

FBC SERVICE SUNDAY OCTOBER 4, 2026, AUTUMN IN THE PSALMS

TRUSTING GOD ONE STEP AT A TIME Psalm 37:3-7, 23-24

INTRODUCTION - WHEN YOU CANNOT SEE THE WHOLE ROAD

There are times in life when we would love for God to hand us a map. We would like to know what's around the next corner, how a difficult situation will turn out, what tomorrow will bring, and exactly how God intends to answer our prayers.

But very often God doesn't give us the whole map. He gives us enough light for the next step.

That's one reason Psalm 37 speaks so warmly to our hearts. David isn't writing as a young man who has never faced trouble, for later in the Psalm he says, *"Once I was young, and now I am old."*

He's speaking from a lifetime of walking with God. He has seen good days and difficult days. He has known victory and disappointment. He has learned that circumstances change, people change, and our own strength can fail - **but the Lord remains faithful.**

Psalm 37 was written in a world where the righteous could look around and wonder why evil seemed to prosper. David begins by telling God's people not to fret. **Then, in verses 3-7, he gives us something better to do than worry.**

He calls us to trust, delight, commit, and be still. And in verses 23-24 he gives us a beautiful reason why: the Lord directs our steps and holds us by the hand.

That's the message I want us to carry home today: We don't need to know every step ahead when we know the One who directs our steps.

1. TRUST IN THE LORD

"Trust in the LORD and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper." Psalm 37:3 (NLT)

The first word is simple, but it isn't always easy: TRUST.

David doesn't say, "Trust your feelings." **Feelings rise and fall.** He doesn't say, "Trust your circumstances." **Circumstances can change overnight.** He doesn't say, "Trust your own understanding." There will be moments when life simply doesn't make sense.

He says, "Trust in the LORD." Our faith rests not in what we can see, **but in who God is.**

To trust God is to say, "Lord, I don't understand everything that's happening, but I know You. I know Your character. I know Your promises. I know You've been faithful before, and I will trust You now."

Notice that David joins trust with action: *"Trust in the LORD and do good."* Biblical trust isn't passive. We keep obeying. We keep serving. We keep praying.

We keep doing what is right even when we don't know how the story will end.

Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do in a confusing season is simply to do the next faithful thing.

Perhaps someone is carrying a concern about family, health, finances, the future, or a prayer that has not yet been answered.

Psalm 37 doesn't tell us to pretend the concern isn't real. It tells us where to place it: **in the hands of the Lord.**

Faith says, "I may not know what tomorrow holds, but I know who holds tomorrow."

2. DELIGHT YOURSELF IN THE LORD

"Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart's desires." - Psalm 37:4 (NLT)

This is one of the best-known verses in Psalm 37, and sometimes one of the most misunderstood.

It's easy to read it as though God is promising, "If you believe strongly enough, I will give you everything you want."

But David is saying something so much deeper. When the Lord Himself becomes our delight, He begins to reshape the desires of our hearts.

The question changes from, "How can I get God to give me what I want?" to, **"Lord, what do You want for me? What will honour You?"** What will make me more like Christ?"

There is a huge difference between delighting in what God gives and delighting in God Himself.

We thank Him for His gifts, for family, home, church, daily bread, friendships, health, provision, answered prayer. **But the greatest gift is the Giver Himself.**

The Christian can say with conviction, "Even when life doesn't give me everything I hoped for, I still have Christ. I still have His presence. I still have His promises. I still have eternal life. I still have a Shepherd who will never leave me."

One of the most amazing truths of the Christian life is that when Jesus becomes the treasure of our heart, our desires begin to change. We begin to desire holiness more than comfort, faithfulness more than applause, God's will more than our own way, and His glory more than our own recognition.

So ask yourself: What has my heart been delighting in lately? What occupies my thoughts? Where am I looking for satisfaction? David gently turns us back to the Lord: *"Take delight in the LORD."*

3. COMMIT EVERYTHING TO THE LORD

"Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and he will help you." Psalm 37:5 (NLT)

Here David takes trust one step further. **Trust must eventually become commitment.**

The word translated **"commit"** carries the picture of rolling something over onto another. It's as though David says, **"Take the weight you've been carrying and roll it onto the Lord."**

Some of us are very good at giving God our burdens in prayer and then picking them up again before we leave.

We pray, “Lord, I give this to You,” and ten minutes later we’re carrying it again. We rehearse the problem, imagine every possible outcome, and try to solve tomorrow before tomorrow arrives.

But Psalm 37 says: commit your way to the Lord. Roll it onto Him.

That doesn’t mean irresponsibility. We still make wise decisions. We still do what God calls us to do. **But there’s a difference between responsibility and anxiety.** Responsibility does what it can and leaves the outcome with God. **Anxiety tries to carry what only God can carry.**

Are you carrying something this morning that needs to be rolled onto the Lord?

A loved one? An uncertain future? A disappointment? A decision? Something you cannot change? Someone you cannot fix? A prayer you have prayed for years?

There comes a moment when faith must say: **“Lord, this is bigger than I am. I place it in Your hands. Show me what I should do and help me leave the outcome with You.”**

And then comes the promise: *“Trust him, and he will help you.”* Not necessarily in the way we expected, nor always on our timetable, but God will not abandon the person who entrusts his or her way to Him.

4. BE STILL AND WAIT FOR HIM

“Be still in the presence of the LORD and wait patiently for him to act.” Psalm 37:7 (NLT)

For many of us, this may be the hardest instruction in the passage.

Trusting sounds good. Commitment sounds good. **But waiting?** We would much rather have God act now.

Yet there are seasons when God’s instruction isn’t “Run,” but “Wait.” Not “Fix it,” but “Be still.” Not “Figure everything out,” but “Stay close to Me.”

Being still before the Lord isn’t doing nothing. **It’s an act of faith. It’s refusing to let panic make our decisions.** It’s refusing to allow fear to write tomorrow’s story before tomorrow arrives.

We learned recently from Psalm 40 that waiting isn’t wasted time. God often does some of His deepest work in us while we wait for Him to do the work we are asking Him to do around us.

Waiting can deepen prayer. **Waiting can expose what we really trust.** Waiting can soften us. Waiting can teach us patience. Waiting can make us listen. Waiting can move our confidence away from ourselves and onto the Lord.

Maybe today the Lord is saying to someone: “You have prayed. You have done what you can. Now be still in My presence. **Wait patiently for Me to act.”**

God is never in a hurry, but He is never late.

5. THE LORD DIRECTS OUR STEPS

“The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.” Psalm 37:23 (NLT)

Now David tells us why we can trust, delight, commit, and wait.

Notice the word **“steps.”** **We often want God to show us miles.** He frequently shows us steps.

We say, “Lord, show me what the next months will look like.” **God says, “Walk with Me today.”** We ask, “How will all of this work out?” God says, **“Trust Me with the next step.”**

Proverbs 3:5-6 gives the same counsel: *“trust the Lord with all your heart, don’t depend on your own understanding, seek His will, and He will show you the path to take”.*

What does trusting God look like on Monday morning? It means doing the next faithful thing. Pray the next prayer. Make the next right decision. Speak the next gracious word. Fulfill the next responsibility. **Take the next step God has put in front of you.**

We don’t need to see the whole staircase to take the next step with Him.

6. WHEN WE STUMBLE, HE HOLDS US

“Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the LORD holds them by the hand.” Psalm 37:24 (NLT)

This may be the warmest promise in the passage.

David doesn’t say that godly people never stumble. **They do.** We become discouraged. We make mistakes. We have moments of weakness. Sometimes circumstances knock us off balance. Sometimes our own poor choices do.

The promise isn’t that we will never stumble. The promise is that stumbling doesn’t have to become fatal, because *“the LORD holds them by the hand.”*

Picture a small child walking in the woods beside a loving father. The ground is uneven. The child trips. For one frightening moment the child loses balance but doesn’t crash to the ground. **Why? Because a stronger hand is holding the child.**

The child’s security isn’t ultimately in how tightly the child can hold the father. **It’s in how firmly the father is holding the child. That’s a beautiful picture of grace.**

The Bible repeatedly shows how easily this can happen to even the best people.

It tells us the whole truth about human nature. We see men and women who are faithful one day and fickle the next.

We see worship mixed with worry, courage followed by cowardice, faith matched with doubt. Generosity followed by greed, kindness overcome by arrogance.

We learn that strong people sometimes do very stupid things. **Even saints at times can act like sinners.**

Think of Noah, Abraham, Moses, David. Peter, boasting of his loyalty, and only hours later broken by his own failure

These stories are in the Bible both to instruct us and to encourage us. They teach us that **even the best people under pressure can do very foolish things**. **No one is beyond the reach of temptation.**

Very godly people can make some very wrong choices and suffer greatly as a result. And cause others to suffer with them. It's good that the Bible shows this to us, or we would be tempted to deny this reality.

We like to think, "I'm beyond that temptation." **Don't ever say that.** You don't know what you're **"beyond."**

Today's **"victory"** may actually set you up for tomorrow's **"defeat."** Satan roams the world like a mighty lion, seeking careless and overconfident believers he can pull down (1 Peter 5:8).

There have probably been moments in every believer's life when we can look back and say, **"If the Lord had not held me, I don't know where I would be."**

He held us through grief. He held us through disappointment. He held us through illness. He held us through temptation. He held us when our faith felt strong, and He held us when our faith felt very small.

And the hand that has held us until now has not grown weak.

Let's sum up the application of this message with three simple statements:

Your struggles are not wasted — **FIGHT ON!**

Your Father has not forgotten you — **HANG ON!**

Your future is secure in Christ — **WALK ON!**

FIGHT ON — because stumbling isn't the end.

HANG ON — because God is holding your hand.

WALK ON — because God is directing your steps.

CONCLUSION - ONE STEP AT A TIME

Maybe you came to church today wishing God would show you the whole road ahead. **Psalm 37 doesn't promise that He will.**

Instead, it gives us something better. It gives us the assurance that God Himself will walk the road with us.

TRUST in the Lord.

DELIGHT in the Lord.

COMMIT our way to the Lord.

BE STILL before the Lord.

And then **WALK** with the Lord - one step at a time.

We may not know what the next few weeks will bring. We may not know how a situation will turn out. We may be waiting for an answer that has not yet come. We may even feel that we have stumbled.

But we are not walking alone. The Lord directs our steps.

The Lord delights in every detail of our life. And when we stumble, the Lord holds us by the hand.

So perhaps the prayer we need today isn't, "Lord, show me everything that's ahead." Perhaps it's simply: "Lord, **give me grace to trust You with the next step.**"

We don't need to know every step ahead when we know Who is directing our steps.

And when the road is uncertain, when the answer is delayed, when the way is difficult, we can place our hand in His and say: "Lord, I trust You. Lead me one step at a time."

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You that our lives are safe in Your hands. Forgive us for the times we have allowed worry to become greater than our trust.

Teach us to delight in You, to commit our burdens to You, and to be still in Your presence.

For those who are facing an uncertain road today, give courage for the next step.

For those who are waiting, give patience.

For those who have stumbled, remind them that Your hand has not let them go.

Direct our steps, keep our hearts close to You, and help us to trust You one day and one step at a time.

In Jesus' name, **Amen.**