

PLEASING OUR FATHER

A. Our circumstances are so varied when it comes to our earthly fathers.

1. So today let's notice something we can ALL relate to — **what it means to "please" our Father.**

B. To begin with, let's define the word "please" as it is found in the NT.

John 8:29-30

29 ***And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.*** 30 As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

1. The word Jesus used here: *aresko* (ar-es'-ko) means **exciting** [stirring up] **emotion; to be agreeable** (Strong); **to accommodate the desires and interests of others** (Thayer) - IN THIS CASE, THE FATHER IN HEAVEN.

Hebrews 11:5

5 By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up ***he was pleasing to God.***

1. This word is *euaresteo* (yoo-ar-es-teh'-o); **it means to gratify entirely: to be well-pleasing.**

2. The life Enoch lived for 365 years was so pleasing to God, so entirely gratifying to Him that He snatched Enoch up to Heaven (G 5:23-24).

a. That's similar to what a parent will do with a child, when that child has done something that so pleases the parent that mom or dad cannot help but to pick up that child and draw it close.

[Pleasing God is a tender & beautiful concept. There are six specific things that please God.]

I. Attention

2 Timothy 2:3-4

3 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, ***so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.***

A. These words are not for preachers only, to remind them to stay on the task of preaching.

1. Notice that Paul was writing to "a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (3).

a. Someone wearing the armor of God (Eph 6:10-17), someone fighting the good fight of faith (1 Tim 6:12).

- b. So the passage speaks to all of us who are soldiers of Christ Jesus.

- B. And what Paul is telling us is that God doesn't want anything (worries, riches, pleasures) to distract our attention from Him; He enlisted us into His army.

Matthew 13:22 (Luke 8:14)

22 "And ***the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns***, this is the man who hears the word, and the ***worry*** of the world and the ***deceitfulness*** of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."

1. The Father wants to have our full-attention, because of the fruit it will bring to Him (Gal 5:22-23).
2. So we need to make sure that we are giving Him our undivided, undistracted attention every day, because that pleases Him.
3. And we need to listen to our consciences in this matter; we know whether or not we are giving Him our full attention (cf. Eph 6:13-19).

[It will take our full-attention, every day, to wear the armor of God, and to stay on guard for the saints, but that's what pleases Him.]

II. Obedience

John 8:29-30

29 ***And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.***" 30 As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

- A. In the context, the Jews were asking Jesus, "Who are you?"

1. Jesus said, "I've been telling you all along that My Father sent Me to speak His word. And unless you believe that I am HE, you will die in your sins."
2. That's when Jesus made that remarkable statement in verse 29.
3. How many of us can say that it is our aim to always be pleasing to God, and to make Him so happy with us that He can't wait to sweep us up into His arms for all eternity, like He did Enoch?
 - a. To attain that level of *pleasing God* will require in us the same commitment to obeying Him that Jesus had.

1 John 3:21-22

21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; 22 and ***whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.***

1. That's the way Jesus lived -- because *Jesus wanted to please His Father*; that's what He lived for, that was as important to Him as food (John 4:34; 5:30).

John 4:34

34 Jesus said to them, "***My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.***"

John 5:30

30 "***I can do nothing on My own initiative.*** As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, ***because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.***"

- a. The Father not only responded to Jesus' prayers, but, at the cross, He swept Him up and honored Him for His obedience (Eph 1:20-23; Phil 2:5-11).

Ephesians 1:20-23

20 which He brought about in Christ, when ***He raised Him*** from the dead and ***seated Him*** at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And ***He put all things in subjection under His feet***, and ***gave Him as head over all things to the church***, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Philippians 2:5-11

8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, ***God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name***, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and

under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

[What Jesus did must be - or must quickly become - the goal of our lives too, that is, if we would like a similar outcome.]

III. Holiness

- A. I like the hymn, "Take Time To Be Holy"; it teaches us not that we should be holy from time to time, but that it takes time to be holy.

1. We have to be holy all the time; not just when we're reading the Bible and praying before we start the day.

1 Peter 1:15

15 but like the Holy One who called you, ***be holy yourselves also in all your behavior***;

1 Thessalonians 4:1-4

1 Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that ***as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God*** (just as you actually do walk), ***that you excel still more.*** So what pleases God?

2 For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. 3 ***For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality***; 4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; (Col 1:10).

B. Holiness is about our lifestyle; how we behave, our life habits.

1. We are holy when we treat our bodies and minds as belonging to God and not to ourselves (1 Cor 6:19).

Luke 22:33-34 (Peter)

33 But he said to Him, "**Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!**" 34 And He said, "...Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me."

Acts 21:13 (Paul)

13 Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? **For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.**"

[What was the difference between Peter and Paul? **Paul** was holy; **Peter** was yet to be holy. **Paul** was pleasing God; **Peter** was still working on it.]

IV. Faith

- A. The writer of Hebrews teaches what should be an obvious truth about pleasing God.

Hebrews 11:6

6 And **without faith it is impossible to please Him**, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

1. This is the same Greek word used to describe Enoch in the previous verse.

- a. Euaireteō (yoo-ar-es-teh'-o); **to gratify entirely: to be well-pleasing.**

2. Hebrews 11 gives us a long list of people, saints of God, who demonstrated a level of faith that pleased Him.

- a. And in every case, each one obeyed a command of God even when it contradicted human logic.

- b. Why else would Moses leave his comfortable lifestyle in Pharaoh's house to go out and live with a nation of slaves?

Because he had faith in God, and faith wants to please Him.

Moses believed that God would reward his diligent and obedient faith.

Hebrews 11:24-26

24 **By faith Moses**, when he had grown up, **refused** to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 **choosing** rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 **considering** the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; **for he was looking to the reward.**

3. Faith in God is hard to develop, because we respond strongly to what is observable.
4. We live among people who think “seeing is believing”, but our Father is pleased when we trust and obey Him in matters relating to what we cannot see.

[The exercise of our faith pleases our Father. He loves FOR His children to trust Him enough to obey.]

V. Sacrifices

- A. It has always been true for God’s people; our Father is pleased when we make the sacrifices that HE asks us to make.

Hebrews 13:15-16

15 Through Him then, **let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God**, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. 16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing, **for with such sacrifices God is pleased.**

1. By giving thanks to God, we acknowledge that He is all-powerful and working all things together for our good.
2. By doing good and sharing with others, we are sharing the gifts that He has given to us.

3. When our Father sees us making these kinds of sacrifices, it gives Him pleasure.

Acts 4:32-35

32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and **not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own**, but all things were common property to them. 33 And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and **abundant grace was upon them all.** 34 For **there was not a needy person among them**, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales 35 and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need.

[I don’t know about you, but I think we should much rather make those kinds of worthwhile sacrifices to God than to sacrifice our lives for any other cause.]

VI. Preaching

1 Corinthians 1:21

21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, **God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.**

- A. We all need to be preaching the gospel to those who are either lost or wandering away from God in their sins

1. And not just because their soul's salvation depends on it, **but because it pleases God!**
2. In fact, all Heaven rejoices when the gospel is preached a soul returns to God (Luke 15).
3. Nothing could please Him more than that.

[There is no greater purpose on God's heart than in using us to reach those who are lost and dying in their sins.]

CLOSING

- A. We can please our Heavenly Father, by giving Him our attention, our obedience, our lives, our faith, our sacrifices, and our mouths to preach His word.

1. It seems like a lot to live up to, but keep in mind:

Numbers 14:18 (Exo 34:6-7)

18 The Lord is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression;

The joy of our hearts should be in giving God the pleasure He seeks.

Gospel Plan of Salvation

Hear the gospel – Romans 10:17

Believe the gospel – John 20:30-31; Acts 8:37

Repent – Acts 2:38; 2 Peter 3:9

Confess faith in Jesus Christ – Romans 10:9-10

Baptism into Christ – Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:20-21

Obey Christ – John 8:31-32; Hebrews 5:8-9; 2 John 9
