



## 4: COMFORTABLY NUMB WITH DELIGHT

I looked up the phrase “things that bring delight” on the internet, and a list of “100 ways to be delighted” came up. Here are some of those things in the list:

- Standing in your yard listening to snow fall late at night
- The sound of pencil on paper
- Woodsmoke in late fall
- Puppy breath
- Rollerskating
- Laughing so hard that even after you stop you keep having fits of laughter
- The back of a baby’s neck – especially after a nap
- The sound a basketball makes as it swishes through the hoop
- Paws of sleeping kittens
- Songs that make your eyes fill with tears as you drive
- Hiking all day
- Miles Davis – Kind of Blue
- Calvin and Hobbes
- Trees<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://christinekane.com/100-ways-to-be-delighted/>

Can you relate to some of these? Many of these? None of these? Come on bro don't be cold like that if it's **none of these!** ;) Don't be a curmudgeon man lighten up!

What brings you "delight"? Merriam Webster defines "delight" as "a high degree of gratification or pleasure".

I relate to many of these things in the list though not to all of them. Lately, in May of 2023 as I write this, these are eleven things that bring me delight:

1. Holding my wife's hand
2. Hugging our baby daughter Madi
3. Listening to "Comfortably Numb" by Pink Floyd really loud
4. Hiking in the woods on a lot of terrain with no noise but nature
5. "Reading dates" with my oldest daughter Charlotte where we go to Starbucks, get drinks, and sit together and read, with spontaneous conversations happening all along.
6. Playground adventure days with my middle daughter Brooklyn where we visit multiple playgrounds in one day for her to play on.
7. Pink Floyd documentaries (I've been on a Floyd kick lately!)
8. Listening to "Shine on You Crazy Diamond" by Pink Floyd really loud (I told you I've been on a Floyd kick!)
9. Reading and drinking coffee when it's quiet
10. Smoking a nice cigar (not habitually- but for a treat y'all!)
11. Drinking a beer while watching "Law and Order" Thursdays with my wife. (I'm against alcoholism y'all but enjoy the occasional drink or two!)

**ENGAGE FOR A MOMENT... TAKE OUT A PIECE OF PAPER AND PEN, OR DIGITAL NOTEPAD, AND LIST THE THINGS THAT BRING YOU DELIGHT! LIST AS MANY AS YOU WANT!**

Now I know that I don't find any more delight than I do in the presence of God- but I'm telling you that God is very present in all these things I mentioned in my list, as He also powerfully is in my times and moments of daily Bible reading, prayer and worship. Somehow all the "secular" things we do are made "sacred" and the "sacred" spills over into the "secular" when we see every moment, outside of sin, as a chance to delight in God.

Elizabeth and Zechariah, or Liz and Zech, must've really been delighting in God in the latter part of Luke, Chapter one! Let's take a look;

<sup>57</sup> Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she had a son. <sup>58</sup> Then her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her his great mercy, and they rejoiced with her. <sup>59</sup> When they came to circumcise the child on the eighth day, they were going to name him Zechariah, after his father. <sup>60</sup> But his mother responded, “No. He will be called John.” <sup>61</sup> Then they said to her, “None of your relatives has that name.” <sup>62</sup> So they motioned to his father to find out what he wanted him to be called. <sup>63</sup> He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And they were all amazed. <sup>64</sup> Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God. <sup>65</sup> Fear came on all those who lived around them, and all these things were being talked about throughout the hill country of Judea. <sup>66</sup> All who heard about him took it to heart, saying, “What then will this child become?” For, indeed, the Lord’s hand was with him. (Luke 1:57-66)

Elizabeth, or Liz, was delighting in God that she had been promised a son by an angel in her old age, and the time had come to give birth. Now I’m sure that she was freaked out, like any Mother, in that traumatic reality of labor, but she must’ve been in awe and blown away by God who had come through like He did!

Her neighbors and relatives shared in Liz’s delight. God had shown her great mercy. They “rejoiced” with her!

Then they circumcised lil John the Baptist on the eighth day, as prescribed by Yahweh and the law (Gen 17:12; Lev 12:3).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *The flesh of his foreskin must be circumcised on the eighth day. (Lev 12:3)*

This indicated that John was incorporated into the covenant (Gen. 17:9–14).<sup>3</sup>

They were going to follow typical tradition and name the baby after his father Zech, but Elizabeth, in accordance with her faith in Gabriel’s message (Luke 1:13), insisted on naming him “John”.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Lk 1:59). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>3</sup> Schreiner, T. R. (1995). [Luke](#). In *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* (Vol. 3, p. 807). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

<sup>4</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Lk 1:60). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Now Liz's neighbors and relatives reminded her of what she already knew, that "*None of her relatives had that name.*" They turned to Zech, because in ancient Israel, fathers held the final naming rights.<sup>5</sup>

So Liz was kind of breaking rank here in this culture by jumping the gun and telling everyone what the boy's name would be. That was supposed to be up to Zechariah, ultimately, in this ancient Israelite context. But let's remember that the angel Gabriel had also visited Zechariah and told him all about this, and no doubt it's pretty dang likely that Liz and Zech had communicated plenty about it, though Zech had been mute. But nonetheless, Liz was assertively standing up for the ways of God.

We live in an era where everybody and their grandma wants to rebel against the norm. Everybody wants to "stick it to the man". Plenty of people do question and stand up to many traditional authority structures and stigmas.

But there is a difference when somebody has a prophetic assurance from God and stands up for God despite the norms around them. Liz had this assurance and stood on what God had said despite the expectations of her in the culture she was in.

Don't rebel against the norm unless God says so!

We don't wanna be more woke than God, we wanna be woke in the Holy Spirit. We don't wanna be more conservative than God, but to honor His Name as holy and righteous. Know the difference!

Back to the delight of Liz and Zech at the birth of lil John... The text says next;

*<sup>62</sup> So they motioned to his father to find out what he wanted him to be called. <sup>63</sup> He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they were all amazed. <sup>64</sup> Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God.*

Gabriel's words in Luke 1:20 were fulfilled.<sup>6</sup> Delighted, Zech's tongue got loose after he reiterated the promise of God, after writing on a tablet in his muted state that the boy's name needed to be John, and in stating that angelic promise, Zech's spirit got loose, and he began to praise the Lord!

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<sup>5</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Lk 1:62). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>6</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Lk 1:64). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

You ain't gonna be freed and loosened to praise the Lord until you lean into His promises!

Some of y'all are jammed up. You've been jammed up for hours, days, weeks, months, or even years. God has spoken a lot of promises into you. You know that Jesus Christ came from heaven to earth, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless, perfectly obedient life to God. You believe He performed many miracles and signs. You know that He willingly laid down His life on a cross. You know that He bled and died for your sin and for the sins of the world, anyone who would receive His gift of substitutionary atoning salvation. You believe that He was buried. You believe that He rose again on the third day from the grave and appeared to many people in the flesh. You believe He ascended to heaven. You believe He sent the Holy Spirit to live in all who follow Him. You believe He'll return again, not as a meek and mild servant, but as a conquering King, in His eternal state, to judge the quick and the dead and the children of humankind, and will wipe out sin, hell, death, and the devil forever!

But you're not delighting in God. You believe in these "Christianity 101" promises, but just because you think you've got to, and have no choice but to. Yet your spirit is cold. Your heart has become hardened. Your hope has been extinguished.

And it's all because you're not believing God for that **thing...** He didn't come through on that **one thing**. He didn't remove that one **sin** from your life. He didn't remove that one **struggle** from your life. He didn't resolve that relationship. He didn't give you that job. He didn't give you that thing you wanted. He didn't remove that disease. He didn't change that person that ended up being what you didn't expect them to be. He allowed someone to die and didn't do anything about it. He let that person come into your life to hurt you. He won't lead that person to forgive you. You can't forgive that person. He allowed those Church leaders to screw you over when they should've been listening to Him. He won't make your parents be functional and life giving. He's left you with unresolved trauma from your past that won't heal.

**ENGAGE FOR A MOMENT... WHAT IS "JAMMING YOU UP" IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD? PRAY A PRAYER OF SURRENDER IN THE "LITURGY OF THE HOURS" OVER THAT THING THAT'S JAMMING YOU UP:**

**"IN YOU, MY GOD, MY BODY WILL REST IN HOPE."**

**—ANTIPHON TO PSALM 16, THURSDAY NIGHT PRAYER**

**"BECAUSE WITH THE LORD THERE IS MERCY AND FULLNESS OF REDEMPTION,  
ISRAEL INDEED HE WILL REDEEM FROM ALL ITS INIQUITY."**

**—PSALM 130:7, WEDNESDAY NIGHT PRAYER**

**"KNOW THAT HE, THE LORD, IS GOD.**

**HE MADE US, WE BELONG TO HIM,**

**WE ARE HIS PEOPLE, THE SHEEP OF HIS FLOCK."**

**—PSALM 100:3, FRIDAY, MORNING PRAYER, WEEKS I AND III**

**"THE LORD IS FAITHFUL IN ALL HIS WORDS AND LOVING IN ALL HIS DEEDS.**

**HE IS CLOSE TO ALL WHO CALL HIM, WHO CALL ON HIM FROM THEIR HEARTS."**

**—PSALM 145:13B, 18, FRIDAY, EVENING PRAYER, WEEK IV<sup>7</sup>**

I don't know if you know this yet, but the Holy Spirit wants to make sense of that area that is jamming you up. He wants access right into that thing. Give it to Him fully. Pray it right into His hands fully. Surrender it for real as the Liturgy of the Hours suggests. Find the freedom in surrender. God delights in you. Delight in Him again! Delight in Him like of Zechariah did!

Then lift up your hands in praise to Him again! Maybe then you'll finally sing, in the words of Richard Smallwood... "YOU ARE THE SOURCE OF MY STRENGTH! YOU ARE THE STRENGTH OF MY LIFE! I LIFT MY HANDS IN TOTAL PRAISE..."<sup>8</sup> (Man... I can't listen to that song without crying my eyes out!)

Cause you see, Zechariah struggled with the crazy, supernatural promise of God to give him a son, and that the son would be a prophet of the most high. That's why Zech was mute, and going through a deep, dark, weird valley. I don't think that Zech was all excited to not be able to speak y'all! And remember, he couldn't speak for the entire duration of Elizabeth's pregnancy term, so it had to be for at least nine months! I wonder how he did with his job as a priest not being able to talk! He had to be on the **struggle bus** y'all!

But **as soon as Zech** fully surrendered over to the promises God had made to him, his tongue and spirit got LOOSE and he praised God from his soul! JOIN IN THE PRAISE OF ZECHARIAH! God can deliver you from that thing that's got you jammed up and give you delight in Him again!

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<sup>7</sup> <https://mcgrathblog.nd.edu/surrendering-in-prayer-the-liturgy-of-the-hours>

<sup>8</sup> Listen to the Brooklyn Tabernacle sing "Total Praise" here: <https://youtu.be/n0PPZyF-Bzo>

So Zech supernaturally gets his voice back again and is praising God, and rumors spread about it like it was featured on TMZ. People were like, “What in the world was going on here? What is going to be up with this kid? **“What then will this child become?”** This hinted at messianic expectation<sup>9</sup>, no doubt folks may have thought that lil John would be the messiah with all this amazing craziness going on around his inauguration into existence!

So, in utter delight, Zech goes on to utter a prophetic hymn, a song known as the Benedictus due to its first word in the Latin Vulgate:<sup>10</sup>

*67 Then (John’s) father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:*

*68 Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel,  
because he has visited  
and provided redemption for his people.*

*69 He has raised up a horn of salvation for us  
in the house of his servant David, (Luke 1:67-69)*

A “horn of salvation” was a metaphor for power (e.g., 2 Sam 22:3; Pss 18:2; 148:14).<sup>11</sup> God’s power was going to be lit up in lil John! God was gonna fill this boy with **fire**! He was going to be a messenger of God’s redemption and God’s salvation!

*70 just as he spoke by the mouth  
of his holy prophets in ancient times;*

*71 salvation from our enemies  
and from the hand of those who hate us.*

*72 He has dealt mercifully with our ancestors  
and remembered his holy covenant—*

*73 the oath that he swore to our father Abraham.*

*He has given us the privilege,*

*74 since we have been rescued  
from the hand of our enemies,  
to serve him without fear*

*75 in holiness and righteousness  
in his presence all our days. (Luke 1:70-75)*

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<sup>9</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Lk 1:66). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>10</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Lk 1:67–80). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>11</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Lk 1:69). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

In the line of the OT prophets of old, lil John was going to be an ambassador for God's truth and mercy in the face of the oppressors of the time. Little did Zech know that both the power mongers of Rome and the religious mongers of Israel were going to come against his little baby- his "enemies" were going to be those outside and falsely "inside" the covenant that they were supposed to share with John!

John was going to be a restorer of the covenant. He was going to be right in line with Abraham all the way up through Moses, through the Judges, the Kings, and the prophets!

God doesn't change the core principles of His covenant! Anyone who has ever been in line with God will also be right in line with Abraham all the way up through Moses, through the Judges, the Kings, the prophets, Christ, and His Body throughout the last 2K millenia!

Oh come on now man- He wants to get in line with us, and then we can't help get in line with Him! Praise His Name!!!!

Zech turns to prophesy directly to lil John;

*76 And you, child, will be called  
a prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord  
to prepare his ways,  
77 to give his people knowledge of salvation  
through the forgiveness of their sins.  
78 Because of our God's merciful compassion,  
the dawn from on high will visit us  
79 to shine on those who live in darkness  
and the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace. (Luke 1:76-79)*

Lil John was going to grow to be a "prophet of the Most High". He was going to "go before the Lord to prepare His ways". He was going to "give God's people knowledge of salvation through forgiveness of their sins".

All of us who are disciples of Jesus have the flavor, to differing degrees, of John's calling on our lives!



We are all called to “prophesy”, and to “go before the Lord to prepare His ways”! This of course includes the message of and “knowledge of salvation” through the gospel that forgives people of their sins, past present and future! To prophesy basically means to speak the truth of God and apply the truth of God into the realities and situations of everyday life. Not everyone is going to prophesy to the point of speaking into the future (like Zech undoubtedly was here!), or supernaturally discerning, by the Holy Spirit, what’s happening inside of people at any given time. But everybody is called to constantly grow in the knowledge of, application of, and proclamation of the Word of God! Just look at what the apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians:

*Pursue love and desire spiritual gifts, and especially that you may prophesy. The person who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouragement, and consolation. The one who prophesies builds up the church. I wish all of you spoke in tongues, but even more that you prophesied. The person who prophesies is greater than the person who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets so that the church may be built up. (1 Cor. 14:1-5 (some parts removed for clarity & focus))*

So according to Paul, we’re all, in a sense “prophets of the most High God”. We’re not all John the Baptists, and we’re not Old Testament prophets, but we’re called, in differing degrees and appropriate times, into the disposition and gifting of prophecy as described in Eph. 4:1-11, particularly v.11. We are all meant to be a vital part of, and to build up the Body of Christ, God’s people, God’s co-laborers, God’s Church. Some disciples of Jesus think they’re being disciples of Jesus apart from God’s covenant people but they’re fooling themselves and not really being disciples if that’s the case—rather they’re going rogue!

So let’s collectively, united as One, hit the streets, the workplaces, the schoolhouses, the youth centers, the homesteads, the clothing stores, the coffee and teahouses, and the concert venues with the prophetic truth of God! Let’s pave the way for God to show up wherever He wants to, which is anywhere we are! Come on now trust in Him!

The *dawn from on high or rising sun* (Luke 1:78) was an allusion to Mal. 4:1-3, particularly v.2.<sup>12</sup> You want to soak in a powerful, prophetic passage of scripture? Check it out!

*“For look, the day is coming, burning like a furnace, when all the arrogant and everyone who commits wickedness will become stubble. The coming day will consume them,” says the Lord of Armies, “not leaving them root or branches. <sup>2</sup> **But for you who fear my***

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<sup>12</sup> Marshall, I. H. (1994). [Luke](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 984). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

**name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings, and you will go out and playfully jump like calves from the stall.** <sup>3</sup> You will trample the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day I am preparing,” says the Lord of Armies. (Mal 4:1–3)

The dawn from on high that would *shine on those who live in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide (His people’s) feet into the way of peace* was also a reference to the Messiah and not to John.<sup>13</sup> The messiah, in Mary’s womb yet to be born, would **shine on those in darkness**, perhaps an allusion to Isa 9:2,<sup>14</sup> where;

*<sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
a light has dawned  
on those living in the land of darkness. (Is 9:2)*

This messiah, whom John would delight in and prepare the way for, would also shine on those in the shadow of death. He would raise the dead, and bring life where death reigned. He would guide His people’s feet into the way of peace.

Jesus came to bring light and peace where there is darkness and death. His light and peace can overcome addiction, fear, anxiety, depression, hatred, unforgiveness, selfishness, laziness, overindulgence, hopelessness, stress, foolishness, greed, insatiable hornyness, jealousy, envy, materialism, individualism, and consumerism. He speaks light and life and peace and hope and joy and delight into ALL the areas of darkness and death that plague our lives!

**ENGAGE FOR A MOMENT... WHAT’S THE AREA MENTIONED ABOVE THAT YOU’RE CAUGHT IN? WHAT DOES JESUS SAY ABOUT THAT STRUGGLE? PRAY ABOUT IT! WHAT WORDS OF LIFE DOES JESUS SPEAK OVER THAT STRUGGLE TO YOU DIRECTLY?**

Luke Chapter one concludes describing an overview of John the Baptist’s early life;

<sup>80</sup> *The child grew up and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel. (Luke 1:80)*

**The child grew up.** Verse 1:80 summarizes approximately 30 years of John’s life. (compare Luke 3:23). It also mentions the fact that John was **in the wilderness**. This

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<sup>13</sup> Marshall, I. H. (1994). [Luke](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 984). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>14</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Lk 1:79). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

detail set up the quotation of Isaiah's prophecy in 3:4–6 (compare Isa 40:3). It also might be intended to evoke Israel's wilderness wanderings after the exodus.<sup>15</sup> But Isaiah 3:4-6 just absolutely screams the life of John the Baptist, check it out!

<sup>4</sup> *As it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah:*

***A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:***

***Prepare the way for the Lord;***

***make his paths straight!***

<sup>5</sup> ***Every valley will be filled,***

***and every mountain and hill will be made low;***

***the crooked will become straight,***

***the rough ways smooth,***

<sup>6</sup> ***and everyone will see the salvation of God:*** (Lk 3:4–6)

It's an important side note to add that there are some interesting similarities between John's way of life and teaching and those of the Jewish sect in the desert at or near Qumran. They lived an ascetic life, and looked forward to the coming salvation of God.<sup>16</sup>

Additionally, as one could gather, John's living **in the desert** till the time of his public appearance was not normal for a young person. But because of the special mission which John knew from an early age he would perform, he chose to follow the role of Elijah (cf. v. 17) by living in a desolate area. For in only a brief period of time John's ministry would catapult him into a flash of prominence, and shortly after into martyrdom.<sup>17</sup>

Reflecting on John's life brings us to a final note to conclude on- **If you want to be somebody stop trying to be somebody!**

What do you want? To have a life that brings a bunch of glory to you, or a life that brings a bunch of glory to God? If so- be willing and ready to enter into difficulty to have your character chiseled into God's image. John the Baptist was prophesied to be a wild man of God who would prophetically place God on His throne in every possible way for the watching world to see. Imitate John. Be who God made you to be.

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<sup>15</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Lk 1:80). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>16</sup> Marshall, I. H. (1994). [Luke](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 984). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>17</sup> Martin, J. A. (1985). [Luke](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 207). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Stop striving. Stop scheming. Stop politicking. Stop cultivating. Rest in Christ. Trust in Christ. Abide in Christ. Be crafted by Christ!