

Being A Delight To God And Bringing Him Pleasure

Have you ever wondered about what it is that delights God? Delight means great pleasure, gratification or joy, something that gives great pleasure or enjoyment. **Have you ever considered what it is that gives God pleasure?** Pleasure means an enjoyable sensation or emotion, satisfaction or delight; a source of enjoyment, or gratification.

Believe it or not, there are several passages in the Bible that speak directly about these two very closely related topics.

From time-to-time, I have noticed many of these verses as I have been doing my Bible reading, especially in the Psalms. Sometimes I find myself thinking about this and I marvel that God has told us, as sinful man, what He delights and takes pleasure in, even in spite of our sinful nature. **Just the fact that God has told us what He takes pleasure in provides us with hope.** If it were impossible for us to ever be a delight to God, who created us in His own image, we certainly would be without hope. Thank you God, for sharing your insights with us.

In an attempt to study this area further, I cross-referenced every verse in the Bible using my KJV Computer Bible, looking for the word delight and pleasure, along with all of their associated synonyms. Following is a review of what I found, in the order they are shown in the Bible. My thoughts about the words used and what they are communicating are limited to my understanding of the English language. I do not have the ability to discuss the meaning of the original Greek or Hebrew language. All scripture is quoted from the NKJV of the Bible.

**“I know also, my God, that you test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness.
As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these things;
and now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here to offer willingly to you.”
I Chronicles 29:17**

God takes pleasure in uprightness of heart. David was speaking here as he and the people were preparing to build the temple for God. What does it mean for us to possess uprightness of heart? The dictionary defines “uprightness” as being morally honorable, morally honest, respectable and to be righteous. To be upright is to act righteously.

**“...Let the Lord be magnified, Who takes pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.”
Psalm 35:27**

God takes pleasure in the prosperity of His servant. Wow! Does this say that God takes pleasure in our being rich in money or material things if we are His servants? Well...maybe it could include that...but not exactly! To enjoy prosperity means to thrive, to be successful, to flourish (to grow well). To be prosperous may include being financially successful, but it is not necessarily limited to only material things. In fact, there are many ways to be prosperous, other than money. Ways like an appreciation of life, contentment, emotional wholeness, happiness, health, love, joy, peace of mind, a sense of well being, spiritual sensitivity, an understanding of ourselves, etc. Possessing the qualities of life that all people seek but aren't able to purchase with their money has more to do with prosperity and being prosperous than having all the money in the world and nothing else.

**“For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it;
You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart - These, O God, You will not despise.”
Psalm 51:16-17**

God delights in a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart. Here we are told in reverse form what delights God. What are the sacrifices of a broken spirit? What is a broken and contrite heart? To be contrite is to have a humble repentant spirit for our sins, with a sincere desire to amend them, arising from pure love of God. What a joy it is that I John 1:9 specifically tells us that if we confess our sins to God that He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. A joyous fact is that there are no limits placed upon us by God in using I John 1:9. As long as we remain alive in the flesh, this verse applies to all that are contrite (repentant) and believe.

**“I will praise the name of God with a song,
And magnify Him with thanksgiving.
This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bull.”
Psalm 69:30-31**

God takes pleasure when we praise Him in songs and when we glorify Him with our thanksgiving. To please is to give enjoyment, pleasure or satisfaction to. Therefore, any verse that tells us what pleases God may be included with those that speak of giving Him pleasure or delight. God enjoys it when we sing praise to Him in songs. He is also pleased when we express our praise and gratitude to Him for His greatness.

**“The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him,
In those who hope in His mercy.”
Psalm 147:10**

The Lord takes pleasure with those who fear Him! The Lord takes pleasure in those who hope in His mercy! Is this verse a dichotomy? If we hope in God’s mercy, what have we to fear? If God is to be feared, how can we hope in Him for mercy? At first thought, on the surface anyway, this seems to be a confusing paradox.

To fear God means to have Extreme Reverence for Him and to hold Him in Supreme Awe. When God shows us His grace and mercy, He is being benevolent to us in providing us with His gratuitous compassion and forbearance, for we are under His Power and Sovereignty. Our very being and existence is subject to His Grace and Mercy. Therein lies the answer to the surface tension between fear and mercy.

Since we did not create ourselves, but are in fact a product of God’s creation, we are, by nature of our entity, within and subject to His authority and control. Therefore, He is to be held in supreme reverence and awe, for we are alive by His grace and mercy! Romans 9:15 says that God will have mercy on whomever He will have mercy, and He will have compassion on whomever He will have compassion. God is the Sovereignty and as Creator has the Power, we do not. The best we can do is to acknowledge that Sovereignty, by fearing Him. At the same time we can hope in His mercy to care for us. **It’s a balanced scale, fear balances mercy, and mercy balances fear, for God is both Merciful and Sovereign.** Therein lies a secret to contentment and peace, and in the process, we are a delight and a pleasure to God. Everybody wins, both God as Sovereign, and we as His creation. **This is a really neat passage, one that stretches both our mind and faith.**

**“For the Lord takes pleasure in His people;
He will beautify the humble with salvation.”
Psalms 149:4**

The Lord takes pleasure in His people. What does it mean to be God’s people? Who are God’s people? Originally, as promised to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, his descendants would be God’s people and in Abraham, all the families of the earth would be blessed. Psalms 100:3 says, “Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of his pasture”. Since He made all of us, we can all be His people if we choose to be. Unfortunately, we all have sinned and moved away from fellowship and walking with God.

The Bible has many references to “God’s people”. Leviticus 26:12 says, “I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be my people”, Jeremiah 30:22 says, “You shall be My people and I will be your God”. Jeremiah 31:31-34 refers to a new covenant with the house of Israel, and God being their God and they being His people. Likewise, again in Jeremiah 32:38 it says, “They shall be my people and I will be their God”. Finally in the Old Testament, Ezekiel 37:27 gives reference to the same. The New Testament picks up the theme in II Corinthians 6:16 and Hebrews 8:10.

So, I ask again, who, beside the descendants of Abraham, are God’s people? The overwhelming evidence from what God is telling us is that those who walk with the Lord will be His people, and walking with God infers faith, fellowship, and obedience on our part. The entire message of the New Testament is centered on our walking with Christ, as God’s Son, and being God’s children through faith. Thank you Lord, for the hope of being Your people!

**“Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the Lord,
But the blameless in their ways are His delight.”
Proverbs 11:20**

The blameless in their ways are God’s delight. Oh great! If we are blameless in our ways we will be a delight to God, but who can be blameless? To be blameless is to be free from blame or guilt and to be innocent. Romans 3:23 tell us that we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. So now what? Back to I John 1:9... confession and forgiveness of sins. That is the only way we, as sinful mankind, can ever be accounted blameless before God. So, when we repent and turn from our sins, confess them to God and ask Him to forgive us, we can be blameless, thereby, being a delight to Him. Psalms 103:10-18 is a great source of grounding and encouragement when considering blameless.

**He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him.
As far as the east is from the west so far has He removed our transgressions from us.
As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him.
For he knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.
As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes.
For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more.
But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him,
and His righteousness to children’s children,
To such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them.**

**“Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord,
But those who deal truthfully are His delight.”
Proverbs 12:22**

Dealing truthfully will be a delight to God. What is truth? Is it relative or absolute? Truthfulness means to consistently tell the truth, being honest, corresponding to reality, to be true, to be a person of integrity. God is pleased when we are truthful. Ephesians 4:15 gives reference to the need to speak the truth in love, so that we might grow up into all things in Christ, the Head. Mankind loves relational truth, but when dealing with God, truth is an absolute!

**“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,
But the prayer of the upright is His delight.”
Proverbs 15:8**

The prayer of the upright is God’s delight. What are prayers? What does it mean to pray? Prayers are reverent conversations made to God, and include any act of communion with God containing confession, petition, praise, thanksgiving or worship. They are often a specially worded form used in addressing God and include any fervent request. To pray is to utter or address a prayer to God. **Prayers should be made with fervency and reverence.**

Praise God that He has made it possible for us to come to Him in prayer! Hebrews 4:16 encourages us to pray when it says, “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” James 5:16b gives promise to us by saying, “...The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”

The verse in Proverbs assures us that if we choose to live uprightly, that our prayers are a delight to God. It doesn’t say only our prayers of praise, or our prayers of thanksgiving, but our prayers. Therefore, we may conclude it includes all of our prayers, even those that fervently request and petition God to work on our behalf or the behalf of others.

Prayers on the behalf of others are intercessory prayers. They are prayers that entreat God in favor of another, or to ask God earnestly, or to beseech and implore God emphatically for the sake of someone else beside us. Some people are led to have a ministry of serving God through intercessory prayers. In this, God does in fact, delight!

**“Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
Ten thousand rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”**

**He has shown you, O man, what is good:
And what does the Lord require of you,
But to do justly, to love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God?”
Micah 6:7-8**

To do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God brings God pleasure. To do justice is to act morally, with rightness and equity. It is to be honorable and fair in all that we do.

To love mercy is to be kind and compassionate in our treatment of others, to have a disposition of being kind and forgiving in acts and attitudes.

To walk humbly is to walk modestly while showing deferential respect, having and showing feelings of humility rather than of pride. Being aware of our shortcomings while embodying an attitude of meekness and modesty adds to our ability for walking humbly. Someday, as the Lord gives me grace, I hope to write a separate article on this passage.

**“Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity,
And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?
He does not retain His anger forever,
Because He delights in mercy.”
Micah 7:18**

God delights in mercy! God is Deity and Divine, Sovereign and Holy. Only He has the power and authority to pardon iniquity and show mercy. Can you imagine the hopelessness that mankind would have if God were not a God of mercy and if He didn't delight in it? If God delighted only in Holy Judgement, without regard for Grace and Mercy, there would be no life on earth, and no hope for life, either in the flesh or in the spirit. **Praise and thank you, Lord, for your Grace and Mercy!**

**“But without faith, it is impossible to please Him,
For he who comes to God must believe that He is,
And that He is a rewarder of those
Who diligently seek him.”
Hebrews 11:6**

Faith pleases God and therefore, brings Him delight and pleasure. Faith! What is faith, and more specifically, what is faith in God? Faith in God is a belief and trust in God and in the doctrines expressed in the Scriptures. It is belief that does not rest on logical proof or material evidence. It is a confident belief in the truth, value, and trustworthiness of God.

We have all heard the expression “blind faith”. Is that a non-oxymoron? Is there any other kind of faith? Does the expression “blind faith” infer there is a “seeing-faith”? II Corinthians 5:7 says, “For we walk by faith, not by sight”.

How did God Himself define faith? Hebrews 11:1-3 defines faith by saying, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.” Romans 10:17 says, “So then, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” By faith we delight!

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So there you have it, a list of those things that brings delight and pleasure to God. It really is a marvelous and inspiring fact that we, as finite man, may actually have an impact on God, who is Infinite, Holy, Just, and Sovereign, by bringing Him delight and pleasure. Going forth each day having the opportunity to impact God is powerful.

My prayer, as you read these thoughts and verses from God's Word, is that you will truly be a blessed, and that your life will be enriched.

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