

**Title: Faith Which Pleases God**

**Text:** Hebrews 11: 6

**Date:** Sunday, May 18, 2008

**Place:** Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Princeton, New Jersey

It is an utter impossibility to please God without believing that he is. That he is everything he says about himself in his Word and his Son. It is absolutely impossible to please God without faith.

**Hebrews 11:6: But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**

Throughout scripture, faith is distinguished as that which is the direct opposite of works. Yet, in our day, most speak of faith as if it were just another work like circumcision. Faith is presented as "Christ plus my act of believing which justifies--as if a sinner believes on his own."

Folks are sincere under whatever denomination they worship. But I fear that there are many who have by their traditions and doctrines, by their code of morals, and by their particular ceremony of worship turned from the external rules of the Mosaic covenant and embraced another set of external rules under the heading of Christian faith yet have not moved an inch from Mt. Sinai and the works of the flesh.

True faith is the gift of God. True faith receives justification from its object. True faith does not trust in a profession we experienced, or a walk we try to engage in, our even in our own faith. True faith is pleasing to God because it is wrought in us by God.

**Title: Faith Which Pleases God**

**Proposition:** That which pleases God is the work which God is pleased to perform.

That faith which pleases God is the faith which God gives when he leaves a sinner no other choice, so that the sinner can do nothing else but trust him for all. I want to show you 5 things which pleased God. In each of these, take note that God performs all these things himself.

**I. FIRST, IT PLEASSED GOD TO CHOSE A PEOPLE IN CHRIST JESUS BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN.**

**1Samuel 12:22: For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.**

**A. It was not that there was any more worth or worthiness in them that they became his people, but by his own sovereign good will and pleasure he chose them.**

- Romans 9: 1-24

B. Since God chose his people based on nothing in them, nothing in them can cause God to reject them.

1. Free grace was the cause you were made his people.
2. Free grace shall be what keeps you his people.
3. Free grace shall be the reason none shall be lost.

**Romans 11:29: For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.**

**Ephesians 1:6: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved....12: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.**

C. Notice, it is God who performed this work which pleased him.

**John 15:16** Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain:

**ILLUSTRATION: PICKING OUT A PUPPY!**

THAT FAITH WHICH PLEASES GOD IS THE FAITH GOD GIVES WHICH BELIEVES GOD TRULY CHOOSE ME FREELY BY HIS GRACE--TRUE FAITH IS PLEASED WITH GOD FOR DOING SO AND THEREBY GOD IS PLEASED WITH THEM WHO BELIEVE HIM.

**Psalm 65: 4: Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.**

**II. IT PLEASED GOD THAT ALL FULNESS DWELL IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

**Colossians 1:19:** For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;

A. God the Father, first trusted Christ as Mediator:

1. In the everlasting covenant of grace, God trusted that by "The faith of Jesus Christ, by his faithful performance in our place, as our Substitute, that he would accomplish all that was necessary for the salvation of God's elect."
2. That he would reveal the righteousness of God in saving sinners apart from a sinner's obedience to the law.
3. God the Father was pleased that all the fullness of his holy name would dwell in the Son of his love. Just as you or I would look to our son and trust him to bring honor to our name.

B. Therefore, that which pleased God, God performed.

**Hebrews 10:5: Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:**

**John 1:14: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.**

**C. BECAUSE IT PLEASED GOD WE READ:**

**Colossians 2: 9:...***in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

**Ephesians 3:11: According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.**  
(Christ's faithfulness is our confidence)

TRUE FAITH BEHOLDS THE FAITHFULNESS OF THE ONLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER AND IS PLEASED THAT HE RECEIVE THE PREEMIENICE IN ALL THINGS:

- THE FULLNESS OF GOD'S GREAT NAME AND GLORY
- THE FULLNESS OF WISDOM
- THE FULLNESS OF OUR STANDING BEFORE GOD--WISDOM, JUSTIFICATION, SANCTIFICATION, REDEMPTION.
- THE FULLNESS OF OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE
- THE FULLNESS OF POWER WHICH KEEP US
- THE FULLNESS OF GLORY TO COME

**Illustration: Blind Man At Gate Called Beautiful--Acts 3:16: And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.**

**Note:** GOD GIVES FAITH, BY FAITH THE BELIEVER IS PLEASED THAT ALL FULLNESS DWELLS IN GOD'S SON AND THEREFORE GOD IS PLEASED WITH THIS FAITH and DWELLS FULLY IN THE BELIEVER.

**III. IT PLEASED GOD, IN SAVING HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS, TO BRUISE THE SON OF HIS LOVE.**

**Isaiah 53:10: Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.**

**A. The most shameful act ever recorded in human history was no accident, but by God's own will.**

**Acts 2:23: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:**

**B. What ignorant men look at as contemptible--Christ crucified--is the pinnacle of satisfaction with God.**

**1. Pay particular attention to this verse: Isaiah 53: 10:...he hath put *him* to grief, when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, (He hath...when THOU shalt make HIS soul an offering for sin)**

- This is God providing himself a Lamb.
- For God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son
- The Lord God gave His Son an offering for sin
- At the same time this was voluntary on the Son's part.

**2Corinthians 5:21: For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.**

**Zechariah 13:7: Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.**

**1John 4:9: In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. **10:** Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

**Romans 3:26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.**

Through death, Christ--in himself--accomplished the security of eternal life for all the children of God, he satisfied justice, brought in everlasting righteousness, brought life and immortality to light, and above all he glorified the God of glory.

The work of Christ our Lord was performed before God, for God, on behalf of God's people. THAT IS GOD PLEASING GOD. When God shuts sinners up to behold how his own work brought eternal satisfaction to him, then the believer is pleased that his salvation is by substitution. That is the faith God gives without which it is impossible to please him.

**ILLUSTRATION: DESIGNATED BATTER! Take the place of one. The crowd does not cheer for the one on the bench but for the one who took his place--Christ receives the glory! Until we are pleased for it to be so, we do not have true faith.**

#### **IV. IT PLEASSED GOD TO SAVE THEM THAT BELIEVE THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF HIS SON.**

**1Corinthians 1:21: For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.**

**Romans 1:16: For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. **17:** For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.**

**Romans 10:17: So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**

#### **A. GOD IS PLEASSED TO SAVE BY PREACHING, SO HE IS PLEASSED TO SEND PREACHERS.**

**Jeremiah 3:15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.**

**Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent?**

- If God has an elect people in a city, he'll embolden his messenger like he did Paul when he said, **I have much people in this city. And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them (Acts 18: 10, 11.)**

- If the Lord has a Lydia from Thyatira he can bring her to Philippi and forbid his servant from preaching in Asia and direct his steps as he did Paul, saying, **Acts 16: 10...assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.**
- If the Lord has an Ethiopian to call out, he will cross his path with the gospel by directing one of his Philip's by saying, **Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. (Acts 8: 26)**

**B. BECAUSE IT PLEASSED GOD TO SAVE BY PREACHING, THE KING OF GLORY RECEIVES ALL THE GLORY FOR THE MAN WHO PREACHES:**

**I Timothy 1:11: According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. 12: And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13: Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. 14: And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.**

**Question:** But doesn't a man perform this work. I study but it is not my studying that reveals Christ in me, but the Spirit of Christ. I get dressed and come to this place--but it's God who delivers me here safely. I stand up and preach--but it's God who gives me strength to do so. Paul actively believed God through faith, Paul actively preached the gospel and this was his testimony: **For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! 17: For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.** (I Corinthians 9:16, 17) Paul also made clear, **And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.** (1 Corinthians 2:4, 5.)

**Note:** IT PLEASSED GOD TO MAKE US PLEASSED WITH HIM THROUGH THIS GOSPEL THEREFORE IT PLEASSED GOD TO DO EVERYTHING NECESSARY TO GIVE US PASTORS AFTER HIS OWN HEART.

**V. IT PLEASURES GOD AT HIS APPOINTED TIME TO CALL OUT HIS ELECT BY HIS GRACE.**

**Galatians 1:15: But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace, 16: To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:**

**A. All those who the Father elected unto salvation in Christ Jesus, all those whom the Son redeemed, shall have Christ revealed in them--when it pleases God.**

1. When it pleased God Christ was formed in Paul, his Spirit was put within him, his Seed was implanted in him; Christ took up abode and dwelt in his heart by faith, as the Son in his own house; Christ in him was Paul's hope of glory.

2. When God is pleased to make a sinner pleased with him, he gives that sinner faith to behold that he has supplied everything.

- Spiritual life out of spiritual death. Through the Holy Spirit a new heart is created in place of that heart of stone.
- The object of faith--his Son who in true faithfulness fulfilled the everlasting covenant by laying down his life that the righteousness of God without the law might be manifest.
- The example of faith--his Son who in true faithfulness obeyed the whole law of God in thought, word and deed.
- The doctrine of faith--doctrine of grace whereby we learn more of the Excellencies of our Redeemer.
- We discover that God has given us the gift of faith--heart willingness utterly incapable of rejecting all this which God has freely wrought on our behalf.

**Ephesians 2:8: For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: **9:** Not of works, lest any man should boast. **10:** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**

**B. BUT LISTEN TO THIS NEXT POINT!** Yet, in amazing grace, after performing the work which causes a sinner to actively believe on him then God calls it our faith and says, "Well done, I am pleased with you" as if we did it all on our own.

**Hebrews 11:5: By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.**

- We love God and our brethren because we know, "I am what I am by the grace of God."

**Application:**

1. Do you wonder if your faith is pleasing to God?

- Who gave it?
- Who increases it?
- In whom does it rest? If you don't have true faith, may you cry out to God this hour!

2. God is pleased with only that which God receives the glory for performing.

- Electing a people pleased God.
- It pleased God that all fullness should dwell in his Son.
- It pleased God to bruise his Son in place of his elect.
- It pleased God by the preaching of the gospel of Christ to save sinners.
- It pleased God to reveal Christ in sinners at his appointed time.
- Likewise, the faith which pleases God is the gift of God and has for its object Christ alone, praises God's strength alone, and rests in him alone.

**Psalm 36: 7: How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. 8: They shall be abundantly satisfied**

with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. 9: For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.