

# Faith and Pleasing God

Pleasing God is the greatest privilege and experience that a human being can have in this present life.

There is one way in which we can please God now in this life but never again; this way is summed up on one word, faith.

**Hebrews 11:6** [NIV] *“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”*

**Hebrews 11:1** [NIV] *“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”*

**Once we have attained this hope, eternal life and a rewarded position in the Kingdom of God we will not need faith.**

We will have all the proof and evidence we need for we will be seeing and experiencing what we now hope for and exercise faith in as we wait for it to happen.

## Believing God’s Word, His Promises are what gives God pleasure

**Romans 5:1** [NIV] *“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,”*

The blood of Jesus’ sacrifice satisfies God’s divine justice.

When we believe this promise of justification and transfer our trust from our good works to what Jesus has done for us, we know we have pleased God.

This is called saving faith.

**Revelation 21:1-4** [NIV] *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”*

In the Kingdom of God all the difficult circumstances that now cause us pain and tears will no longer exist.

We can please God now with achieving faith; that is having faith in God’s Promises made in His Word relating to His Fatherly Care of us as we face trials in this life.

**Psalms 103:13-18** [NIV] *“As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children, with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.”*

**Our reward which we receive at the Judgement Seat of Christ will be the result of our pleasing God by achieving faith.**

**2 Corinthians 5:10** [NIV] *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due to him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”*

Achieving faith is pleasing God by believing His Promises in difficult circumstances and will bring us honour on our judgement day.

**1 Corinthians 9:27** [NIV] *“No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”*

The prize that Paul sought through disciplining his body was **not** salvation, this was his through faith in Christ’s sacrificial blood, but the reward that comes with day-to-day faith is God’s Promises.

## **Why is this study important?**

This study will help us understand the difference between “*saving faith*” and “*achieving faith*” simply stated –

**Saving faith** – assures us eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

**Achieving faith** – assures us a reward in the Kingdom of God but also allows God to use us as a witness now to an unbelieving world.

This study will help us to understand just how we can please God now.

This study will show us how unbelief can cause God pain instead of pleasure.

This study will help us have a deeper understanding of the two aspects of faith that please God.

This study will stimulate us to please God more than ever before.

**Hebrews 11:5** [NIV] *“By faith Enoch ... before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.”*

We can look at the life of Enoch and see an example of one person who was commended as one who pleased God.

**Genesis 5:21-24** [NIV] *“When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. And after he became the father of Methuselah, **Enoch walked with God** 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.”*

From this short biography of Enoch we understand he began to “*walk with God*” at the age of 65 and did so for 300 years before God took him “*out of circulation.*”

**Jude 14** [NIV] *“Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones”*

Enoch prophesied about the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Enoch was a legendary figure and has three books in his name in Jewish writings. Jude quotes from the book of **Enoch 1:9**.

**The key to all that Enoch achieved was his faith.**

What pleased God was that Enoch believed Him, not just in His existence but what God said and promised.

**Hebrews 11:5** [King James] *“... before his translation he and the testimony that he pleased God.”*

Not only was Enoch’s life commended by God, it was also a witness.

The Greek word translated *“commended”* [NIV] and *“testimony”* [King James] can indicate a good report about a person that is in itself a witness to God being in the life of that person.

### **The basis of this good report and witness was faith in God and His Word.**

**1 John 5:10** [NIV] *“Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.”*

It is our faith in what God has done and said that is a witness to this society and it is that which pleases God.

**Acts 5:32** [NIV] *“We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”*

### **Our believing God and His Word allows the Holy Spirit to use us as a witness.**

This causes the Holy Spirit [God] to be *“un-grieved”* and His fire in us not to be put out.

This is *“letting God be God”* in our lives.

We may sing the words in the beautiful song of that title but do we live those words out in our lives by faith in God in all aspects of our lives?

There is no greater witness on earth than that of a person whose life pleases God.

It does **not** say that Enoch pleased people!

It does **not** say that Enoch pleased his friends.

It says Enoch pleased God and it was a witness to others.

### **Pleasing God meant more to Enoch than anything else in his life.**

Is that true of us?

Enoch’s greatest joy was walking with God [being led by Holy Spirit] and knowing that such a life pleased his God, his Saviour and the Holy Spirit.

**Galatians 5:22** [NIV] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,”*

True joy is a fruit of the special presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives; it is second only to love.

## **Enoch was the product of the first recorded revival**

**Genesis 4:26** [NIV] *“Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD.”*

There was at this time a group of people who were called by others, probably in contempt, people of God.

Enoch became a witness to people who were far better known at that time in the history of mankind.

Jabal – the “*father*” of the construction business.

Jubal – the “*father*” of music.

Tubal-Cain – the “*father*” of the hardware business.

There was even another man called Enoch who was better known, the son of Cain, who had a city named after him.

But Enoch who pleased God is the one who has endured as a man to remember down through history and for all time.

## What kind of faith pleased God?

**Hebrews 11:6** [NIV] *“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”*

The faith that pleased God is two-fold

### a) **Believe that He exists or as the King James says that He is**

The Greek word translated “*is*” or “*exists*”, is the present indicative tense.

We have to believe God exists now and without doubt, this can only happen to each person individually by personal experience.

God challenges us to do this in many ways, all of which involve faith.

**Malachi 3:10** [NIV] *“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”*

In our financial affairs God challenges us to prove that He is.

**James 5:14-15** [NIV] *“Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.”*

In sickness God tells us to trust Him, and this involves prayers offered in faith.

### **Just believing that God exists is not enough.**

**James 2:19** [NIV] *“You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that-- and shudder.”*

The fallen angels believe in God’s existence but will **not** submit to Him or trust in Him.

We have to live out our belief in God’s existence.

### b) **Believe that God rewards all who earnestly seek Him**

That is actually seeking to have a day-by-day relationship with Him.

God does reward those who diligently seek Him, but be certain that the reward we are expecting by seeking God is the reward He wants to give us.

Many Old Testament scriptures talk about seeking God's "face" or that our sins cut us off from God's "face".

In Hebrew the "face" is synonymous with several things about a person.

- a) Their presence – and our being directly in front of that person.
- b) The "face" was the visible indication of inward emotions, the person's unswerving purpose, and reveals their inner character.
- c) When a person prostrated themselves to make a request, his superior would raise the supplicant's face as a sign that the favour would be granted.
- d) Intimacy and understanding is indicated when people converse "face to face". This is why we should seek God's face and not just His hand, ["handouts"].

**Psalm 105:4** [NIV] *"Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always."*

Seeking God's "face" must be a constant part of our lives.

**Luke 11:9-10** [NIV] *"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."*

The Greek text indicates a continual knocking and seeking.

**Jeremiah 29:13** [NIV] *"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."*

Our heart is the driving force behind our life.

**Psalm 27:8-10** [NIV] *"My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek. Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, O God my Saviour. Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me."*

David realised the great importance of seeking God's face, to get to know God personally.

**Matthew 6:33** [NIV] *"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*

Jesus was saying the same thing in different words. The Kingdom of God is where God's Presence is, where we see His Righteousness [His "face"] and then we have the promise of all needful, physical things.

**All of this seeking God demands faith, but this is exactly how we bring pleasure to God.**

**Hebrews 10:35-38** [NIV] *"So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him."*

We have to persevere in our seeking and doing God's Will for our lives. Not giving up even when it seems that God is hiding His face [favour] from us.

For if we give up we will not be pleasing our God for our actions will show a lack of faith.

We are not without help in all of this living a life of faith in God.

**Luke 11:13** [NIV] *“If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”*

When we ask in faith then God will send us the special presence of the Holy Spirit.

**Galatians 5:22** [NIV] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,”*

One of the fruits of the special presence of Holy Spirit is even more faith, or faithfulness.

**1 Corinthians 12:9** [NIV] *“to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,”*

Faith is also a gift of the Holy Spirit.

**God loves to give but He does not give to those who are unthankful for His gifts and who do not use those gifts to benefit others.**

**1 Corinthians 12:7** [NIV] *“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”*

Gifts from God are only given for the good of **all** in the Church.

**Colossians 2:6-7** [NIV] *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”*

Overflowing with thankfulness, this really pleases God.

## **Conclusion:**

We please God now when we still believe Him [His Word and Promises] although our prayers may not always be answered in the way we wished, although we are not being showered with blessings, but we continue to seek His face in spite of not always *“feeling”* His presence.

**Hebrews 13:5-6** [NIV] *“Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because **God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”** So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”*

Pleasing faith in God can give us this total confidence in our Father, Saviour and Constant Companion, the Holy Spirit.