

Pleasing God . . . It's a Pleasure

by Lewis Gregory

The sermon emphasizes that we please God through our identity as His children and by allowing Christ to work through us in our actions.

Scripture: Matthew 3:17, Matthew 17:5, John 8:29, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 1:6, 1 John 3:2

Topics: "Pleasing God", "Union With Christ"

Description

Lewis Gregory preaches on the unique parent-child relationship where children naturally desire to please their parents, drawing parallels to our desire as children of God to please our Heavenly Father. Just as God was pleased with Jesus for who He is, as His Son, believers are also well pleasing to God by being in union with Christ. By allowing Christ to live through us, we can please God in all that we do, as Christ always did what pleased the Father, offering us the opportunity to rest in Him and experience perfect peace and rest.

Transcript

One of the unique features of the parent-child relationship is that children have a natural desire to please their parents. In the same way, we as children of God desire to please our Heavenly Father. It's our pleasure! But, how do we do this?

We do it first of all by just being who we are. The Father was pleased with Jesus simply because of who He is. At Jesus' baptism, the Father said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). This occurred at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry before He had preached any great sermons or done any marvelous miracles.

Why was God pleased then? God was His Father. Jesus had been born of a virgin by the Spirit of God. Therefore, God was pleased with Jesus because of who Jesus is--His Son. And who are you? Are you not also God's child? Yes you are, if you have received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. When you receive Christ, you are born again by God's Spirit; you are joined to the Lord in a one-spirit union. So, you are now a son or daughter of the living God. "Beloved, now we are children of God" (1 John 3:2).

Therefore, God is also pleased with you because of who you are. You are in union with Christ, so you are now well pleasing to Father God! You are pleasing to Him simply because of who you are, His child! This is a work of shear grace; something God has done for you in Christ. He has made you accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6). So now you can rest assured, since you too are His beloved child, in whom He

is well pleased. And that's perfect peace and rest!

Secondly, we please our Heavenly Father by what we do. Jesus is the good son. He was intent on doing the will of His Father in all He said and did. Therefore, Jesus could say regarding Himself, "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29). So it was not just the miraculous things that Christ did which pleased His Father, but also the ordinary things that He did as well: like simply walking the streets of Jerusalem, or cooking a meal by the Sea of Galilee. God the Father confirmed this at the Mount of transfiguration when He declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him" (Matthew 17:5). The Father was pleased with His Son, not only because of who Christ is, but also because of what Christ had done.

Is your Heavenly Father pleased with what you are doing? He is if you are allowing Christ, by faith, to live out His life through you (Galatians 2:20). Living according to your own human abilities makes it impossible to please God because the "flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8). On the other hand, faith in Christ makes it possible for everything you do to be pleasing to God. As you cease to live from the outer man of your flesh and begin to live from the inner man of your Spirit, your actions will be pleasing to God. This is the way that the Apostle Paul lived: "not I, but Christ who lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). The good news is that Christ always does those things that please the Father.

So, the same can now be true for you. All you have to do is simply be yourself in Christ, and allow Christ to be Himself in you (have His way with you and live His life through you). No more struggling or striving, merely rest in the One who does all things well. The doing will come naturally, as Christ does the work through you. Therefore, your Heavenly Father will be well pleased with you: not only with who you are, but also with what you do. Now that's a pleasure!

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