

## **Life Lessons from an Old Man: Wisdom from David in Psalm 37:1-11**

In the midst of all the problems with growing old, also comes the joy of being a mentor. Such was the case with David in Psalm 37. As an advice-giving, grey-haired old man David presents a number of timely and relevant life lessons to anyone who will listen.

**Jim Cecy** is a regular speaker at the European Leadership Forum. He serves as Senior Pastor-Teacher of Campus Bible Church in Fresno, California. Jim is also founder and President of JARON Ministries International, a training ministry for Christian leaders in the U.S. and abroad. He has a Masters of Divinity in Bible Exposition from Talbot Theological Seminary and a Doctorate of Ministry from Western Seminary. He is a conference and seminar speaker for hundreds of churches, schools, seminars, conference centers, Christian groups and denominations in U.S. and abroad. In addition to other books and materials, he is the author of *The Purity War: A Biblical Guide to Living in an Immoral World*. Jim has been married for forty years and has nine grandchildren. Information about his materials, books and seminars is available at [www.puritywar.com](http://www.puritywar.com)

### **I. Introduction:**

Psalm 71:18 “And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to all who are to come.”

Introduction to Psalm 37...written by David in his old age.

Psalm 37:25 “I have been young and NOW I am old...”

***Psalm 37:1-9 “Do not fret because of evildoers, Be not envious toward wrongdoers. For they will wither quickly like the grass. And fade like the green herb. Trust in the Lord and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He will do it. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light. And your judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing. For evildoers will be cut off, But those who wait for the Lord, they will inherit the land. Yet a little while and the wicked man will be no more; And you will look carefully for his place and he will not be there. But the humble will inherit the land. And will delight themselves in abundant prosperity.”***

### **II. Life Lesson #1. “Don’t be consumed by worry and jealousy.” (Psalm 37:1-2)**

A. Psalm 37:1-2 “Do not fret because of evildoers. Be not envious toward wrongdoers. For they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb.

- B. Psalm 37:7 “Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carries out wicked schemes.”
- C. Psalm 37:8-9 “Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing. For evildoers will be cut off...”  
fret = Hebrew: charah= blaze up/over-react/flare up/explode  
Worry opens the door to envy and jealousy.
- D. Psalm 37:1 “Be not envious toward wrongdoers.”
- E. Song of Solomon 8:6 “Jealousy is as severe as Sheol; its flashes are flashes of fire...”
- F. Psalm 37:2 “For they (i.e. the ungodly about whom you are filled with worry and envy) will wither (i.e. be cut to size) quickly like the grass and fade (i.e. wilt and die) like the green herb.”
- G. Psalm 37:16-18 “Better is the little of the righteous than the abundance of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked will be broken, but the Lord sustains the righteous. The Lord knows the days of the blameless, and their inheritance will be forever.”
- H. Matthew 6:33-34 “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow...”

### **III. Life Lesson #2. “Trust in the Lord and do the right thing, no matter where you are.” (Psalm 37:3)**

- A. Psalm 37:3 “Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.
- “Trust in the Lord...” = Hebrew: batach = put your confidence in someone or something. The only One we are ever commanded to trust is God, because He never changes.
  - “...and do good...” Psalm 37:3 = Hebrew: ‘asah tob = “Do what is best. In fact, do what is even better.” (“excel still more”)
  - 1 Corinthians 10:31 “...whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

- “...dwell in the land...” Psalm 37:3 — i.e. bloom wherever God puts you
- “...and cultivate faithfulness...” Psalm 37:3
- NASB “...cultivate faithfulness...” KJV “...thou shalt be fed...” NIV “...enjoy safe pasture...” Other “...feed on faithfulness...” Jim’s Version: “Trust in the Lord and do the right thing no matter where you are and keep company with other shepherd-like people who are well-fed enough to care for others!”

#### B. The Result?

- Psalm 37:5-6 “...and He (God) will do it. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday.”
- Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust (Hebrew: batach) in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on (lit. be supported by) your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him (i.e. know Him intimately), and He will make your paths straight.”

### **IV. Life Lesson #3. “Delight yourself in the Lord with the assurance He will bless your life.” (Psalm 37:4)**

A. Psalm 37:4 “Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart.”

“Delight yourself (Hebrew: anag = be soft and pliable) in the Lord...” (Psalm 37:4)

“He will give you the desires of your heart.” (Psalm 37:4)

God will align your moldable heart with His giving heart — “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

### **V. Life Lesson #4. “Commit your way to the Lord and your path will be clear.” (Psalm 37:5-6)**

A. Psalm 37:5-6 “Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday.”

- B. Proverbs 16:1-3 “The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD. All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, but the LORD weighs the motives.

Commit your works to the LORD and your plans will be established.” Commit = Hebrew: galal = roll

- David’s counsel is that we must commit our way to the Lord — roll on God the whole course of our lives.

- Solomon’s counsel is that we must commit our works to the Lord — roll on God the daily events that lead up to the whole course of our lives.

P.U.S.H. = PRAY UNTIL SOMETHING HAPPENS

## **VI. Life Lesson #5. “Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him with the confidence He will take care of your every need.” (Psalm 37:7-8)**

- A. Psalm 37:7-8 “Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger and forsake wrath; do not fret; it leads only to evildoing.”

- “Rest (Hebrew: damam = be silent) in the Lord...” (Psalm 37:7)
- “...and wait (Hebrew: kuwl = twist and turn) patiently for Him...” (Psalm 37:7)
- Whereas resting in the Lord gives the idea of quietly listening, waiting patiently for the Lord actually pictures a person on the move, but nonetheless still resting.
- “Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing.” Psalm 37:7-8

## **VII. Life Lesson #6. “Wait for the Lord and be humble and you will delight in abundant prosperity.” (Psalm 37:9-11)**

- A. Psalm 37:9-11 “For evildoers will be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord, they will inherit the land. Yet a little while and the wicked man will be no more; and you will look

carefully for his place and he will not be there. But the humble will inherit the land and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity.”

- wait = Hebrew: qavah = gather and bind together a collection. It also means to hope.
- Waiting on the Lord (i.e. hoping in the Lord) is a vital form of worship.
- “Cease (Hebrew: raphah = refrain/let it go) from anger and forsake (Hebrew: ‘azab’ = relinquish) wrath...” (Psalm 37:8)

### VIII. The Results of Heeding the Old Man’s Counsel...

- A. Psalms 37:11 “But the humble will inherit the land and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity.”  
(KJV = “The meek shall inherit the earth.” — Sermon on the Mount)
- B. Rather than trying to do life your own way, be humble enough to listen to wise counsel and you will experience abundant prosperity.  
**“abundant prosperity” = lit. “an abundance of peace” (Hebrew: shalom = wholeness)**
- C. If we listen and take heed to David’s counsel, God will bless us with abundant peace and generations of faithful people following in his footsteps.

### IX. Conclusion: Words in the night

Do Not Fret • Be Not Envious • Trust in the Lord • Do Good • Dwell in the Land • Cultivate Faithfulness • Delight Yourself in the Lord • Commit Your Way to the Lord • Rest in the Lord • Wait patiently for Him • Cease from Anger • Forsake Wrath • Delight in Abundant Prosperity