

How Can We Please God?

[Hebrews 13:20-21](#)

Hebrews, Day 57

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. - Hebrews 13:20-21, ESV

Have you ever known someone who was really hard to please? If you've ever been the parent of a teenager, you probably have. People who are really hard to please are typically a combination of picky and unpredictable. They have a very narrow idea of what they like, and their preferences can shift with their moods and the day of the week.

As Christians, our highest goal should be to please God with our lives. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:9, "we make it our aim to please him." The longing of every believer's heart is to reach heaven and hear Jesus say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." (see Matthew 25:21-23)

So, is God really hard to please? Well, as the holy, holy, holy God and Lord of heaven and earth, His standards are very high. In fact, His standards are perfection, and they really could not be anything less.

But here's the wonderful thing with God: He does all the work to make us His, and then He works in us that which is pleasing to Him. This wonderful benediction which closes out the Book of Hebrews shows us both of these truths. It reflects back on the work of redemption God has done to make us His - "*He bought back from the dead the Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep*" - and it looks at what God does in and through us now.

The faithfulness of God kept His covenant promises by raising Jesus from the dead and exalting Him to the highest place of authority. And now, the faithful love of God applies the merits of Christ to our hearts and souls. "*By the blood of the eternal covenant*" - that is, by the perfect satisfaction Christ made for our sins - God equips us to do everything good. As Peter says in 2 Peter 1:3, "*His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.*"

So God not only provides salvation for us through Jesus Christ, but He also applies that salvation to us in a powerful way. He applies the merits of Christ to us so that we are now equipped with everything good to do His will. But God doesn't just redeem us and equip us. No, He also works in us that which is pleasing in His sight. And He does all of this through Jesus Christ - through His merits applied to us and His intercession for us.

So, is God difficult to please? No! As we trust in Him, He redeems us, equips us, and works in us that which pleases Him. In other words, He makes us pleasing by His grace, and then He takes pleasure in us to the eternal glory of Jesus Christ!

These wonderful truths should give us great encouragement and confidence of our worst days and great humility and gratitude on our best days. God is pleased with us, and that should raise our heads with confidence when we're drooping. But God is pleased with us because He has done all the work to make us pleasing in His sight, from beginning to end. That should keep us humble and grateful when we're tempted to be puffed up. In the end, we can rejoice with confidence, and Jesus can get all the glory! Amen.