

“Pleasing God”

The life of a believer and follower of Jesus Christ is often speckled with the question, “Is what I’m doing pleasing to God?” I know that most would agree that self-examination in this content is a frequent occurrence in the life of the Christian who has decided to practice a Godly existence. I believe that it is a healthy question to ask oneself and then of course, God. If not, then what boundaries or measurement would you self impose to know whether or not you are doing acts that please our heavenly Father? It is certainly an interesting question to raise. Although there are the obvious acts that are displeasing to God, and that we unfortunately fall into at times, knowing what truly pleases God can take deeper inspection. I say this because it is easy to think that what we are doing is pleasing to God when in fact it is not what God is asking of you or I at that moment. This is not to discredit any particular good work being done on His behalf nor to say that God is not pleased with you or your endeavor. It is simply to emphasize that what God finds as pleasing to Him can be different from what we *believe* is pleasing to Him. At times, the two can be very far apart and unless some time is carved out for personal reflection on this matter, then we can find ourselves so off course that we’ve drifted away from what truly pleases God.

Let me give you an example. My older son loves to spend quality time with me and for him that is in some form of one on one dialogue about any number of subjects. Now for a ten year old, those topics usually range from Star Wars to army battles to building the latest Legos set. His dad spending that time with him is what brings him the greatest pleasure. So, if I took the same time we have together and spent it with him at a movie or at the park with some of his other friends, I would tell myself that I am doing something that pleases him and I would not be wrong for he enjoys those things as well, but what I’d be missing is what *truly* delights my son. We would be on two separate sides of the same spectrum. Do you see my point? Thankfully, we have an abundance of scriptural references that do shed light on what pleases God but one in particular is, I believe, of most importance because who better to know what truly pleases the Father than Jesus himself? In the area of worship, Jesus clarifies how we can truly delight God with our worship.

In John 4:19-24, Jesus has run into the Samaritan adulteress at Jacob’s well and after some earlier discourse about the right place to worship, He proceeds to say that “a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is Spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” His message to this woman was as simple and direct to her back then as it is for us today...*If you want to please God then know what He’s looking for: true worship.* As Jesus pointed out to the Samaritan woman, it’s not about worshiping God in this location or that location. In today’s time, God is not concerned with where you attend church, what books you are reading, which Pastor you follow, what building or facility you go to on Sunday, or what Bible study group you attend, because you can do all that and still not please God. Jesus said that those things are not relevant in becoming the true worshiper that delights our Father. Now, I’m not writing to say that attending a church, reading books, bible studies, etc. are not important nor please God. Simply stated, we can easily fool ourselves in thinking that all of that Godly activity must be something that is pleasing to Him when it’s not what He is looking for. Jesus says that the kind of worshipers that God seeks are those that will engage in worship, not because of a place they attend weekly or a frequent gathering but rather worship that resonates in your inner being. To worship the Father in Spirit is to take God with you because He is in your heart. Being able to carry God in your heart becomes then a mobile place of worship ready for engagement at anytime and anyplace. The daily integration of God in your life is what’s most pleasing to Him as your spiritual act of worship. Equally important is worshiping in truth. In other words, your life becoming the real time personification of what you believe. If you believe that Jesus is Lord, are you living that out day to day? Being able to live a life worthy of our calling is a form of worship that pleases our heavenly Father. Consider this; if you believe in gravity and the truth behind this physical law then you live your life according to this truth. Meaning, you certainly would not go around jumping off building rooftops or anything so great in height that it would severely hurt you if not kill you if you jumped off it, right? Your decisions and actions would be based on knowledge, understanding, and belief on the truth of gravity.

The Bible was written so that anyone could read it and understand it without having to obtain a degree in theology or attend seminary. In fact, it was written by laymen (most of them) for laymen. As a result, anyone can have a clear understanding of what not only God requires of His children, but what He is looking for from us. When the question arises again, "Am I truly living a life that is pleasing God?" take a moment to reflect on what Jesus told the Samaritan woman and make adjustments as necessary. I'm sure that you'll find it immensely rewarding and satisfying to know when you are.

By: Jesus Maymi

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