

Pleasing God

What is your goal in life? We hear so much about having a purpose and a vision. All that is very important, but we should be able to define our goals in life with this simple statement, "To please God." I know that that goal is the challenge of our lives, but what is it that pleases God? As I was growing up, I had the thought that God had an insatiable hunger that I could never fill, but that was wrong. The New Testament lists three things that please God. They are found in the book of Hebrews. Hebrews was written primarily to the Jews. The Jewish people were notorious for having all kinds of laws that supposedly would please God. But Paul, the writer of Hebrews, gives just three things that please God.

The first thing that pleases God is found in Hebrews 11:5-6 where it says, "By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But 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 diligently seek Him." What made Enoch so pleasing to God that he was the first to rapture out of this world? It was his faith. Enoch lived in a very evil time long before the law was ever given. He was the father of Methuselah. Genesis 5:24 tells us that Enoch walked with God. How did Enoch walk with God? He walked by faith. Enoch is again mentioned in Jude 14 where Jude tells us that Enoch prophesied about what God was going to do with evil men. It took faith for Enoch to prophesy. This prophecy came true with the flood. Enoch had very little to base his faith on. He didn't even have the Ten Commandments which are God's moral code of ethics yet he walked with God. We have so much knowledge yet it isn't what pleases God, it is our faith. In other words, if Enoch could do it, so can we.

In Hebrews 11:5-6, it tells us two things that Enoch believed. These are the two things that we must believe if we are to please God. The first one is that He is. In other words that God exists. We as Christians do this. The second thing is that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. The key word in this verse is the word "diligently". This word is a powerful word that means seek after something with everything you have. Many times we limit our obedience to God because we don't really believe that He will reward us if we give everything to Him. I remember when Audrey and I left and moved to the Soviet Union in 1991. Many people thought we were crazy. Actually, we were. We were crazy after the will of God in our lives. I meet so many Christians who struggle with giving up things. The reason they struggle is because they really don't believe that God is the rewarder of all those who diligently seek to do His will. It takes faith. That kind of faith pleases God and when God is pleased, nothing can stop you from receiving His abundance of grace, love and every good thing.

The next two things that please God are found in Hebrews 13:16. Look at what it says, "But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." The first of these two things is "doing good". The Greek word that is used here means to do good or beneficence which means a generous gift. Every time you give with a joyful heart God is pleased. Every time you help a person in need God is pleased. We must keep in mind that people are God's greatest desire. He created man to have fellowship with Him. When we aid people which are God's greatest desire it pleases Him. That is why Jesus could say that as you have done it to least of these you have done it to Me. (Matthew 25:40)

The third thing that Paul tells us is that God is pleased when we share. The word share is the same Greek word that is translated fellowship. This sharing comes from having something in common and is used primarily when speaking of Christians. The fellowship that we share with each other pleases God. In the Bible, strife in the Body of Christ is a major offense. Romans 16:17 actually tells us not to associate with people that cause division. Strife, fighting, and division are offensive to God. In order to please God we must fellowship and share with the rest of the Body of Christ. God is pleased when we do and it is that place that He commands a blessing. Psalms 133:1-3 says that God commands a blessing where the brethren dwell together in unity.

Let us set our goals or purpose to please God! Our faith, doing good, and fellowship together pleases Him.