

## Our aim – to be PLEASING Him

### Can you and I ever really please God?

(1 hr. 12 minutes)

by Philip Shields

[www.LightontheRock.org](http://www.LightontheRock.org)

January 2011

.....  
**Summary:** “My beloved son/daughter- in whom I am well pleased”. Do you think that would ever be said of you or me? Can we ever really please perfect Yahweh? Or is He a hard-to-please Father? We hope you’ll feel encouraged as you hear how God’s children make it their aim to please Him, and how they accomplish that goal.

\*\*\*

*(Note: I always recommend you listen to the audio while following along with the printed notes. There are things said in the audio that are not in the transcript. Sometimes vice-versa. In other words, it is an approximate “transcript” due to time limitations.)*

Greetings, brothers and sisters in the Messiah, members of the household of Yahweh, the Eternal God.

*Let me start with a brief correction to something I said in a recent message that wasn’t quite right: I said the Hebrew word picture for Yahweh had the word picture of “See, or behold, the hand and behold the nail”. That was actually the word picture for Yeshua, which makes it even more amazing!*

Let’s get into today’s message. We read something about the way Father viewed His Son in Matthew 3:16-17. This announcement we are about to read will be repeated a couple more times in Jesus’ life (I will also refer to Jesus by his actual Hebrew name “Yeshua. I may often refer to God’s personal name – YHWH – or Yahweh. Some Church of God groups translate that name as “the Eternal”. )

#### **Matthew 3:16-17**

When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*”

Some years ago, our extended family was having one of our traditional weekends on the coast of Oregon, and early one Sabbath, I asked one of my daughters something which I want to also ask all of you hearing this today. I said, “We know that God in heaven said He was well pleased with His Son – “this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ If a voice from heaven was to be heard about you today, would the voice say ‘this is my beloved daughter, in whom I am well pleased’ – or not?”

There was a tense pause and then she answered, as she dropped her eyes, “No dad, I don’t think I’d hear that”.

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

Her answer saddened me, but I had to admit that I would have probably answered the same way. But another side of me was hurting inside. You see, I'm also a father. I am *her* father. As a father, I would want my children to know I like them and am very pleased with them. I know that's two separate issues, but I would not want my children at any age feeling their father was not pleased with them.

So I winced a bit.

### **What would the Heavenly Voice say about you and me?**

Well, what would *you* say if I asked you point-blank: "What would our heavenly Father say about you? Can He ever be pleased by humans, and –more importantly – do *you* please Yahweh?"

What would you say?

I know I'd have to say that I know all too often I fall short of doing the things that would please Him, so we have to deal with that. But still, does that mean we can't be *overall* pleasing to Father? How do you honestly feel about that? Do we have to be perfect to be pleasing to Him?

Another question: do you expect to hear your Father or your King of kings say to you, "Well done, good job!"? Or are we fearful we're going to hear, "What were you doing? Depart from me, you worker of iniquity, for I don't even know you"? Which picture do you have of your King, and for your Father, for that matter? (Check out my sermon given April 2008, "I Never Knew You".)

Compare our sometimes erratic obedience and often failure with what our big brother Yeshua says about Himself, something I know I can't say, and know you can't say either!

#### **John 8:29**

And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for *I always do those things that please Him.*"

Our Master's words should become one of our aims in life: to always to those things which please Father. That certainly would happen if we could ever get in synch with the divine purpose He has for each of our lives.

***Pastor Rick Warren wrote a book on "Purpose Driven Life".*** If you've never read it, get it, read it. Though I don't agree with every point in his book or his Sunday-keeping theology, I do love the positive thrust of it and the focus he puts on his thesis that we are each here on the planet for a divine purpose. That's not just true for people like Abraham, King David, or Mary the mother of Yeshua. No way. He knows each of us intimately and profoundly and wants us to achieve our highest potential in Him. *In Him*. And I think Rick Warren does a good job of conveying that.

I hope in today's message I can show that not only *can* we please our Father, but we must make our *aim* to please Abba, our dear heavenly Father. But is it an achievable goal? Certainly the more you love someone, the more you'd seek to please that person. If we are in love with our

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

Master/Savior, and if we dearly love our *Abba* (Aramaic for “dear Father”) – we *will* be seeking to be well pleasing to Him.

In this sermon I’m going to read a lot of scriptures that bear on this topic. Ask Yahweh to speak directly to you as we read through these verses. He will be speaking to me as well. I hope you’ll see the hope and the love He wants us to feel. He is our *Father* and He *does* understand our frame, that we are but mere dust (Ps. 103:13-14) and often fall short of the glory of God.

*I also think this message today will dovetail very nicely after the last two sermons I gave on the gift of God’s righteousness, and witnessing to the resurrection life of the Savior. Big hint: if we are to be witnesses to the resurrection of the Son of God by demonstrating His life in us now... hmm, did He please Father? Just let that percolate as we discuss the topic. I want you to have the hope and knowledge that you can, you do and you must -- please Father.*

### 5 Psychological Roadblocks we have to being able to believe we can please our Almighty Father:

- **Our first roadblock is our own experience: that key people in our lives have been hard to please.** This transfers over to our feelings about our Heavenly Father, Abba. Some have had a **hard-to-please Dad**, or a rough dad, and so it’s hard to picture Father being pleased with us -- ever. Sometimes we have a hard-to-please husband or wife. How do you really picture the Eternal, our Father in heaven: hard to please?

I can be hard to please at times myself, as a husband or father. I want that to change and want to be more easily pleased by people. I like things done a certain way and that can translate into “I’m not happy with your efforts”, if I’m not careful. So now I’m trying to be far more conscious of applauding my children and wife for their efforts. I don’t want to be part of the cause for someone having the inability to see and feel their heavenly Father as a Father who can *smile* when He thinks of them.

Let me make a plug here for all parents and all of us – who can we encourage today? Who can we bring a smile to? Who can we help have a good feeling because of something we said or did? Even the cashier at the Safeway, or the UPS deliveryman. Everyone, anyone -- let’s be a fountain of joy and good will and someone easily pleased. Who can we write a short email to today to say how much that person means to us? In your own little way, you might be helping them accept that it is possible to please someone – and someday that might help them accept they can even please Yahweh above.

- **Roadblock #2: If we have very low self-esteem,** we can believe we are often total failures and displeasing to everyone! People with terrible self-esteems don’t even like *themselves*. They can’t, so they reason that nobody else could possibly like them either. But remember, Messiah himself taught us we are to love others *as we love ourselves*. In fact it’s the second greatest commandment (Matthew 22:39). We emphasize the “love your neighbor” part and forget that part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest commandment is to also love yourself. There is a proper kind of love for self and self-acceptance a normal, healthy person should have. Galatians 5:14 says the entire law is fulfilled in that statement. James agrees in Jas. 2:8.

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

- Roadblock #3: Another roadblock to knowing you are pleasing to God is that we *sin*. When I sin, any sin, I don't like myself at all. It's certainly clear that sin doesn't please Father! So we repent, and we must learn to let our past be past. I've squandered *years* of my life by letting past sins, mistakes and bad choices continue to haunt me. That shouldn't be. Paul says, "forgetting the past" we now look forward, and press on to what lies ahead of us (Phil. 3:12-13).

When we understand what our Savior has done for us, we can accept that we now stand before the Eternal God without condemnation. "There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ..." (Romans 8:1), even as we continue now to do the rest of the verse, to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. That second part to Romans 8:1 is often left out of most modern translations, by the way. This is why we have got to be feeding the spirit, so the spirit is strong in us, and the flesh is getting weaker and weaker. Result? "Walk in the spirit and you won't fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

- The 4<sup>th</sup> roadblock can sometimes be some of our own **ministers** – including me at times - - giving so many sermons which focus on how far short we fall, how we have sin in our lives, and how we fail and must buck up and overcome -- so we start to feel it's useless. We feel like such failures much of the time. Or am I the only one? I know about "Cry aloud and spare not, and ...show my people their sins" (Isa. 58:1), but all the time? What about reading the scripture the Messiah read as He began His ministry? Notice it wasn't the "cry aloud" one, though in fact He did call for repentance as part of His message. So let's avoid the ditches. What He read and preached was how "A bruised reed he will not break", and it also spoke of taking the message to the Gentiles (Matthew 12:15-21).

So I do think a lot of this feeling comes from the many sermons we've had over the years that just often beat us down. Let's not go the other ditch either though, and forget there *are* times to "cry aloud, spare not and show my people their sins". There *are* times to warn against Laodiceanism or spiritual stupor. Sure – but let's understand how people are responding to these messages too.

I think sometimes pastors need to take a breath once in a while and seek to inspire the brethren to action, rather than just constantly beat them over the head with their shortcomings. For that matter, pastors are human too. They need encouragement and prayers too.

There's one more roadblock, the biggest of all.

### **CAN a human being please Yahweh, the perfect, holy, Eternal God?**

I think to have a healthy relationship with our heavenly father, we *must* come to understand we can, and we do, please our heavenly Father.

***But first, there is another roadblock, the 5<sup>th</sup> and biggest roadblock.***

#### **Romans 8:7-9**

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, ***those who are in the flesh cannot please God.***

9 ***But you are not in the flesh*** but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

So verse 9 strongly implies we can please Father since we are not “in the flesh” but “in the spirit”. He no longer sees our old, failed, failing and sinful old self. That was buried in baptism. That old self died with Messiah in His crucifixion, as we’ve covered many times before (see Romans 6:3-7; Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3, etc.).

So the carnal mind cannot please Yahweh. It is hostile to Yahweh. When even our own children are in a hostile mood to us – the parent – that isn’t pleasing, is it? But as Paul explains in Romans 7, Father looks upon the heart. He sees the “new man”—the new nature of the Messiah in us that wants to please and obey Him. Again, if you haven’t heard the 2 previous sermons, please do – as they bear heavily on what I’ve just said. (December 2010 sermons).

So let’s get over this 5th roadblock – our human nature. We have to admit it still is way too much alive in us. So in faith, we ask for, and in faith receive, the righteous life of the Son of God, who fulfilled God’s perfect law perfectly, without a single sin. He’s prepared to live in you if we’d just get out of the way. But this new life becomes His doing, it’s His life, it’s Him from start to finish.

But too often, we fail to get out of His way. So *just this morning, I had to once again in prayer beg Father to “create in me a clean heart oh God”, as David prayed in Psalm 51.*

***It seems I too often have to pray something like this:***

“Restore a right spirit in me, dear Father. Let me be growing in the nature and image of my Savior more and more with each passing day. Abba, come live in me. Teach me how to love you. Teach me, Abba, how to give up my old self and let my husband King Yeshua now be my life. Let me become one spirit in Him, with Him (1 Cor. 6:17), as Eve and Adam were to become one flesh. Grow in me by your set-apart Spirit. Mold me like your pliable clay to start looking more and more like you. I know I get so stubborn and carnal too often, dear Master and King. Fashion me into a vessel for your use – whatever you deem you need me to become in your hands. When I speak, let your love and grace come out of my lips, for I am a man of unclean lips. Soften my heart. Please create in me a new heart, oh dear Father. I can get so bitter, so vengeful, so unlike you – make it stop, Oh King of the universe! Let my lips express graciousness. Let me become a husband to my wife who is acting more and more like Yeshua is to His called-out ones, His body. I just want to please you. I fall so far short of this. Let me please you by getting myself out of the way, and letting the head of the Body, my Savior, live His perfect life more and more in me....please Abba, don’t see my old self – but see the new risen Messiah living more and more perfectly in me. In Him, you can be so well pleased. Let me become more and more like Him. I want to please you, dear Abba. Let me be formed in His exact image, that I may be pleasing you. Amen.”

I can only imagine you pray the same words. But it is time to see *His* life more and our life less. As John said in John 3:30, “He must increase, and I must decrease.” Amen. Amen. That is becoming a favorite verse for me along with Phil. 3:9-10.

***So—can we agree: the carnal self is not pleasing to God? But Yeshua perfectly pleased His father, and if we get out of His way, He’ll do it again in us, with us, to His glory and honor.***

# To Be Pleasing Him...

---

## How Other Mortals Pleased the Eternal God Yahweh

Now let's see how other "sons of God"-- besides *the* Son of God--also pleased Yahweh. But as I spoke last 2 times—it's always been about the *kingdom's* righteousness. We seek first the kingdom and *its* righteousness (Matthew 6:33). These we're about to read about pleased Father by His nature, not theirs, because we've already read that the carnal mind and nature cannot please God. So any human who did please God, was no longer primarily living in the carnal state. I said "primarily". Even Paul said, years after his conversion, "...but I am carnal..." (Romans 7:14). So it's what Father sees that counts.

### **Hebrews 11:5-6**

"By faith **Enoch** was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for ***before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.***  
*6 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." [Note: so Enoch, a man, pleased God, and if we live by faith, it is strongly implied we can as well.]

### **1 Thessalonians 2:4**

But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, **not as pleasing men, but [pleasing] God** who tests our hearts. [that sounds possible, doesn't it – to please God]

### **Psalms 149:4**

"For **Yahweh takes pleasure in His people**; He will beautify *the humble* with salvation."

### **Psalms 41:11**

"By this I know that ***You are well pleased with me***, Because my enemy does not triumph over me."

### **1 Thessalonians 4:1-2 ASB**

"Finally then, brothers, we ask and encourage you in the Lord Jesus, that as you have received from us how you must walk ***and please God—as you are doing***—do so even more. 2 For you know what commands we gave you through the Lord Jesus."

Obviously God can be pleased by mortals. But do we have to be perfect and sinless before we can please Him?

*We don't have to be perfect yet in this life to please Abba.* No one but the Son of God ever lived a perfect life. What we need is to be forgiven. Just living "in Him". Just growing to be more and more like Him. He knows our frame, that we are but dust. In one sense though, when we accept HIS righteousness by grace and faith, He does see the perfect obedience of the Son in whom He is well pleased – and not our stumbles, for WE died, and the life we now live is the life of Messiah. And when we are In Messiah, this is what we read in Romans 8:1:

*"For there is now NO condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." -- Romans 8:1.*



## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

*Let that verse capture your heart.* Let it be true for you. Graciously accept it in humble adoration for what we're being offered. Don't feel condemned once you've repented. I have to repent quite often, but I came to be "in Messiah" many years ago. People continue to condemn us for our past sins, but Father doesn't. Live in that grace. And extend it then to others too.

### **So, what pleases Yahweh? How can we be pleasing to Him?**

In simplest terms, the things which please the Almighty are the opposites of the actions and lifestyle which displease Him. In simplest words, it pleases Father to see us growing more and more like His Son, "until Christ is formed in you" (Gal. 4:19). It pleases Abba when we're in synch with the Kingdom Way of doing things. What did Messiah do?

Do you remember what the Son of God said?

#### **John 8:29**

And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for *I always do those things that please Him.*"

Yeshua gave us clues as to what He did and *how* these things pleased Abba. Let's read a few. We can learn from these.

#### **John 4:34 CJB**

Yeshua said to them, "My food is to **do what the one who sent me wants** -- and to bring his work to completion." (NKJV—"to do the will of Him who sent me...". Also check out John 6:38-39.)

***Let's make it our aim to do what Yahweh, our dear Abba, our wonderful Father created us to be doing.*** We were each made for a specific purpose. You are unique in the universe. Let's get in synch with our created purpose. Let's make it our aim to make him so happy with us that we help make His face shine upon us.

Yeshua spoke many, many times of the fact that when He spoke, it was actually His father's words. When He acted, it is what His Father's will was. He was not here looking out for himself, but to do what Father wanted. That's it in a nutshell. The more we let Him do that again, this time in us, the more we will be pleasing Father.

#### **John 14:30 CJB**

"Rather, this is happening so that the world may know that I love the Father, and that *I do as the Father has commanded me.*"

You see when I spoke of Yahweh's perfect, holy righteousness imputed to us, there should be evidence of that starting to work in us. The faith we have in that process should be more and more evident, more and more demonstrated in our daily living. I preach to myself. I myself fail so much in doing this. Why do you think I'm talking about it so much!? We all need this! Yeshua's life is the one Father will see – but let's quit covering up His life in us! Let's get ourselves out of the way! We have to be more obedient, more like Him by letting *Him* live in and through us.

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

How? Feed the Spirit, starve the flesh. Get up and **collect your daily manna** before starting the day. Yeshua is the manna, the bread from heaven (John 6). Don't go a single day into spiritual battle without **your spiritual armor**. But unfortunately too many of us do just that! I preach to myself too. We appear for a battle spiritually naked. That's what Yeshua said about Laodicea – blind, miserable, poor and naked. Where was their spiritual armor? Our king is our helmet of salvation. That's what Yeshua means. Our king is our sword of the word – for HE is the Word (John 1:1-3). Our king is our shield of faith (Psalm 3:3). Our king is the breastplate of HIS righteousness, the belt holding all this together is truth – His truth, HE is truth; He's the shoes – He's all of it! I'm sure you recognize I'm referring to the armor of God in Ephesians 6:10-18.

*We also love and please Him by obeying His word and His commandments.*

### **John 15:10-11 CJB**

**If you keep my commands, you will stay [abide] in my love** — just as I have kept my Father's commands and stay in his love. 11 I have said this to you so that my joy may be in you, and your joy be complete.

### **1 John 3:22 – live HIS way of life**

And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and **do those things that are pleasing in His sight**.

Now I think most of us want to please Father – it's just that we don't do it all the time, perfectly, without a single misstep.

What if we fail, and sin? Or “goof up”?

I think we understand this, don't we? If you ask your son or daughter to please take out the garbage and then do the dishes, but when you come home you find none of that was done, you would be displeased. ***Do you no longer love your kids? Of course you still love them. But were you well pleased with them? Honestly at that moment, no. But in an overall sense, yes.***

Even as we stumble, Abba – our heavenly Father – is compassionate, though initially we may do things that don't please Him.

**My dog started barking when all the fireworks went off on New Year's eve.** I hollered “no” to her, so she stopped, but then shortly started barking again. The loud bangs were scaring her. This time my compassionate side came out as I realized my poor little pug was scared by the sudden big bangs and all the noise. So then instead of hollering at her to be quiet, I came and sat with her, rubbing her head gently, as I assured her, “everything's OK”.

If we can do that for our pet dog, can't we see Abba feeling this way a million times more so, for His dear children? So sometimes we fall short, but can we also see Father sitting beside us and comforting us even as we show fear or become unsettled?

**It certainly pleases Father when He sees we want to please Him. And isn't it true, that when we really like, and really love someone, we look for ways to bring a smile to their faces?**



## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

Husband and wives: go back to your first love. In our marriage, my wife and I are joined at the hip all day. We literally work together, 24/7 most days – and that’s not necessarily always a good thing! So I have to find ways to give her the space she needs. I have to wake up to the fact that I’m taking her for granted, I’m not being as sweet, gentle and considerate I might be to another woman who might just be an employee. My point is: we tend to take our “loved ones” for granted.

*The greatest “loved one” in our lives must be Yeshua and our Father. Are we taking our Creator and Savior for granted?*

*One more thing: when you know your children love you, and look up to you, it pleases you. It pleases Father when He knows and can see that we love Him.*

***If we truly, deeply love Yahweh, we simply will seek to do those things that please Him. Our respectful love for Him will keep us from giving in to sin as much or as often.***

I know there were many times I failed as a young man, or teenager to live up to what my Mom had taught and expected, but there were also countless times when I *didn’t* do certain things because I thought, “If Mom got wind of this stupid thing I am tempted to do, it would hurt her so much... and I just love Mom too much to hurt her.” So I wouldn’t do that particular bad thing that particular day. Now, I was as much a red blooded teenage boy like all the others, so I often failed, but there was a desire at least in my heart to be pleasing to her and let her be proud of me.

Now take it up a notch: imagine if your Dad or Mom was literally, visibly, right there when you were tempted to do something you knew would disappoint them and anger them? Would you have done it anyway? No way!

**Surely, our awareness of our Father’s presence in us has to increase. Surely this will help us seek to please Him more. Plus, the more we grow up in Him, the less we will truly want to sin.** Paul, though he still gave in to sin from time to time (Romans 7:15), was at least able to say, “that which I HATE, I do”. I think we still sometimes enjoy and like sin – or the pleasures of sin too much. Have we grown to the point where we can say we hate sin? All sin?

*The Kingdom’s way is the Father’s way.* Father is not tempted by sin (James 1:13). Sin has no pull on Him. Abba has no desire to even sin for the short temporary pleasure of sin. It disgusts Father. He is perfect holiness and joy, as He knows sin has a terrible kickback --sometimes immediately, sometimes years later. Jesus said Satan had nothing in Him (John 14:30).

As we grow up spiritually, sin has less and less hold on us as well. But as we feed the spirit, the flesh has less and less hold on us (Gal. 5:16).

If we need more awareness, and who doesn’t? – feed the Spirit. Starve the flesh. Turn off the TV. Go read *His* Book instead. You’d think if we really understood that the Bible is Yahweh’s own handwritten book, that he personally wrote, we’d be grabbing it every possible moment we could! We’d want to see what He has to say to us. We would be picking up our daily “manna” daily.

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

**\*\* Since any normal father is pleased to hear, feel and experience the love of his family, TELL your Messiah what He means to you. Tell Him. Say it. This pleases Him.**

When I feel my grandsons or granddaughters squeeze me as they hug, or give me a kiss, or say “I love you, Poppy”, does that please me? Does that please me? Of course it does. Who do you think put those feelings into me?

When was the last time you said, “I sure love you, father. I love you Jesus (Yeshua).” When? Now I know we prove our love by obedience. I know that. But love is also a deep *affection* we can feel in our hearts—that results in a life of goodness, obedience and seeking to please the object of our love.

Do you think God wants to hear us say we love Him? Jesus asked Peter three times, “Peter, do you love me? Do you agape me?” (John 21:15-17). Three times Peter confessed he did, but could only muster admitting the *phileo* level of love, like a friend has. So he answered, “Yes, Master, I *phileo* you”. But my point is, our Master asks us, “Do you love me?” God, and the son of God, apparently want to know! *God wants to hear us say it – as well as live it.*

One time recently my wife and I had a Sabbath meeting with another couple and their two teenage daughters. After our meeting and sharing of the word with each other, the other gentleman brought it to a close and asked that we all kneel and pray. Each one took a turn, if he or she wanted to say something. I was touched by the words of the young daughters. Both of them prayed for other people in need, by name, and then one said, “We love you, Yahweh. Help us grow to be more in love with you.”

Wow. When we read the psalms, David’s words of adoration just explode off the pages. In Psalm 18:1 he just comes out and says it, “I love you, O Yahweh my strength.”

If you’re not an expressive person, and many aren’t, then pray for Father to put His love into your heart and to help you express love to Him, your spouse, your kids, people you come into contact with. If you can’t express it, sometimes a pat on the back, a smile and a wink, or a note of appreciation can say the same thing.

I like to sing out, that I love him for who He is, for what He does, and for the hundreds of ways he has shown me *His* love. Express it. Say it. Feel it. Love Him with all your heart and soul and being – and I know He will reciprocate. You’ll see and feel His love more and more.

### MORE WAYS WE CAN PLEASE FATHER

So let’s read some of the Scriptures now that show us how we can please Him. This is not a complete exhaustive list, but enough to get you started—each point hit quickly only.

We’ve already read 1 John 3:21-24 where we’re told in v. 22 that we experience more positively answered prayer, “...*because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight*”. Any father is pleased when his children obey. God responds with pleasure to our obedience even more so. Any father knows we tend to be more lavish with our gifts, blessings and requests we grant – when our children are pleasing to us.

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

Here are some more ways to be pleasing Abba, our dear Father:

**\*\* Father is pleased by humility, but resists pride.**

God draws near to the humble (He likes their attitude) but distances himself from the proud and vain persons (1 Pet. 5:5). Pride is one of the 7 things God hates most (Prov. 6:16-19). *When we really “see” Father, we will be smaller in our own eyes, as happened to Job. When we don’t see Father is when we think we are really something.*

Humble people don’t need the spotlight. They don’t need excessive praise and constant recognition (some recognition and praise is good. Even God gives praise and honor.). They’re willing to put others ahead of themselves. When this happens, God is pleased. The proud look is anathema to Father. I preach to myself too.

**\*\*God is pleased when He sees us pitching in and helping one another**

**Hebrews 6:9-10**

But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. 10 For **God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love** which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister [serving one another].

Have you ever set up chairs, or cleaned church floors, or brought flowers to the church service? Have you ever come real early to be the usher, or help with parking? Have you not picked up people who needed a ride to services – even though their children vomited all over your car seats from time to time? Have you ever spent hours on sermonettes, sermons? Haven’t many of you spent countless hours rehearsing in church choirs? Just don’t forget to love Him as you do these works, or we could end up hearing what was said to the Ephesian church in Rev. 2 – “I know your works, but you have forsaken your first love.” So again, the balance.

Don’t forget Matthew 25 – “to ***the least of these my brethren***”. I hope you’ll hear my sermon given in March 2009 on my website, which went into this in detail. Whom of “the least” have we reached out to lately? There’s a thunderbolt shocker at the end of that sermon, identifying why Yeshua takes so personally what we do to the least of these His brethren.

**\*\* Sharing and sacrificing – pleases Father.**

**Hebrews 13:16**

But do not forget to **do good and to share**, for with such sacrifices ***God is well pleased***.

**Philippians 4:18 - sharing, sacrificing**

18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, **an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God**.

Have you not shared your food, your home, your love, your friendship?

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

### **\*\* Father is so pleased when we are in synch with the purpose for which we were created**

#### **Colossians 1:9-11** - gives a list of things which please Father

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be *filled with the knowledge of His will* in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 *that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

### **\*\* Father is pleased when we remember where our life is really centered.**

#### **2 Timothy 2:3-4**

You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, *that he may please him* who enlisted him as a soldier.

Have you not kept yourself from getting too entangled in the affairs of this life? We can't serve two masters. I caution many, and I preach to myself: some of us *are* getting too tangled up in the affairs and politics of this life. Yep, me too at times. We listen to Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck or other talking heads and get upset at the way this country is heading. I listen to some talk radio when driving around too, but we must be careful not to let that get us stirred up too much about *this* life. This whole cosmos is going to hell in a hand basket before our Master comes to save the world from utter destruction. So don't get too wrapped up in it. If we find the balance here, that will be well pleasing to Father. This is not Father's world! We can't get too enmeshed in it or its politics.

Instead, center your life on the Master. "For in Him we live, move and have our being..." (Acts 17:28). Avoid distractions that take your center off of *Him*.

### **\*\* It pleases Father to see His children working together in Unity**

Remember this one? "How good and how pleasant (or pleasing) for brethren to dwell together in unity" (**Psa. 133:1**). Especially in light of the ongoing divisions and splits we see marring the reputation of the Body of Christ, we need to focus on this. I gave several sermons on this topic at the end of 2009 and early 2010. I feel strongly about it. If you're wondering why the body of Christ seems so split, I urge you to hear those sermons. In Messiah, we should be ONE – not just in word, but in reality.

Yahweh is obviously allowing the divisions. But His stated purpose was that we be and act as one, as one as Messiah and Father in heaven are one (read John 17:21-22). "There must be NO schisms (splits) in the Body..." (1 Cor. 1:10-13). That's His stated will.

If we understand that we are members of His body, and therefore members of one another, how could we be attacking and badmouthing brethren who really are parts of His holy body? (See Rom. 12:4-5; Eph. 4:25). When will we understand that when we are kicking at one another, *we are actually kicking Messiah Himself in the stomach*? For that brother we "kicked", is part of Messiah! When will we understand that one reason we have sickness and early death going on is because we aren't discerning the body of Christ (1 Cor. 11:29-30)?

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

*If we're not gathering together, we're scattering (Luke 23:11). Please remember:*

- We don't belong to this group or that group....NO! We belong to Christ! (Mark 9:41).
- We are not a member of this or that man-made organization – NO! We are a member of the spiritual body of Messiah! Ephesians 5:30. The Body of Christ is a spiritual organism.
- Our real leader to whom we pledge our lives is not any pastor general, or presiding evangelist, or senior pastor, or whatever title men want to give themselves. The Head of the Body is the Son of God! Colossians 1:18
- Our God does not want to be worshiped in places or buildings or mountains or organizations anymore – but in spirit and truth. John 4:21-24. Let's quit trying to confine where Yahweh works into these little boxes we call churches!

Call someone from “over there” whom you haven't talked to in years. Be a “gatherer” of God's children. Visit and attend another body of believers other than just the one you usually go to.

Why? For one thing – it brings pleasure to our dear Abba. As a grandpa myself, I'd be horrified if my kids and grandkids couldn't come together to honor me on our anniversary or something. Imagine how He feels when we try to worship Him on His holydays but can't and won't come together with other children of His. Children of God – get past the church politics, get past the power struggles, get past the hurts, and come together in forgiveness, offering grace to one another. *Let's give Abba the pleasure He deserves by showing Him we can live peaceably and joyfully with all His children.* Take some concrete steps to make that happen in your life.

**\*\* It pleases Father when He sees us TRUSTING Him, and not allowing ourselves to have any anxious thought or worry. See Matt 6:25-33.**

We can be concerned enough to take steps we need to take, but we must not become anxious. Seek *first* the kingdom of God and *its* righteousness. We counter worry by seeking God. That famous verse in Matthew 6:33 that says to seek first the kingdom of God comes right on the heels of the verses about not allowing ourselves to fret. It's the solution to fretting! Draw near to God, and our fears should melt away over time. I have a 3-part sermon series on living by faith, given in 2004, that I hope you'll listen to. We all give in to fretting from time to time. Even I do. But it is when we surrender to His purpose and His will for us, trusting Him - - that we find peace.

**Heb. 11:6 says, “without faith it is impossible to please Him”.** So with faith, we can and we do please Him.

(Story of how children feel a calmness if Dad and Mom are calm about a situation. Father is never worried, so we never need be either – even when facing death or crises of all types. Easier said than done, I know, but that's the goal.)

There are so many more ways we can talk about pleasing God, but then we'd have to read Genesis through Revelation. I hope by now you can see that it is possible, and even a necessity, to seek to be pleasing our Father and King.

**Now let's kick it up a notch. Let's raise the ante.**

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

Can you see yourself – or any human – pleasing Father so much that Father actually praises that person? Or is that pushing the envelope too far?

### CAN WE PLEASE FATHER SO MUCH THAT HE WILL EVEN PRAISE US?

We think of praising *God*... do you ever think of Yahweh praising *us* or giving us honor? How dare we! That was my first thought, and yet dear Abba says He will, and He does praise His children, just as you rightly praise your children when it is warranted and when you wish to encourage. Let's read a few verses on this. My point is this: if you're still not sure you can please God, surely you would not praise someone you're not pleased with. So let's see what He says:

#### **John 5:44**

How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and *do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?*

#### **Romans 2:29**

but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose *praise is not from men but from God.*

#### **John 12:42-43**

Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved the praise of men **more than the praise of God.**

#### **1 Peter 1:6-7**

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, **may be found to praise, honor, and glory** at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

#### **THE CLEAREST ONE OF ALL: 1 Corinthians 4:5**

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. **Then each one's PRAISE will come from God.** (2 Cor. 10:18—"whom the Lord commends".)

Can you even begin to grasp that Father is so much for you, for us, that He wants to honor you, commend you, praise you – in front of His Son, in front of the 4 living creatures beside the throne, in front of the 24 magnificent elders surrounding the throne, in front of the 6-winged seraphim and 4 –winged cherubim, in front of Gabriel and Michael, and billions and billions of glorious angels – because you please Him? Again, how? Because we are exhibiting the new life of the resurrected Yeshua as our new life. And father is definitely pleased with Yeshua.

Oh, I know, we fall short. But now tie this in to the last 2 sermons. It's about "the LORD (Yahweh) our righteousness." And with Paul, we all together say as one person, as one body: "I want to be found 'in Him', not having my own righteousness that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness of God by faith, and that I may know Him and



## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

the power of His resurrection..” (Phil. 3:9-10). So now we live by His might, by His power, by His wisdom and by His perfect life being duplicated in us now over time (1 Cor. 1:30-31).

As we get ourselves out of the way and let Yeshua live His life in us, now what’s happening? You have to have heard my previous two sermons to understand where this is coming from: but now the life that Father sees is not our life, but His Son’s perfect life. Our life is hidden in Christ, in God (Col. 3:3). We no longer live, but the lives we now live we live by faith in the son of God, who gave Himself for us. For if righteousness could come from the law, then Messiah died in vain (Gal. 2:20-21).

### Would YOU spend eternity with someone you didn’t like?

***One final thought: Father wants to spend eternity with you.*** That’s right, with you. Let that sink in. Would you spend even an hour with someone you can’t stand? How about a day, a week, a month? ***But with a friend you could.*** I just invited two brothers to come spend time in our home because I like them and respect them. I think this would be an enjoyable time.

We need to accept, that when we are pleasing Father, He says we are His friend. Whole sermons have been preached on that. I’m sure you can Google it or do your own concordance study on it. Here are a few to start you off: John 15:13-15; James 2:23 (Abraham); Ex. 33:11 (Moses). But God is not a friend to just the big names in the Bible.

#### **John 15:12-17**

12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. 14 **You are My friends** if you do whatever I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; **but I have called you friends**, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose Me, **but I chose you and appointed you** that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. 17 These things I command you, that you love one another.

If Father wants to spend the rest of all time – eternity – with you, what does that say to you about how He feels about you? Let your heart hear that. I think that says A ton, without even having to add more commentary to that point.

Remember the Living God is for you.

#### **Psalms 56:8-9**

You number my wanderings; Put my tears into your bottle; Are they not in Your book?  
9 When I cry out to You, Then my enemies will turn back; ***This I know, because God is for me.***

I started this message by telling you the story of my daughter and I talking about pleasing God. I still fall short. She does too, I’m sure. But Messiah never falls short. He now lives in us, and in Him, you and I can be, must be, will be pleasing to our Father. Just let Him live in you. He sees Messiah in you and me. And we should see Messiah in each other as well, as we grow in His grace and His Way – ever more and more pleasing to Father in heaven.

## To Be Pleasing Him...

---

Until next time, may we grow more and more in love with our Husband, grow in our love for Abba, *and may we experience His love, His pleasure, His acceptance and His JOY over us* in our lives. For that's the kind of Father we have. Isn't He just magnificent? Spread the word.

Until next time, this is your brother Philip signing off, as we all seek to always do the things which please Father.