31—Jesus rejoicing in the presence of His father and in creation
100. Proverbs 8:35 – whoever finds Jesus finds the favor of the Lord
101. Proverbs 15:8
102. Ecclesiastes 2:26 – two groups – ‘sinners’ and ‘those who please God’

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<sup>12</sup> The word often translated “desired” is the Hebrew word **חָמַד**, *hamad*, which means to desire, to delight or to take pleasure in

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103. Ecclesiastes 7:26 – same as previous
104. Song of Songs 1:15 – Jesus sees His bride as beautiful (i.e., pleasing and enjoyable to see and/or hear)
105. Song of Songs 2:10 – Jesus sees His bride as beautiful (i.e., pleasing and enjoyable to see and/or hear)
106. Song of Songs 2:13 – Jesus sees His bride as beautiful (i.e., pleasing and enjoyable to see and/or hear)
107. Song of Songs 2:14 – our voice in worship is sweet<sup>13</sup> to Him
108. Song of Songs 3:11 – Jesus marries His bride and it is the day of the gladness of his heart
109. Song of Songs 4:7 – Jesus sees His bride as beautiful (i.e., pleasing and enjoyable to see and/or hear)
110. Song of Songs 4:9 – Jesus’ heart is ravished (overwhelmed with deep and pleasurable emotions) by one glance of our eyes
111. Song of Songs 4:10 – our love is delightful to Him
112. Song of Songs 4:13, 16
113. Song of Songs 5:16 – his mouth is full of sweetness (delight)
114. Song of Songs 7:6
115. Isaiah 2:5 – walking in the light (favor/pleasure/smile) of God
116. Isaiah 5:1 – Jesus sings to His Father with love and delight
117. Isaiah 5:7 – the Jewish people are God’s delightful planting
118. Isaiah 9:2 – The light (gladness) of God shines on the people in darkness – see note with Isaiah 60:1-2
119. Isaiah 11:3—Jesus delights in and has a worshipful reverence towards the Father
120. Isaiah 25:6-9 – God throws a feast/banquet/party at the end of the age – seminal text for the messianic banquet
121. Isaiah 40:2 – the iniquity of Israel is literally “accepted favorably” – often translated removed or pardoned. The idea is that despite Israel’s sin, God is not receiving her with gladness.
122. Isaiah 42:1—The Father says of Jesus that He is “the one in whom my soul delights”
123. Isaiah 42:4—He is not discouraged because of our struggles
124. Isaiah 42:21 – the LORD is pleased to make His law great and glorious
125. Isaiah 43:25 – God forgives us for his own sake, for his own benefit, for his own pleasure
126. Isaiah 44:28 – for Jerusalem and the temple to be rebuilt is God’s delight (see note with Psalm 51:6)
127. Isaiah 46:10 – God’s eternal purpose of giving righteousness and salvation to Zion is called His “good pleasure”

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<sup>13</sup> In Hebrew (and often in English as well) the word “sweet” carries with it the idea of pleasure and delight.

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128. Isaiah 48:14 – God loves Israel and it is His “good pleasure” to destroy her enemy Babylon
129. Isaiah 49:8 // 2 Corinthians 6:2—now is the time of God’s favor (his smile over us)
130. Isaiah 51:3 – God will make Zion’s wilderness like the Garden of Eden, i.e. the garden of God’s pleasure. He will make their deserts a place where they encounter God, delighting in Him as He delights in them (see note with Genesis 2:8).
131. Isaiah 53:10—It was the Father’s pleasure to crush Jesus (on the cross) so that we could be forgiven, redeemed and reconciled unto God
132. Isaiah 54:9-10—God promises never to be angry with us again
133. Isaiah 54:12<sup>14</sup>
134. Isaiah 55:11 – God’s word accomplished His delight (see note with Psalm 51:6)
135. Isaiah 56:7 – offerings from foreigners will be accepted with pleasure (favor – see note Judges 6:17-21)
136. Isaiah 58:5 – the LORD looks with favor and gladness upon fasting that is according to His design
137. Isaiah 60:1-2 – the light (smile) of God breaks into Zion<sup>15</sup>
138. Isaiah 60:7 – the Lord will enjoy offerings from foreigners – “acceptance” is *ratson* (favor) - see note with Judges 6:17-21
139. Isaiah 60:10—the favor of the Lord overcomes anger (see note with Judges 6:17-21)
140. Isaiah 60:15 – the Lord makes Jerusalem an eternal joy (cf. Isaiah 65:17-19)
141. Isaiah 60:19-20 – the shining smile of God – see note with Isaiah 60:1-2
142. Isaiah 61:2 // Luke 4:19—The year of the Lord’s favor, i.e. his pleasure in receiving us
143. Isaiah 61:10—Jesus fulfilling his Messianic role rejoices and delights in the Father
144. Isaiah 62:4-5—our identity in the delight of God
145. Isaiah 65:17-19—He takes delight in His people
146. Jeremiah 3:12 – literally the Lord says He will no longer “cause his face to fall,” as in to frown, on His people – that is, he will smile upon them when they simply acknowledge their sin.

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<sup>14</sup> The word translated “precious” in many English translations is the Hebrew word **חֶפְזִים** *hephets*, which in its most basic definition means “delight, pleasure” but can also be translated “precious” or “treasure.”

<sup>15</sup> Light here (and often in other places in the Bible) speaks of happiness [J.L. Koole, *Isaiah Part III Volume 3: Isaiah 56-66* (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 223]. The “shining face” of God throughout the Scripture speaks of his favor, gladness and pleasure [David E. Aune, *Revelation 17-22* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1181]. The expression “light of one’s face” (and hence a “glowing/shining face”) speaks of one’s smile. Note in Job 29:24 where “smile” and “light of my face” are in synonymous parallelism, that is, they are two lines of a poetic unit meant to be understood as two ways of saying the same thing.

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147. Jeremiah 3:19—His gladness as our father
148. Jeremiah 9:24 – the Lord delights in exercising kindness, justice and righteousness
149. Jeremiah 12:10 – Israel is God’s pleasant field/vineyard
150. Jeremiah 18:4
151. Jeremiah 24:6 – He will set his eyes on us for good, i.e., look on us with pleasure and good-will
152. Jeremiah 31:2 – they will find the favor of God in the wilderness (see note for Psalm 45:2)
153. Jeremiah 31:20 – God’s delight in us even as he disciplines us – his discipline does not contradict his delight – his discipline is not rejection
154. Jeremiah 32:41—God rejoices in doing good to the people of God
155. Jeremiah 33:9—God’s delight in Jerusalem
156. Jeremiah 49:25
157. Ezekiel 18:23, 32—He does not delight in the death of the wicked but receives pleasure when people turn from their ways and live
158. Ezekiel 20:40 – God will gladly receive Israel in the time of her restoration (see note with Judges 6:17-21)
159. Ezekiel 20:41 – God enjoys us like fragrant incense
160. Ezekiel 28:13 – Even Satan at one point was an object of God’s pleasure as He lived in the Garden of God’s Delight (i.e., the Garden of Eden – see note with Genesis 2:8)
161. Ezekiel 33:11 – He does not delight in the death of the wicked but receives pleasure when people turn from their ways and live
162. Ezekiel 36:35 – God’s restoration of the physical land of Israel will be a sign of his delight in them, restoring it to the conditions of the Garden of Eden (see note with Genesis 2:8)
163. Ezekiel 43:27 – enjoyed by God (accepted – *ratson* – see note with Judges 6:17-21)
164. Daniel 9:23; 10:11, 19<sup>16</sup>
165. Hosea 6:6 – He delights in mercy over sacrifice. He enjoys when people know Him<sup>17</sup>
166. Hosea 9:5 – see note with Leviticus 23:2
167. Micah 6:7-8 – God delights in justice, kindness and humility

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<sup>16</sup> The word in this passage often translated “greatly beloved” or “highly esteemed” comes from the root word *chamadh*, meaning “to desire; to take pleasure in; to consider precious” (BDB, 326). It is used here in a noun form meaning “one who is desired,” “one who is delighted in,” “one who is a precious treasure.” Its plural form is an “intensive plural” (GKC 124e) thus indicating the intensity and greatness of God’s emotions of delight and desire.

<sup>17</sup> The word sometimes translated “desire” is the Hebrew word **חָפֵץ**, *haphets*, which in its most basic definition means “to delight in”

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168. Micah 7:18-19—God delights to show mercy
169. Zephaniah 3:17—God rejoices over His people with singing
170. Zephaniah 3:20 – the Lord will give us praise (i.e., celebrate us, make a show about us) among all the peoples of the earth
171. Haggai 1:8 – God takes pleasure in the building of His house (temple)
172. Zechariah 4:10—God rejoices to see His house built
173. Malachi 3:1-4 – when the Messiah, Christ Jesus, purifies us through the gift of righteousness our worship/offerings are pleasing to the Lord.
174. Malachi 3:12 – Israel will be a land of delight – to the Lord and the nations of the earth
175. Matthew 3:17—The Father expresses pleasure in his son
176. Matthew 7:9-11—Father giving good gifts out of an overflowing heart
177. Matthew 8:11 – the eternal kingdom of God (in which God has his way entirely) is pictured as a continual celebratory party, “a *great festival of rejoicing* and feasting in celebration of the victory of God.”<sup>18</sup>
178. Matthew 9:2 – Jesus tells the paralytic to “be of good cheer.” It is difficult to imagine someone telling another to be happy without a smile on his face.
179. Matthew 9:13 – see comment on Hosea 6:6, as Matthew is quoting from that passage
180. Matthew 9:14-17 – the disciples cannot mourn with Jesus because his gladness is so contagious<sup>19</sup>
181. Matthew 9:22 – “be of good cheer” – see Matthew 9:2
182. Matthew 11:19 – Jesus came “eating and drinking,” so that he was accused to being a glutton and drunkard. He enjoyed having a good time at celebratory gatherings.
183. Matthew 11:26
184. Matthew 12:7 – see comment on Hosea 6:6, as Matthew is quoting from that passage
185. Matthew 12:18—The delight of the Father in His Son
186. Matthew 13:44-45 – for joy over it, Jesus pursues us, the treasure and pearl of great value
187. Matthew 14:27 – “be of good cheer” – see Matthew 9:2

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<sup>18</sup> Donald Hagner. *Matthew 1-13* (Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1993), 205

<sup>19</sup> “Fasting is a sign of mourning and sorrow. It was not that his disciples *did not* fast. They *could not* fast. This was not a matter of liberal dispensation. It was a question of the existential impossibility of being sad in the living presence of Jesus! The sinners and lowlife rejects found that sharing a meal with the Master was a liberating experience of sheer joy...His contagious joy (only carriers can pass it on) in the lavish, gratuitous, and indiscriminate love of his heavenly Father infected and liberated his listeners.” Edward Schillebeeckx, *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), 204-205.

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188. Matthew 17:5—"this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."
189. Matthew 18:13 – great rejoicing over the one who returns to God
190. Matthew 22:2, 8, 10-12 –The kingdom of God is like a father who throws a party (wedding feast)
191. Matthew 25:10 – The bridegroom invites us to share his joy with him at the wedding feast
192. Matthew 25:21, 23—the reward of the workers is to 'share in their master's happiness'
193. Matthew 27:43 – The Father shows His delight in Jesus by delivering Him from death in the resurrection
194. Matthew 28:9 – Jesus' first words after the resurrection literally mean "oh joy!" or "be glad!"<sup>20</sup>
195. Mark 1:11—The Father declares his delight in his Son
196. Mark 2:18-20 – see Matthew 9:14-17
197. Mark 6:50 – "be of good cheer" – see Matthew 9:2
198. Mark 10:13-16 – the little children came to Jesus – He took them in His arms (i.e. one at a time)<sup>21</sup>
199. Mark 10:49 – "be of good cheer" – see Matthew 9:2
200. Luke 1:77-79 – the sunrise (the smile of God) visits the people in the forgiveness of sins
201. Luke 2:14—the favor of God is pronounced in the birth of Jesus
202. Luke 2:52 – Jesus increased in favor with God – he grew in an enjoyable relationship
203. Luke 3:22—The Father expresses pleasure in his son
204. Luke 4:22—the people marveled at the gracious<sup>22</sup>, joy-imparting words from his lips
205. Luke 5:33-35 – see note for Matthew 9:14-17
206. Luke 7:34 – Eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners<sup>23</sup>
207. Luke 8:48 – "be of good cheer" – see Matthew 9:2

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<sup>20</sup> Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1992), 739.

<sup>21</sup> "To me it is unthinkable to picture a wooden-faced, stoic, and joyless Jesus as he blesses the little children." Brennan Manning, *A Glimpse of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2003), 33.

<sup>22</sup> Grace has two main definitions in Greek (*charis*), the primary one, which was the way the Greeks commonly understood the word, is "that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness." The secondary definition, which is how the word theologically developed, primarily in later Pauline writings is, "good will, loving-kindness, favor, [speaking] of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues." (cited from Thayer's and Smith's Greek Lexicon). The former definition makes the most sense in this context.

<sup>23</sup> "Jesus seemed to behave as though there was continually something to celebrate (cf. Luke 5:33-34), and he drew into this celebration tax collectors and sinners – people known to be unsavory types who lived beyond the edge of respectable society. The uncomprehending generation could not understand that Jesus was signaling the in-breaking of the eschatological time of salvation: that his meals with sinners presaged the eschatological banquet (cf. Luke 13:29) of those who have received God's grace and forgiveness at the time of his eschatological visitation. John Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20* (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 345-6.

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208. Luke 10:21 – Jesus rejoices in the Holy Spirit
  209. Luke 10:22—the Father’s pleasure in revealing himself to the immature (little children)
  210. Luke 12:32—God is pleased to give us the Kingdom
  211. Luke 13:32 – the humor of Jesus with his disciples – calling Herod “that fox,” while often read stoically was likely quite funny to the disciples.
  212. Luke 14:15-24 – the great banquet – see note from Matthew 8:11
  213. Luke 15:2 – Jesus received “sinners” and ate with them. The word “received” here takes the sense of “take pleasure in/have goodwill towards.”<sup>24</sup>
  214. Luke 15:3-7, 8-10, 24-25, 32—rejoicing when we return to God
  215. John 2:1-11 – Jesus enjoys a good party
  216. John 4:36—Jesus rejoices with us as we partner in the harvest
  217. John 5:21—God feels pleasure in giving life
  218. John 8:29—Father has pleasure in all of Jesus’ actions
  219. John 11:15—Jesus rejoices in helping us grow in faith
  220. John 15:11—Jesus speaks to His disciples so that his joy may be in them
  221. John 16:33 – “be of good cheer” – see Matthew 9:2
  222. John 17:13—Jesus speaks so that His disciples may have the full measure of His joy
  223. Acts 2:26—Jesus has a glad heart and a rejoicing tongue
  224. Acts 2:28 – Jesus is full of gladness in the presence of His Father
  225. Acts 7:46 – David “found favor in God’s sight” (see note for Genesis 6:8)
  226. Acts 20:35—It is happier to give than to receive—hence God is happy in giving
  227. Acts 23:11 – “be of good cheer” – see Matthew 9:2
  228. Romans 3:25 – atoning sacrifice of Jesus fills the Father’s heart with joy towards us (see note for 1 John 2:2)
  229. Romans 5:9 – saved from the sphere of God’s wrath and set free in the sphere of God’s pleasure
  230. Romans 5:10 – reconciliation is when one ceases to be angry with another and receives him into favor.<sup>25</sup> On the relationship between favor and pleasure see the note for Judges 6:17-21.
  231. Romans 8:8-9 – those in the flesh cannot please God, But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit

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<sup>24</sup> The word “received” is *προδέχεται*. John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (Dallas: Word Books, 1993), 770.

<sup>25</sup> Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, *καταλλάσσω*; *katallasso*

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232. Romans 11:15 – reconciliation comes to the world. See note on Romans 5:10
233. Romans 12:1 – setting ourselves apart for God – choosing in our hearts to follow him (though not always doing so perfectly) fills him with pleasure<sup>26</sup>
234. Romans 14:7—there is joy in the Holy Spirit
235. Romans 14:18 – the one who serves Christ is well pleasing to God<sup>27</sup>
236. 1 Corinthians 1:21
237. 1 Corinthians 4:5 – the gladness of God on judgment day
238. 1 Corinthians 13:6—the God who is love rejoices in the truth
239. 2 Corinthians 2:14-15—we are the aroma of Christ—we are as enjoyable to God as Jesus is
240. 2 Corinthians 4:6 – the light of the smile of Jesus’ face shines in our hearts (see note for Is. 60:1-2)
241. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 –We are reconciled unto God, restored to his favor (see Romans 5:10 note)
242. Galatians 1:15-16—God was pleased to reveal Jesus
243. Galatians 5:22—joy is a sign of the Spirit’s presence
244. Ephesians 1:4-5, 9
245. Ephesians 5:2—the Father was pleased with Jesus offering his life as a sacrifice for sin<sup>28</sup>
246. Ephesians 5:8-10—it pleases the Lord to walk in our spiritual identity
247. Philippians 2:13
248. Philippians 4:18 – giving is a fragrant offering to God, giving him pleasure
249. Colossians 1:19-20—God was pleased (received pleasure) in reconciling us to himself
250. 1 Thessalonians 1:6—Holy Spirit’s joy
251. 1 Thessalonians 4:1 – Paul reassures the Thessalonians that they are pleasing to God
252. 2 Thessalonians 1:11- the good pleasure of his goodness (NKJV)
253. 1 Timothy 1:11—the glorious glad tidings of the happy God
254. 1 Timothy 2:1-3 – God is glad when we pray for the salvation of all men<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The word translated “acceptable” is εὐάρεστος (*euarestos*) which means “well-pleasing” (BDB)

<sup>27</sup> See note for Romans 12:1

<sup>28</sup> The phrase in this passage, *fragrant offering* (ὄσμη εὐωδίας, *osme euodias*), is exactly how the Septuagint translates the Hebrew phrase רִיחַ אֲנִיחֹהַב ( *reah hanichoach*), which in English is translated, ‘pleasing/sweet aroma (cf. nos. 3, 4, 5 and 9 on this list) .’ It speaks of God’s pleasure in the sacrifices (worship) made by his people.

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255. 1 Timothy 4:4 – Everything created by God is good/pleasing/beautiful (to both us and Him)<sup>30</sup>
256. 1 Timothy 6:15 – (blessed = happy)
257. 1 Timothy 6:17—the heart of the blessed God overflows to give gifts for enjoyment
258. Hebrews 1:9—Jesus is the happiest man in the whole world
259. Hebrews 2:12/Psalm 22:22 – Jesus sings to and celebrates before the Father
260. Hebrews 10:7/Psalm 40:8 – Jesus delights to do the Father’s will, *i.e.* to go to the cross
261. Hebrews 10:38-39 – His soul takes no pleasure in those who ‘shrink back’ – ***but we are not those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.***
262. Hebrews 11:5 – before taken up, Enoch received the testimony that God has pleasure in him
263. Hebrews 11:6—by faith we bring God pleasure (faith is all it takes to enter the sphere of God’s pleasure)
264. Hebrews 12:2-3—Jesus endured the cross because of how much He enjoys us
265. Hebrews 12:28 – reverential and awe-filled worship is pleasing to God<sup>31</sup>
266. Hebrews 13:21 – God Himself will work in us the things He enjoys
267. James 2:13 – Mercy has glad confidence over judgment<sup>32</sup>
268. 1 Peter 3:12 – the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, *i.e.*, He takes pleasure in them (see footnote with Psalm 34:15)
269. 2 Peter 1:17—the pleasure of the Father in the Son
270. 1 John 2:2 – Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, causing the Father to delight in us even in the midst of our sin and struggles.<sup>33</sup>
271. 1 John 3:22—Filled with pleasure when we believe in Him and when we love each other
272. 1 John 4:10 – Jesus is the atoning sacrifice (see note with 1 John 2:2)

<sup>29</sup> The word “good” is *καλός* (*kalos*) (see note for 1 Timothy 4:4) and “acceptable” is *ἀπόδεκτος* (*apodektos*) which comes from *ἀποδέχομαι* (*apodechomai*) meaning “to receive gladly, with joy”

<sup>30</sup> The word “good” is *καλός* (*kalos*), used “in the Septuagint for *yāpeh* beautiful, but much more often for *tōb* good; *beautiful*, applied by the Greeks to everything so distinguished in form, excellence, goodness, usefulness, as to be *pleasing*” (Thayer)

<sup>31</sup> The word translated acceptable in this verse is, *εὐαρέστως*, *euarestos* which means “*in a manner well-pleasing to one*” (Thayer).

<sup>32</sup> Thayer, *κατακαυχάομαι*; (*katakauchaomai*)

<sup>33</sup> The word translated “atoning sacrifice” (NIV) or “propitiation” (NASB/ESV) is the Greek word *ἱλασμος* (*hilasmos*), which comes from the root word, *ἱλαρός* (*hilaros*). *ἱλαρός* is the etymological antecedent for the English word “hilarious.” It essentially means “cheerful,” “glad,” or “merry.” Despite its widely recognized root (TDNT), the idea of atonement (*ἱλασμος*) is not often presented or taught with any connection to the root meaning of gladness and cheerfulness. It is readily understood (as seen in the NIV alternate translation) as the ‘turning aside of wrath,’ but atonement should not only be seen from the negative side but also the positive. As the atoning sacrifice of Jesus’ death removes all wrath in the heart of God towards sinners who enter relationship with Him through faith in Jesus, so also does it evoke cheerfulness in the heart of God towards the same. To turn aside wrath is to make happy.

- 273. Jude 24 – The Father will cause us to stand in His presence
- 274. Revelation 3:5 – Jesus will celebrate and praise before His Father those who overcome<sup>34</sup>
- 275. Revelation 4:11—we were created for His pleasure blameless and with great joy – not just our joy, but His joy as well.
- 276. Revelation 5:8; 8:3—the prayers of the saints are like incense unto God
- 277. Revelation 19:7-9 – our eternal union with Christ is inaugurated by the Father throwing a wedding feast
- 278. Revelation 21:23-24 – the New Jerusalem is flooded with the light of God – see note with Is. 60:1-2
- 279. Revelation 22:5 – the Lord shines on the redeemed forever and ever – see note with Is. 60:1-2

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<sup>34</sup> ὁμολογέω (*homologeō*) can be translated 1) to agree, assent; 2) to concede, confess; 3) to profess, speak openly; and 4) celebrate; praise (Thayer and Smith)

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