

ENTERPRISE

A Christian Lives To Please God

...We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.

1 Thessalonians 2:4

It is a familiar truth that every Christian's life-purpose must be to glorify God. This is the believer's official calling. Everything we say and do, all our obedience to God's commands, all our relationships with others, all the use we make of the gifts, talents, and opportunities that God gives us, all our enduring of adverse situations and human hostility, must be so managed as to give God honor and praise for His goodness to those on whom He sets His love.

1 Corinthians 10:31

³¹ So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

Colossians 3:17

¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Equally important is the truth that every Christian's full-time employment must be to please God. This may be properly described as the Christian's personal calling. Jesus did not live to please Himself, nor may we.

John 8:29

²⁹ The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."

Pleasing God in everything must be our goal.

2 Corinthians 5:9

⁹ So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

Colossians 1:10

¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

The Bible's prescribed way of pleasing God includes:

Our faith

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ 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.

Our praise

Psalm 69:30-31

*³⁰ I will praise God's name in song
and glorify him with thanksgiving.*

*³¹ This will please the LORD more than an ox,
more than a bull with its horns and hoofs.*

Our generosity

Hebrews 13:16

¹⁶ And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Our obedience to divinely instituted authority

Colossians 3:20

²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

Our single-mindedness in Christian service

2 Timothy 2:4

⁴ No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer.

For the covenant people of God, the highest motives are bound up with pleasing Him and fearing His sanctions.

God both enables us for this kind of living and takes pleasure in our practice of it. It is His regular procedure in sovereign grace to give what He commands and delight in the result.

Hebrews 13:20-21

²⁰ May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, ²¹ equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Philippians 2:12-13

¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

From the life-controlling summons to please God, we learn the precise sense in which true godliness is both relational and creative.

God relates to Christians not only as Father to child but also as Friend to friend. Abraham was called God's friend (2 Chronicles 20:7); Christ calls His disciples His friends (Luke 12:4). The measure of God's grace is that He makes friends with sinners; the measure of the Christian's godliness is that one seeks to please one's heavenly Friend, just as spouses seek to please each other in order to show their love (1 Corinthians 7:32-35). Christianity is a love affair, and godliness is in essence a matter of expressing grateful, adoring love by seeking to please.

Creativity is part of God's image in man, and it is meant to find expression in an enterprising style of life as we look for ways to show gratitude to God. Love will always ask whether more can be done to please, and more neighbor-love, more service of other's needs, will always be a major part of the answer (1 John 3:11-18).

If our plans for pleasing God involve risk, we should remember that Jesus' parable of the talents commends those who risked their money in the market and condemns the practitioner of timid inaction (Matthew 25:14-30).

So the Christian lives to please God, and God is working in them helping them to do so.

From God the Father's view, He is as pleased with the believer as He is ever going to be. Why? Because the Father is pleased with the Son.

Matthew 17:5

⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

As the Father is pleased with the Son, so is He pleased with those to whom He has given His Spirit who has made them one with Christ. Believers are in Christ and Christ is in them.

Ephesians 1:13

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,

2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Romans 8:1

¹ Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

Colossians 1:27

²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

So a Christian's position in Christ makes him or her as pleasing to God as they will ever be. Yet the Spirit of Christ in them is transforming them into Christ's likeness. They are becoming what they already are in God's eyes.

2 Corinthians 3:18

¹⁸ And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

This is all God's doing and upon realizing the same, a Christian lives to please God. They do so out of thankfulness, love, and appreciation. They are enabled to do so by God Himself. He gives them what He requires.

*Most of the foregoing material was taken from "Concise Theology" by J.I. Packer