Ps. 147:10-11: He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man. [11] The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His mercy.

Intro: Richard Sibbes: There is more mercy in Christ than sin in us.
- Psalm 147 is a Psalm of praise to the LORD. It begins with "Praise the LORD!" & ends with "Praise the LORD!" Praise the LORD for what's He has done! And praise the LORD for Who He is – His character & His mighty, glorious attributes.

Spurgeon: THIS Psalm, I think, was intended to set forth the singularity of God. In it we are exhorted to praise him who is our God, to give honor & glory to him alone. The psalmist does not dwell here upon those attributes which usually call forth our praise, or the praises of men in general; but he touches some special strings of the harp, from which he brings forth joyous music for the children of Zion, that they may be glad in their King. This is one of the notes of the Psalm, – that, although God himself is so high, he has a very tender regard toward those who are lowly. He turns his thoughts, not to those who are brilliant & attractive, but to those who are broken in heart and wounded in spirit.

Ps. 147:1-11: Praise the LORD! For it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is fitting. [2] The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the outcasts of Israel.
[3] He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. [4] He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names. [5] Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure. [6] The LORD lifts up the humble; he casts the wicked to the ground. [7] Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make melody to our God on the lyre! [8] He covers the heavens with clouds; he prepares rain for the earth; he makes grass grow on the hills. [9] He gives to the beasts their food, and to the young ravens that cry. [10] His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man, [11] but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.

<u>The LORD does not delight in earthly power, but in those who fear Him & hope in His mercy.</u>

<u>1. The LORD Does Not Delight In Earthly Power</u>

Ps. 147:10: He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man.

a. The LORD does not delight in the strength of the horse: There is great strength in the horse: All that great strength is not God's delight in comparison to something else.

b. The LORD takes no pleasure in the legs of a man: This is a way of speaking of the strength of men. The strength of foot soldiers & warriors & great armies.

All that great strength does not give God pleasure in comparison to something else.

2. The LORD Delights In Those Who Fear Him
Ps. 147:11: The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him . . . .

a. Fearing the LORD means you know God & He knows you GOSPEL!
b. Fearing the LORD means you hate evil
c. Fearing the LORD means you will keep His commandments by the power of His Spirit
d. Fearing the LORD means fearing Him & nothing else
e. Fearing the LORD means fearing Him as one who is forgiven & safe
f. Fearing the LORD means trusting Him
- To fear the LORD is to know Him & to be in a personal relationship with Him & to worship Him with reverence & awe! It's to turn from your sin & trust in Him & follow Him & obey Him & live for Him & delight in Him above all else!
g. The fear of the LORD is the Christian's delight

3. The LORD Delights In And Takes Pleasure In Those Who Hope In His Mercy
Ps. 147:11: The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His mercy.

Ps. 33:16-22: No king *is* saved by the multitude of an army; A mighty man is not delivered by great strength. A horse *is* a vain hope for safety; Neither shall it deliver *any* by its great strength. Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy, To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the LORD; He *is* our help & our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in Him, Because we have trusted in His holy name. Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us, Just as we hope in You.

a. What does it mean to hope? 1) Dictionary: Webster's 1828: Confidence in a future event; the highest degree of well founded expectation of good; as a hope founded on God's gracious promises; a scriptural sense. A well founded scriptural hope is, in our religion, the source of ineffable [great, extreme, indescribable] happiness.

2) Hope is faith in the promises of God for the future: Hope is forward looking faith!

John Piper: I would suggest that faith is the larger idea and hope is a necessary part of biblical faith. Hope is that part of faith that focuses on the future. In biblical terms, when faith is directed to the future, you can call it hope. But faith can focus on the past and the present too, so faith is the larger term. You can see this in Hebrews 11:1. This is the closest thing we have to a definition of faith in all the New Testament, I think. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Here's how I would paraphrase this verse. Wherever there is full assurance of hope, there is faith. Faith is the full assurance of hope. Biblical faith is a confident expectation and desire for good things in the future. But faith is more than that. It is also the "conviction of things not seen," and some of these are not future. For example, verse 3: "By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God." Faith can look back (to creation) as well as forward. So faith is the larger idea. It includes hope, but is more than hope. You might put it this way: faith is our confidence in the word of God, and whenever that word has reference

to the future, you can call our confidence in it hope. Hope is faith in the future tense.

3) Hope feels it's need of mercy: Spurgeon: A soundly hopeful soul feels its need of mercy. It does not talk about sin, but it feels it. It does not talk about mercy, but it groans after it. Beware of superficial religion . . . mercy can only come to him through the Mediator — Christ Jesus.

<u>The LORD does not delight in earthly power, but in those who fear Him & hope in His mercy.</u>

b. Hope in the LORD's mercy in salvation: How were you saved? What is your testimony?

John Piper: "The Transforming Power of Feeling Mercy": What a difference it makes in everything, if we feel like we have just been rescued from torment and death! Picture your attitude on a Navy ship after being plucked from the ocean where you spent weeks adrift on a life raft. Or picture yourself rescued from a deep, collapsing mine in Pennsylvania. Or think of a nine-month battle with malignant cancer, only to hear the doctor say, "I can't explain it, but it's gone." Think about your powers of patience and kindness and forgiveness in those early hours of relief and rejoicing. Now add this to your imagination (though it shouldn't take imagination, only Biblical revelation), that you don't deserve to be rescued. Let it sink in - pray right now that God would make it sink in - that you and I deserve nothing but trouble and persecution and sickness and death and hell. We are, the Bible says, "by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind" (Ephesians 2:3). "All . . . are under sin . . . and every mouth [is] stopped, and the whole world . . . accountable to God" (Romans 3:9, 19). The "wages" of our sin is eternal death (Romans 6:23). We are under the curse of God's law, because "cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them" (Deuteronomy 27:26). Our natural mind is "hostile to God" (Romans 8:7). We are "strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12). We are destined to be cast into "outer darkness" where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 8:12; 25:30). If something doesn't intervene, our lot will be in the lake of fire where "the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest" (Revelation 14:11). Therefore, all you Christians - all you believers rescued by the blood of Christ, who has become a curse for us - add to the relief and happiness of your rescue the bewildering wonder and the brokenhearted joy that you deserve none of this, but are lavished with unceasing mercy. Then look upon your afflictions in this light. Think with Jonathan Edwards on your condition: "How far less [are] the greatest afflictions that we meet with in this world...than we have deserved.... The greatest outward troubles and calamities that we meet with...must needs appear very little things to the misery which we have deserved.... A man may meet with very great losses...his cattle may die, his corn may be blasted, his barn may be burnt down and all the goods consumed, and he may be brought from a comfortable living to a poor, low, stricken state. This is very hard to bear, but alas, how little reason have such to complain if they do but consider how little this is, compared with that eternal destruction that we have been informed of. (Jonathan Edwards, Works [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997], p. 321)". Is it any wonder that Paul said to such people, "Do all things without grumbling" (Philippians 2:14). Ponder how you would react to things if you lived hour by hour in the heartfelt awareness that you are rescued from horrible death and eternal suffering, and that, in spite of deserving no help, you are lavished with mercy every day (even in

the hard things) and will be made perfectly and eternally happy in the age to come. Then add one more thing to your thinking. The one who rescued you had to die to do it, and he is the one Person in the universe who did NOT deserve to die. "Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18). O Christian, know your condition - the misery and the mercy. And let the horror from which you have been rescued, and the mercy in which you live, and the price that Christ paid, make you humble and thankful and patient and kind and forgiving. You have never been treated by God worse than you deserve. And in Christ you are treated ten million times better. Feel this. Live this.

c. Hope in the LORD's mercy to grow in the knowledge of God:
1) Calvinism: TULIP
2) Christian Hedonism: John Piper: God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.
3) Christ in all the Bible: All the Scriptures speak of & point to Christ – Luke 24.
4) Christ and His Gospel Daily: I need to be reminded of the Gospel every day.
5) Christ Is All: True contentment in Christ alone: Psalm 73:25
6) Church: **Eph. 3:10:** through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers & authorities in the heavenly places.
7) Christ Humbling Me: Dying more to self & pride in the Navy & as a pastor
8) Christ My King: S. M. Lockridge: "That's my King!"
9) Christ Proclaimed: The centrality of the Great Commission & evangelism
10) Cross: Jesus truly was forsaken, God was angry with Him, & He endured damnation for sinners

Mercy-Heart: My battle with no assurance of salvation: Jonah; Peter; Syro-Phoenician woman

d. Hope in the LORD's mercy in prayer & the study of God's Word:
John Piper: I - Incline: "Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!" (Psalm 119:36). This asks God to turn the heart toward His Word rather than distractions.
O - Open: "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law" (Psalm 119:18). This asks for spiritual insight to see the beauty of God in Scripture.
U - Unite: "Unite my heart to fear your name" (Psalm 86:11). This asks for a single-minded devotion to God, reducing spiritual distraction and fragmentation.
S - Satisfy: "Satisfy us in the morning with your mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days" (Psalm 90:14). This seeks joy in God's mercy & love rather than in worldly things.

David Mathis: Fittingly, the most prominent request made of Jesus in the Gospels is, "Have mercy on me!" (Moses saw mercy; David fell on mercy; Jeremiah wept for mercy; Paul marveled at mercy). Psalm 136; **Ps. 136:1:** Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever (repeated 26 times!).

e. Hope in the LORD's mercy in failure, pain, & rejection: *Mercy-No* book; **Romans 8:28**

William Cowper: Behind a frowning providence, He hides a smiling face.

Spurgeon: There is a famous story of providence in Bradwardine to this purpose. A certain hermit that was much tempted, & was utterly unsatisfied concerning the providence of God, resolved to journey from place to place till he met with some who could satisfy him. An angel in the shape of a man joined himself with him as he was journeying, telling him that he was sent from God to satisfy him in his doubts of providence. The first night they lodged at the house of a very holy man, & they spent their time in discourses of heaven, & praises of God, & were entertained with a great deal of freedom & joy. In the morning, when they departed, the angel stole a great cup of gold from the man. The next night they came to the house of another holy man, who made them very welcome, & exceedingly rejoiced in their society & discourse; the angel, notwithstanding, at his departure killed the man's baby infant in the cradle, which was his only son, he having been for many years before childless, &, therefore, was a very fond father of this child. The third night they came to another house, where they had like free entertainment as before. The master of the family had a steward whom he highly prized, & told them how happy he accounted himself in having such a faithful servant. Next morning he sent his steward with them part of their way, to direct them therein. As they were going over the bridge the angel flung the steward into the river & drowned him. The last night they came to a very wicked man's house, where they had very untoward entertainment, yet the angel, next morning, gave him the cup of gold. All this being done, the angel asked the hermit whether he understood those things? He answered, his doubts of providence were increased, not resolved, for he could not understand why he should deal so hardly with those holy men, who received them with so much love & joy, & yet give such a gift to that wicked man who used them so unworthily. The angel said, I will now expound these things unto you. The first house where we came, the master of it was a holy man; yet, [delighting] in that cup of godl every morning, it being too large, it did somewhat unfit him for holy duties, though not so much that others or himself did perceive it; so I took it away, since it is better for him to lose the cup of gold than his temperance. The master of the family where we lay the second night was a man given much to prayer & meditation, & spent much time in holy duties, & was very [generous] to the poor all the time he was childless; but as soon as he had a son he grew so fond of it, & spent so much time in playing with it, that he exceedingly neglected his former holy exercise, & gave but little to the poor, thinking he could never lay up enough for his child; therefore I have taken the infant to heaven, & left him to serve God better upon earth. The steward whom I did drown had plotted to kill his master the night following; & as to that wicked man to whom I gave the cup of gold, he was to have nothing in the other world, I therefore gave him something in this, which, notwithstanding, will prove a snare to him, for he will be more intemperate; & "let him that is filthy be filthy still." The truth of this story I affirm not, but the moral is very good, for it shows that God is an indulgent Father to the saints when he most afflicts them; & that when he sets the wicked on high he sets them also in slippery places, & their prosperity is their ruin. (Pr 1:32)

Joni Eareckson Tada: Now I know that is not biblically correct, but if I were able, I would have my wheelchair up in heaven right next to me when God gives me my brand-new, glorified body. And I will then turn to Jesus and say, "Lord, do you see that wheelchair right there? Well, you were right when you said that in this world we would have trouble, because that wheelchair was a lot of trouble! But Jesus the weaker I was in that thing, the harder I leaned on you. And the harder I leaned on you, the stronger I discovered you to be. So thank you for what you did in my life through that

wheelchair. And now," I always say jokingly, "you can send that wheelchair to hell, if you want."

God's mercy is a prominent, powerful, perpetual, pervasive, personal theme in my life. God has mercifully taught me many glorious truths about Himself. God showed me great mercy in college . . . One of my favorite devotional articles ever is about God's mercy. One of my favorite chapters in the Bible, 2 Chronicles 20, has praise to God & His mercy is at the center. Almost every time I read the Bible devotionally, I pray that God would satisfy me with His mercy that I might be joyful in Him all my days. God has shown me so much mercy through the preaching of His Word. I wrote a hymn based on the book of Jonah called "Mercy-Heart". I attempted to write a book on trusting God in the midst of rejection in romantic relationships that I wanted to title: *Mercy No*. God showed me great mercy at one point in my life when I thought His salvation was totally out of my reach. In the future, I would like to name one of my daughters Mercy. Even God calling me into the ministry was mercy. Oh what lavish mercy I have received from my King Jesus!

f. Hope in the LORD's mercy for marriage & singleness: It is the mercy of God that He joins anyone together in marriage at all. Hope in God's mercy in the hard times in marriage. Hope in God's mercy in the good times in marriage. Hope in God's mercy to heal your marriage & keep you married. Hope in God's mercy when you lose your spouse. Hope in God's mercy in your singleness & waiting.

Mercy's name: Mercy Kerubo. For the rest of my life, I will be "Joseph and Mercy"!
<u>The LORD does not delight in earthly power, but in those who fear Him & hope in His mercy.</u>

We have all of this because, although Jesus is the only one Who never trusted in earthly power, & He is the only One Who perfectly feared the LORD & perfectly hoped in Him, God showed Him no mercy on that cross so that mercy might endlessly flow to us in Christ!

Christ Jesus Is LORD And Mercy's Foundation
He Bore All God's Wrath And Endured Our Damnation
He Died For Our Sins To Grant Us Salvation
Then Rose From The Dead For Our Justification
His Mercy's Amazing Causing True Love Elation
His Mercy-Heart's Great Knowing Him In Relation
Through Prayer And The Word Enjoy Mercy Contemplation
Mercy Keeps You In Pain And All Tribulation
Then Mercy I Noticed With Preoccupation
I Want Her Forever – There's No Condemnation
She Comes Straight From God Who Saves Every Nation
Oh Praise Him Forever – Mercy's Pure Incarnation!
<u>The LORD does not delight in earthly power, but in those who fear Him & hope in His mercy.</u>

Benediction: Jude 1:2: May mercy, peace, & love be multiplied to you, [in Christ Jesus, now & forevermore! Amen!]