

“Pleasing God”
November 25, 2018

Ephesians 5:1-10 (NOTE: v. 10 summarizes the previous verses)

“Pleasing”- fully agreeable with; to thrill the heart

CORE: It’s not only possible to please God—it’s our highest calling in life!

NOTE: People who live to please God—live the most fruitful lives AND leave the most lasting impact on the world!

WHAT PLEASES HIM?

1. IMITATING HIM (“Be imitators of God”)

- **This is a COMMAND** (*much like 1 Peter 1:15- “Be holy as He is holy”*).
 - **“Command”- not simply a rule to be kept—but a Ruler to surrender to. Lit.- “to join the hand of another”**
 - **In the same way, “Holiness” is not a list of outward observances—but describes a singular devotion to (*i.e., for drinking water only*)**
 - **“LORD” indicates “no other master”**
- **Not a superficial performance—but a supernatural transformation!**
 - **“BE”, not “pretend to be!” (“Now you are light in the Lord!” v. 8)**
 - **We can speak, see, respond, hear, & love—like He does**
 - **We could never accomplish this on our own—requires total dependence on Him!**
- **“As He is—so are we in this world” (1 John 4:17)**
 - **“God is love” (1 John 4:8)—(we too can) “walk in love”**
 - **“Greater works” (John 14:12)—we walk in supernatural expectancy**
- **SIN is what we do when we are not encountering the heart of God.**
 - **“Immorality”- indifference to what grieves God’s heart**
 - **“Impurity”- the subtle, yet deadly steps toward immorality**
 - **“Coarse jesting”- sets the climate for impurity**
 - **God loves humor & delightful enjoyment (1 Tim. 6:17)**
 - **“A joyful heart is good (healing) medicine” (Prov. 17:22)**
 - **Coarse, sarcastic humor often veils anger, disappointment, and cynicism**

2. THANKING HIM (“...rather, giving of thanks”)

- **Gratitude breaks the power of cynicism, bitterness, and destructive speech.** (*NOTE: We can either be fueled by frustration or inspiration*)
- **Psalm 100:4- We “enter His gates with thanksgiving”—unfolding encounters with His presence!**

- *Rev. 21:21*- All 12 of Heaven's gates are "*made from one pearl*"
- Pearls illustrate the capacity to turn an irritant (*i.e., a parasite*) into something precious.
- Thanksgiving—always sees the potential more than the problem!
- Giving thanks not only closes the door on the lies & lures of the enemy—gratitude opens our hearts to the presence of the Lord.

3. FOLLOWING HIM. (*"His sheep will follow Him, because they know His voice" John 10:4*)

- Greater than winning an Olympic gold medal—to hear our Father say: "*Well done, good and faithful servant!*" (*Mathew 25:21*)
- We will follow Him—to the degree we know His voice!
 - In Scripture—we learn His ways
 - In the secret place—we get to know His voice ("*every word that proceeds (present tense) from His mouth*").
- "*Without faith it is impossible to please Him*" (*Hebrews 11:6*)
 - As we pursue increasing in our faith—we will embrace being pushed beyond our comfort zones!
 - Sheep are so fearful—they will destroy a pasture by eating the grass down to the roots
 - They resist change so much—they refuse to volunteer to move to a greener pasture.
- Psalm 23 is all about our "Good Shepherd" leading us beyond our comfort zones!
 - Hebrews 11 describes our faith heroes as people who *did something that no one had done before!*
 - Hebrews 11:6 gives us the key to living as "fresh followers" of Jesus—willing to take risks and dive into greener pastures: we believe that He WAS and He IS and He WILL BE.
 - Believing that "He IS" mandates that we know Him in the PRESENT!
 - We enjoy an ever-deepening relationship with Him—responding to the current word that "*proceeds from His mouth*"!

With faith it is POSSIBLE to please Him!