

### Why Does Faith Please God?

The Bible says in 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.”* In the proceeding verse, it says, *“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”* (Hebrews 11:5). The verse implies that Enoch became so close to God and pleased Him so well that God in essence said, *“Enoch, I like the way you spend your days with Me down on earth, so how about coming up to Heaven and spend the day with Me here?”* And the reason Enoch never returned is because there is no night there; he is still spending the day with God. The great faith chapter (Hebrews 11) tells us that the secret ingredient to Enoch’s walk with God was his faith. God tells us that his faith pleased Him! Oh how I want to please God and be able to say with Jesus, *“...For I do always those things that please him”* (John 8:29).

Why does our faith please God?

#### **1. The “faith life” eliminates idolatry.**

We live in a world that we appreciate with our five senses. We see, hear, feel, smell and taste. It is natural to want to experience something with one or more of our senses. The “faith walk” does not permit us to use our senses to fully appreciate God. I can hear music that brings me close to God or see a sunset that reminds me of how great our God is as Creator, but the “faith walk” supersedes and goes far beyond the peripheral, external nature of enjoyment. I am not always listening to music or seeing a sunset. As a matter of fact, if I become reliant on these external promptings, I eclipse into idolatry. This is why many of the heathen worship the sun or recite mantras. In the ancient world (and even in some modern cultures) worship to the false gods involved sexual acts. Their temples were filled with prostitutes; groves surrounding their idols were places where these evil deeds were done to please their pathetic deities. This is why when revival came to the people of God, idols were torn down and groves were cut down. A good example is the spiritual renewal that took place under Gideon, *“And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Take thy father’s young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it”* (Judges 6:25).

We understand more clearly why God said, *“Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God...”*(Exodus 20:3-5a). God is declaring He becomes jealous when we substitute our relationship with

Him, the Invisible God (I Timothy 1:17) with that which we insist on seeing, hearing, feeling, touching or tasting. This is what God meant when He said, *“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen”* (Romans 1:25).

The Bible tells us, *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”* (Hebrews 11:1). We love God through prayer, meditation and His Word; we dare not become dependent on our senses. *“For we walk by faith, not by sight”* (II Corinthians 5:7).

## **2. When we live the “faith life” we are liberated from dependency upon man.**

The Psalmist said, *“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God”* (Psalm 20:7). The world quakes in the wake of mere mortal man’s bullying, threatenings and pretense of power. It was said of John Knox, “He never feared the face of man, because he feared God so well.” George Washington said this new country was full of men who would rather “die standing on their feet than live on their knees to man.” I would submit to you that those early Americans would bow only to God. Colonial America could not trust her chariots, horses or weaponry. If she was going to be able to stand, she had to stand in the Lord’s might and power. America was founded upon dependency on God.

Dependency on God liberates us from dependency on man. A curse comes on us when we leave the “faith life” that trusts God for our future and our blessings. *“Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD”* (Jeremiah 17:5). *“With him (king of Assyria) is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah* (II Chronicles 32:8). The word “rest” is an important word because this reflects on what God declared in Hebrews 4:10, *“For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.”* The “faith life” is living in a perpetual sabbath rest. We are benefitted from not worrying and stressing. Psalm 37:7 commands us, *“Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself...”* God is pleased when our “faith life” transports us from a bothered state of mind!

## **3. The “faith life” is a witness to the world.**

On the way to my last meeting I sat near someone who was watching a movie and periodically this lady would burst out laughing; then I saw her wiping a tear. I did not see or hear what was so funny, but this person definitely saw and heard something that brought her laughter. This reminded me of one of my early experiences of air entertainment. I was traveling to a meeting and I was listening to Bill Cosby. I began to chuckle, then laugh and then I found myself really “losing it” and the harder I tried not to laugh, the harder it became to subdue it, until finally I was occasionally bursting out with laughter. People were looking at me curiously; I needed to let them know what was going on. So I held up my hand with three fingers, meaning I was listening to channel three on the audio system. Then all over the plane laughter was growing until, literally, it seemed the whole

plane was listening to Bill Cosby and laughing. When people saw what a joyful experience I was having, they wanted to join me. You might say, I became an evangelist for Bill Cosby.

God's Word says, "*And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD*" (Psalm 40:3). When the world sees our spontaneous joy that comes from living the "faith life," they too will inquire, what "channel" we are on. A Christian walking by faith is a great witness to the veracity and reality of what we have in Jesus. The Great Commission that our Lord gave is a means to reaching the world for whom He died. Let us then walk by faith and when our words will fail us, faith will win the day! No wonder faith pleases God!

-Pastor Pope-

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