

How's Your Aim?

April 30th & May 1st, 2016

Ephesians 5:10

"... try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord."

God can be pleased!

Please: "... to satisfy; to [give contentment]; ... to gratify"¹

- ❖ Jesus pleased God... *Matthew 3:17 "and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'"*
- ❖ Enoch pleased God... *Hebrews 11:5 "By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God."*

Pleasing God is the primary goal of the Christian life and the essence of discipleship!

- ❖ Paul wrote, "...we make it our aim to please Him." *2 Corinthians 5:9*
What is pleasing to the Lord?
📖 *2 Corinthians 13:11*
- ❖ Paul disciplined Timothy saying, "You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life..." *2 Timothy 3:10*
Aim: "to direct or point ... to direct the intention or purpose..."¹
- ❖ We can aim our choices for good purposes.
1 Timothy 1:5 "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."
2 Corinthians 8:21 "for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man."
- ❖ We can aim our choices for bad purposes
Psalms 64:3 "who whet their tongues like swords, who aim bitter words like arrows,"
Romans 8:6-8 "For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God."
- ❖ The following are examples of a person's "aim" in life:
Elijah ... *1 Kings 18:17-18 "When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, 'Is it you, you troubler of Israel?' And he answered, 'I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and your father's house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals.'"*
Paul ... *Colossians 1:28-29 "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works within me."*
Daniel ... *Daniel 6:10 "When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously."*
Demas ... *2 Timothy 4:10 "For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia."*
Job ... *Job 1:21-22 "And he said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong."*

“[We] try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord”

❖ What displeases God?

↳ Examples of displeasure and abominations to God:

- ♦ Heterosexual immorality and homosexual immorality

📖 Leviticus 18:1-29

- ♦ The shedding of innocent blood

📖 2 Kings 24:3-4

- ♦ Involvement with the occult: sacrifice of children, divination, sorcery, fortune-telling, mediums, necromancy

📖 Deuteronomy 18:9-12

- ♦ Sowing discord among God’s people

📖 Proverbs 6:16-19

❖ What pleases God?

“But the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him [who take God seriously!], in those who hope in His steadfast love.” Psalm 147:11

↳ Those who don’t “go with the flow” against God’s Word!

Malachi 3:16-18

↳ Those who resist peer pressure to compromise God’s Word!

“For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.” Galatians 1:10

↳ Children who are respectful toward their parents.

“Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.” Colossians 3:20

↳ Those who choose to obey His Word.

“...we keep His commandments and do what pleases Him.” 1 John 3:22

❖ Discern what is pleasing to God

*Discern: (Greek – *anakrino*) “to distinguish ... to examine, scrutinize, question ... determining the excellence or defects of a person or thing...”²*

1 Corinthians 6:12 “‘All things are lawful for me,’ but not all things are helpful. ‘All things are lawful for me,’ but I will not be dominated by anything.”

“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

We make it our aim to please God – How’s your aim?

Endnotes:

¹ Webster, Noah. *American Dictionary of the English Language (1828 Facsimile Edition)*. San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1989.

² Vine, W.E. *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words*. Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997.

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