

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

Good morning and welcome to our Second Service on Sunday mornings where we go through the Bible book-by-book, chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse and today we're currently going through the Book of Hebrews and are in Chapter 11. And our text is going to be verses 4-6. So I'll ask those of you that are here if you're able to stand. You can follow along as I read the text, if not, where you're seated is fine.

The writer of Hebrews by the Holy Spirit is writing and says, "By faith, Able brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith, he was commended as righteous when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Able still speaks, even though he is dead.

By faith, [verse 5] Enoch was taken from this life so that he did not experience death: "He could not be found because God had taken him away." [He was raptured; anyway we will talk about that in a moment.] For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."

Let's pray. If you would please join with me. Father in Heaven, we're so thankful to You for Your Word and this portion that we have here before us today in Your Word. Lord, we at this time though need for the Holy Spirit to enable us to focus our attention and quiet our minds and settle our hearts so that we can receive from You undistracted, uninterrupted by any of the cares and the affairs of our busy and stressful lives as difficult as things are getting.

Lord, I pray that the enemy would not be allowed in any way to enter today and take our minds away from You and Your Word. Lord, don't let those thoughts find a place in our minds and our hearts so that we can give You our undivided attention because the portion that we have here before us in Your Word is so, so important for such a time as this, Lord.

So thank You in advance for what You are going to do in our time together in Your Word today, we pray in Jesus' name amen and amen. You can be seated, thank you.

So I've really been looking forward to the text today. I know I say that every week, not every week, about every other week. Okay, every week. Today I want to talk with you about what pleases God. And in doing that, I hope to answer the question of: What happens when we actually do please God?

I would venture to say that there's is not one of us here today that doesn't want to live a life that's pleasing to God, right? We want our lives to be pleasing in His sight.

Well, the text that we have before us today, the writer of Hebrews is going to commence with what's been affectionately referred to as the Hall of Faith, not the Hall of Fame, the Hall of Faith.

And all of these people, these men and women of God that are in this Hall of Faith, when we get to Chapter 12 and we will, Lord willing, get to Chapter 12. The rapture might happen first, but we're going to try to get to Chapter 12.

But the writer of Hebrews is going to turn this corner and refer to these men and women as the great cloud of witness, bearing witness as a testimony to us now as it was to these Hebrew Christians then who were so discouraged, under tremendous pressure and persecution from their Hebrew brethren to return to Judaism.

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

And many of them were giving up and losing hope and very discouraged, and that discouragement was even giving way to despair. And so the writer of Hebrews inspired by the Holy Spirit is writing to them saying don't give up! Hang on!

And then he goes through all of these men and women who didn't give up, who held on and finished the race, and made it. As if the writer is saying to them then as he is to us now, if they can do it, so can you!

Well, we have a problem right out of the chute. What do you mean? Well, come on, Abraham, Noah, Enoch, who we're going to talk about today, I mean of course, them because they're them. I'm not them.

That's the problem. That's how we think. I don't want to go too far off on this, but maybe someone needs to hear this.

There's really no difference between them then and us now. These were real people like you and I. And actually, I'll take it a step further, and I'm sorry in advance if I'm going to ruin your day and your afternoon. But not only are we like them then, they then looked like kind of I do now because they were from - okay never mind - I told you - apologize in advance.

These are real people. These were real people. These were people like you and me that struggled with daily life, the same kinds of struggles, the doubts that would set in, this fight of faith to fight daily to keep the faith.

And in so doing the writer of Hebrews by the Holy Spirit is going to record for us these men and women of faith who made it. Look at them. They bear witness. They're a testimony. If they can do it, you can do it because God is the same God yesterday, today, and forever.

Well, we're going to start today with this Hall of Faith and we're going to begin with two men, Able and Enoch. And both of these men for different reasons were pleasing to God, and they're going to become for us and to us these examples of what it is that pleases God, and the first one is with Abel in verse 4.

And it is by putting our faith in Him. Here, the writer references the account in the fourth chapter of Genesis, well-known by the way concerning Cain and Abel, two brothers, two offerings; however, we're told that the offering that Abel brought to God was a more excellent sacrifice than the offering that Cain brought.

They both brought offerings to God, but Abel's was acceptable, Cain's was unacceptable.

Question: Why? Why is it that Abel's offering was pleasing to God, whereas conversely Cain's was not pleasing to God?

Well, I will put on the screen an explanation as to the difference between these two sacrifices, huge difference by the way.

Cain's offering was by the flesh. Abel's offering was by faith.

Cain's offering was by works. It was the fruit of his labor. Abel's offering was by the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit.

Cain's offering was produce, the product of his labor, whereas Abel's offering was a sacrifice.

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

Cain's offering was we're told some of many, whereas Abel's offering was the first born of his flock. Cain's offering was just that, an offering. But Abel's offering was also we're told with the most prized fat. It was the best and the first, the first fruits if you prefer.

I don't know why it is or what it is about us, but it's kind of like hey, you know I'm going to get a new one of these. I think I will donate the old one to the church. Really? Reminds me of a story that's told by the late Larry Burkett. He's with the Lord now, but it was in the context of giving our offerings and our first fruits and our tithes to the Lord.

And he tells this story about this rancher who comes home one day all excited, tells his wife, Honey, we had two calves born today! Praise the Lord! I'm going to dedicate one of them to the Lord. So as the wife can and only can, only a wife; leave it to the wife, my wife's not here so I can get away with this today. She asked her husband, oh praise the Lord, which one?

No, it doesn't matter; I'm just going to give one to the Lord. Well, some time goes by, and he comes home one day totally different. I mean just downcast and says to his wife, honey, the Lord's cow died. Oh, I guess that is the one you're going to give to the Lord. Hmm.

No, Abel's offering was the most prized.

Cain's offering was disobedient to what God required. Now this is important. Abel's offering was obedient to what God required. In other words, they both knew what they needed to do in obedience to God.

It was on Cain's part an act of disobedience. He disobeyed God. Obedience is more than sacrifice. It was Abel's obedience.

This one is interesting. We may need to spend just a little bit of time on this. Cain's offering again was the produce, the vegetation, and was likely aesthetically very pleasing to the eyes. I mean probably all arranged, those baskets, when you get those baskets as a gift and everything is just perfectly arranged. It's like aww!

And then here comes Abel with his offering. It's a bloody mess. It's a sacrificed lamb. It is bloody, messy, and probably very smelly too.

Now wait, I'm looking at this and I'm like let's see which one do I want? Which one is more pleasing to me?

Well, of course, this one because man looks at the outward appearance. But God looks at the heart. And so this offering from Cain was unacceptable, whereas Abel's was acceptable and this explains why.

Cain's offering was a symbol of man's efforts in coming to God, whereas Abel's offering was a symbol of God becoming a man. That was the difference, pretty big difference, right?

Cain's offering lastly was offered with no blood that was shed, whereas Abel's offering was offered with the blood of an innocent lamb that was shed, a type, a picture pointing to, yet future, the Lamb of God who would be slain for the sins of the world.

There was no sacrifice with Cain's offering. And the key component here was faith. Abel offered this by faith. That's why it was pleasing; we're going to come back to that in just a moment.

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

But this brings us to verse 5 and a guy that I cannot wait to meet, Enoch. Enoch rises from the pages of our Bibles not just here in Hebrews but back in Genesis as a lesson to us about how pleasing it is to the Lord when we walk close to Him.

Stay with me on this. Like with Abel before him, Enoch pleased God and according to the account in Genesis, I love this, the reason he was so pleasing to God was because he walked closely with God. Again, hang onto that.

Now, we know that he walked close to God, but do you know why he walked close to God? Here is a thought. It's been suggested that Enoch, by faith, was keenly aware of the coming judgment of God which is why he walked so close to God and as such was so pleasing to God.

See, he knew what was coming.

What was coming?

A flood to destroy the entire earth as God's judgment.

But Enoch who walked close to God, pleasing to God, God was so pleased that He one day we're told, I love it, I love that it's so just right there and then you kind of read over it and just move on. And then wait, not so fast, stop right there!

Because he got up one day, put on his - well, he did not put on his pants like we do, sorry, or his robe, whatever it was, he got dressed like we do every morning, but on one particular day he's walking, just going about his day, close to the Lord, in love with the Lord, probably talking to the Lord. And the Lord is like yeah, poof and He took him!

And depending on the translation in Genesis, it says, "And he was no more."

He wasn't?

No.

Where did he go?

He's no more.

Where did he go?

God took him.

Oh, that's why he's no more. Wait a minute. That's the first rapture in the Bible. Why are you looking at me like that?

And it is a picture, a type of the Church of Jesus Christ. And not only is it a picture of the rapture of the Church of Jesus Christ, it is a picture of the pre-tribulation rapture of the church of Jesus Christ. So in the update today, we were talking about Joseph and the 7-year, seven, notice my hands. I'm not doing any horn, devil signs. I had to qualify; this is Shaka; this is not the Devil's sign for those of you on the mainland.

7-year famine. Did you know that pre-famine Joseph took a Gentile bride who's not heard of once the famine begins, a picture of the bride of Jesus Christ, pre-famine?

Enoch, a picture of the church of Jesus Christ pre-flood.

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

Well, wait a minute, I thought Noah was a picture.

No, he's a picture and his family of Israel who go into the flood/tribulation and are saved in the midst of the flood/tribulation. That's a picture of Israel. Joseph, a type of Christ, his brethren a picture of Israel are saved in the midst of the 7-year famine, just as Israel will be saved in the midst of the 7-year tribulation, that 70th week of Daniel, that time of Jacob's trouble.

Last time I checked Jacob, Joseph's father, had 12 sons that become the 12 tribes of Israel. Actually, you might remember the account. It's in Genesis as well.

Jacob wrestled with the Lord, the Lord, that was a pre-Bethlehem appearance of Jesus Christ, all night. That's one strong guy. No, think about it. And he would not let Jesus go until He blessed him.

And the Lord said I can't bless you until I break you. Wrestled all night and what did he do? Well, listen, all throughout Scripture you'll never see the blessing preceding the breaking. Oh, I want to bless you, but you're too strong so I've got to break you. And He touched his hip and broke him. Now, I can bless you. And then when He blessed him, He changed his name.

You've got to understand, Jacob, Yacob, if you're named Jacob here today we love you. But it actually, the name is the nature. It kind of means heel snatcher, kind of conniving. Again, Jacob we love you, but that's what that name meant and God says you're no longer going to be Yacob. I'm going to name you Israel.

You know what Israel means? Governed, ruled by God. That's what Israel means.

So you'll see it interchangeably throughout Scripture where it sometimes it will be referred to as Jacob. It is kind of crazy because sometimes it is in the same narrative. It's kind of like God just is reminding you, remember now Jacob. It is kind of like when your parents would call you by your full name, you knew you were in trouble. But then other times he would be referred to as Israel, governed by God, blessed by God.

So it was this - and oh, one more, can I just do one more? What are you going to say? No?

So you've got Enoch pre-flood.

You've got Joseph and his Gentile bride pre-famine.

And then you've got Daniel pre-furnace.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: they're thrown into a furnace, no ordinary furnace, there is a very interesting detail in the record. Apparently, they turned this furnace up not six times or eight times, but seven times hotter, and they throw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into this seven times hotter fiery furnace and they're saved in the midst of it.

And it's really, actually, I see the humor in it, and of course, I know they have clinical terms for this condition. But I mean, it's so funny to me that they would be - you know, come out. I thought we threw three men in there. I see four and one looks like the Son of God.

That's because it is.

And they didn't even smell like smoke. Do you know the guys that through them in there burned alive? And then they didn't even smell like smoke. And there they are, and they get saved. And it is Jesus who saves them in the midst of the seven times hotter fiery furnace.

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

And then it is like you guys come out here. If I am in there, I am like, I am good. Hey, besides that, you're the one that threw me in here in the first place. I'll stay right where I'm at, the Lord's here. I get saved in the midst of the seven times hotter fiery furnace.

Question: where's Daniel? Oh, he is not there. Why? Well, I am so glad you asked. Pre-furnace, Daniel is exalted and taken up to a high position prior to the seven times hotter fiery furnace.

That is just three of several, pre-flood, pre-famine, pre-furnace. Listen, I'm never going to pass up an opportunity especially when talking about Enoch to mention the typology in the pre-tribulation rapture. I hope you don't mind.

So what was it about Enoch who by faith was so pleasing to God? It's because he walked so close to God. And don't you find it kind of interesting where we're at today?

I truly believe that we're on the cusp of the beginning of the 7-year tribulation because everything that we're told that's going to happen in the 7-year tribulation is already beginning to happen now with a swiftness that is I mean I have to confess and I even mentioned this during the Prophecy Update today, I myself am taken back by how fast everything is moving. It is so fast, so fast.

It actually reminds me of a word in the original language of the Greek New Testament found in the Book of Revelation spoken by Jesus himself that's very telling. He says, "Behold, I am coming quickly."

Quickly. You know what the word "quickly" means? I know deeply profound. It means quickly. But in the original language of the Greek New Testament it's the word "tachos." It's where we get the English word that we use in our cars for the tachometer. It is a measurement of revolutions per minute. The time is set, but the RPMs, that's the word that Jesus uses.

You know what He was saying? Behold I come at a time when things are revving up, speeding up.

Oh, one more thing, why not? I was thinking about this. We talked about it in the Prophecy Update. So I went back in my archives, back to the beginning of this year. Oh, so long ago, not really, nine months ago. And I am looking through my notes and I did a Prophecy Update on, you know, kind of formatted it in the form of the most-often asked questions concerning the jab.

And one of the questions was - this is January, nine months ago - do you think it will be mandated? January. And I looked at my answer, and I'm thinking wait, how did I answer that question? It's pretty bad when you don't remember what you said. Don't worry about you forgetting what I talked about last week. The problem is if I forget what I talked about last week.

Well, anyway, I looked at my answer and the answer was absolutely yes. But here is what I was not prepared for. Yes, I knew it would be mandated. I just did not know how soon.

And I have to confess that here we are at the beginning of September and, first of all, this whole year has been just a blur. I mean so much has happened so fast and things are revving up. I mean with this chiefly, but even geopolitically how fast things are moving.

You know if you went back five years and you looked at what the geopolitical situation was just five years ago and you compared it to what the situation is today, it's mind-boggling.

Now if you took that same approach and instead of going back five years, go forward five years it would be, I mean exceedingly mind-boggling. I would even venture to say that many of the nations

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

today, and I will put Afghanistan at the forefront. Five years ago were not where they're at today nor would they reasonably be in the same place they are today five years from now.

So what your point, Pastor? My point is this: Things are happening so fast and there is this expiration date, if I can call it that, or shelf-life when it comes to Bible prophecy where everything right now is exactly as we're told it would be and even 5, 10 years ago, you could not talk about Russia, Iran, Turkey in Syria. You can today.

Fast-forward 5, 10 years from now. You think those same nations are going to be in the same place they are today with as fast as everything is moving? No way, no way.

Okay, where were we? There was actually a sermon here that I was - oh, did I really go off. Oh, I know why.

Because Enoch knew that the judgment of God was coming. And I think that's the take-away, isn't it? This crisis, if I can call it that for lack of a better word, it has had the much-needed effect of bringing people closer to Jesus, and some people coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus, and some Christians who have strayed away coming back to Jesus.

We talked about this on Thursday night as well. But in the Psalms, David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, he's very open about it. He says had the Lord not afflicted me I would have gone astray. In other words, I needed a crisis, I needed a trial. I needed a difficulty, I needed affliction because that's what brought me back to You. That's what brought me back to You, close to You.

See when things are going good we're just kind of hey, praise the Lord, but boy then let adversity strike, it is like oh, God! Have you ever connected those dots by the way? You don't think the Lord knows that? The only time He's got your undivided attention is when you're in a crisis.

Oh, I haven't heard from JD in a while. I know, we'll have adversity strike. We'll hear from him immediately.

Oh, Lord!

Hey, I missed you. I had to afflict you in order to hear from you. It's good to hear from you.

Oh, Lord!

It is Ecclesiastes 7:14, Solomon writes that during the times of prosperity and joy, praise the Lord, but when, not if - I wish it said "if." It doesn't say "if." It says "when." When adversity strikes, stop and consider and realize that God allows one as well as the other, brings them side-by-side along each other, alongside each other.

Why?

So that we will always be completely reliant upon Him for our future. See, when things are going good, we just kind of take it for granted. It's always going to be good. But then adversity strikes. Is that not when we stop and consider? Is that not then that God has our attention? O

h, now that I've got your attention, there's some things I want to say to you. There's some things I want to show you. But see before the affliction, before the trial, I didn't have your attention. I've been wanting to tell you this and show you this.

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

Here's where I'm going with this. I truly believed that Enoch walked so close to God that he knew and God showed him what was coming. And he was so close to God and he knew what was coming and that drew him even closer to the Lord because of what was coming.

One last thing on this and then we will move on to verse 6. I truly believe that this crisis is the last call for people to come to the Lord or back to the Lord because the judgment of God is coming and He will pour out His wrath on a Christ-rejecting world for the last seven years of human history as we know it.

And if anything, like Enoch, that should have the effect of bringing us to the Lord and we are close to the Lord knowing what's coming. Because like Enoch, we know what's coming.

All right, verse 6. We'll spend the remainder of our time on this because this is what pleases God. It's earnestly, can I say tenaciously seeking Him. I don't know if it's possible to overstate the importance of just this one verse tucked into this chapter in the context of Enoch because he pleased God and then the writer inspired by the Holy Spirit says Enoch pleased God and without faith it is impossible to please God.

Wait, can we take this slow?

That's fine.

So it's impossible to please God without faith?

Yes.

Okay, does that mean that is possible to please God with faith?

Absolutely, absolutely.

One need look no further than to the Gospels to see how Jesus would stop everything and take note of someone's faith. "I've not seen faith like this anywhere in Israel" or sadly the lack thereof particularly on the part of the disciples. I know we talk about this often, but how many times did Jesus say to the disciples "Oh, you of little faith"? Why did you doubt? Why is your faith so little when your God is so big?

If it's impossible to please God without faith, could it be that Jesus was not disgusted, but it is very possible that he was displeased, not disappointed, not surprised, kind of like, come on, what's up with you guys?

I think about Peter when - I mean you talk about faith. When they're in that storm - keep in mind when they saw Jesus, they were terrified and then Jesus identifies himself, and then leave it to Peter, Lord bid me come.

Keep in mind the storm had not yet been calmed. And Peter by faith gets out of that boat and by faith walks on water by faith in the midst of the storm. And then he takes his eyes off the Lord, and I will add and argue when he took his eyes off the Lord, he also took his faith out from the Lord and that's why he began to sink.

Now was Jesus upset with him? Come on Peter what's the matter with you? No.

I mean I'm thinking about the other disciples. Those guys wouldn't even get out of the boat. In fact, one has humorously suggested, and again, I know they have clinical terms for seeing humor in things

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

like this, but the suggestion is that you know when he took his eyes off the Lord, he turned back to the disciples in the boat and goes ha-ha look at me! Boom, down he went because pride comes before the sinking, in this case.

Okay, that's not what happened, but anyway...

But he took his eyes off the Lord. And then he prays a 3-word prayer, Lord save me. I mean if you think about it, that's all he had time for. Because when the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, our Father which art in Heaven, he wouldn't have been able to get that far. I would have been our Father [gurgling] he's done.

So it's a really - here's my point and believe it or not, I actually do have one. God answers 3-word prayers. Yeah, but where is his faith? You know come on Peter. Lord, save me! He started to doubt. You took your eyes off Me, no more faith in Me and down you go.

And if I'm the Lord, I would have let him... which is why - I want to be Christlike, I really do - but I want to let him... just for little bit, just to really reinforce the lesson, you know?

[Laughter]

He doesn't do that. He reaches down and saves him. Yeah, but without faith it's impossible to please Him, so if Jesus was displeased, why would He respond like that? That's the next part of the verse. Because he doesn't just stop at it's impossible to please God without faith, but he goes on to say this, that first we must come to Him, believe in Him, that He exists, and diligently, tenaciously seek Him.

Okay, wait a minute now, you're on a whole new level here. I know. But it's pleasing to God.

What's pleasing to God? I mean you got me at faith is pleasing to God, walking close is pleasing to God, but are you now saying that diligently, earnestly, tenaciously seeking Him is pleasing to God?

No. God's Word is telling you that. I don't mean to be cute, but that's the truth.

When we by faith tenaciously - when I say tenaciously, let me qualify that. I mean we don't let go. We don't stop praying. We just keep praying and keep the faith, and I mean we're tenacious about it. We're bulldogs about it. We ain't letting go. That's diligently seeking Him, tenaciously seeking Him.

And then the best for last. God is so pleased by it, He rewards it.

Oh?

Wait... read the whole verse. He's a rewarder of those who tenaciously, diligently, earnestly seek Him. What, He's going to blow you off? I think of the parable of the persistent widow.

And please when it comes to the parables don't get sideways on these things. I mean God is not like this reluctant judge, you know? This persistent widow is pleading and she is calling him, posting on his social media pages. She's texting him; she's knocking on his door at 2:00 in the morning. I mean she will not leave him alone.

And he is like go away, no, no, and she's like I need justice.

This is a very loose paraphrase of the parable. But Jesus is saying of this unjust judge who finally says oh, okay already! And he gives her what she asked for. Why? Because of her tenacity.

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

And depending again on the translation you have, it's like one of these: Man, she's never going to give up. I mean she is driving me crazy. The only way to get her to stop is just give her what she's asking.

Now again, that is not the way the Lord is, no. It's not like the Lord is saying, okay, fine get JD off my back, just give it to him already. It's not like that.

The parable, the point of the parable is if an unjust judge is going to do that, how much more your heavenly Father?

When I was a young believer, I remember talking to another Christian, older in the faith, not necessarily wiser, by the way. Kind of messed me up actually. Because their belief was that if you kept asking the Lord for something more than once that was a lack of faith.

And man, that really messed me up. I was such a new believer, on fire for the Lord, and I was still learning how to pray. And my prayers were 3-word prayers like Peter basically. And God answered them, just the child-likeness and the innocence of them, the simplicity of them.

And then when she said that to me, I am like oh, I've been asking the Lord for this for like two months now. And it means I don't have faith?

Yeah, I just ask Him one time and believe by faith.

So I stopped asking Him because I mean after all - I asked Him once, that is it. Now think about that, the logic of that. A husband and wife get married. I love you. I love you. 10 years go by. Do you love me? I told you I loved you when we got married.

[Laughter]

What more do you need? If you have a better illustration, let me know, I'm happy to use it. No. It's not a lack of faith. The tenacity: what kept that persistent widow going? She believed that he would do it.

Let me say the same thing in a different way. The reason for her tenacity was she knew at some point he would do it. He hadn't done it yet, but if she knew that he wouldn't, she would have given up.

Am I, right? You're looking at me like you know, wow, did you have a really rough week? I actually did have a really rough week. But you get that connection?

If you're that tenacious, oh, my goodness, it's like they can do it. They're going to do it. Otherwise if I knew they weren't going to do it, I'd go find somebody who would. That's what tenacity is. That's what diligently seeking Him does.

And God will reward those who by faith first come to Him, believe in Him, and diligently seek Him. And then it's like here you go. And then it's like here you go. Not because I'm reluctant. Not because I'm hesitant. It's not like I'm up here going, I'm going to make him suffer on this one. I'm going to let this go for a while just to drive home the point.

And then three months later oh, Lord please! Okay, he's about to give up, go ahead, get down there, give it to him. That's faith. He knows I can do this. He believes by faith that I will do this. I'm going to reward him by doing this.

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

Let me just connect this to what Romans Chapter 8, Paul writing to the church in Rome says, and this is when the Lord opened this up to my understanding, it changed my whole prayer life on everything. You know, I always know that it was a good decision or a good thing when my only regret is that I didn't make it sooner or know it sooner and such is the case with this verse.

Basically it goes like this: Paul says that - now think this through with me - if God would not withhold His only begotten son who He gave to you to die for you, if He's unwilling to withhold Jesus from you, is there anything that He would withhold from you?

Okay let's work this out, let's work this through. In other words, if God so loved me that He would send His only begotten son to die for me, oh, is there anything that He wouldn't do for me? So Jesus said if you will ask anything in My name and it brings glory to the Father, He will do it.

It's not that He'll take a good look at it, He'll review it. He'll discuss it with Michael and Gabriel and we'll see. Oh, how about this one? This is a goody. Actually, it is not a goody. It is a baddy. Let's see how you do over the next couple of weeks. That is called works. That's called earning it. That's not grace. That's works.

But the enemy is right there with that one, isn't he? You're still asking God to do that after what you did? Come on. He's not going to do that for you.

No, no, no, no, if He would send His only begotten son to die for me, He'll do anything for me if it's for my good and His glory, done deal, done deal.

We just don't know when. Of course, we're so patient, right, with God? We want what we want when we want it in the color we want it. And we pray like that, right?

And I think about Isaiah 30:18. We were just there a number of weeks ago on Thursday nights where through the prophet Isaiah the Lord says that He will wait - I hate that word because I hate to wait. He will wait to be gracious to you.

In other words, God is like now just wait. We always say God's never late. Well, He's never early either.

And truth be made known, we don't want Him to be early. His timing is always perfect.

As one quipped, this has always stuck with me, when the timing is wrong, God says, slow.

When the request is wrong, God says, no.

When I'm wrong, God says, grow.

But if the timing is right and the request is right and I am right, God says, go, here you go.

But it's when we seek Him diligently, believing by faith that He will do it if it's for my good, why would He withhold it? If He's not going to withhold His only begotten son, why would He withhold it? So you're praying for somebody's salvation. Why would God withhold that? I know that people have their free will, but never ever, ever, ever, ever give up.

You're praying for that wayward daughter, that prodigal son. Never, never, never, never, never, never give up. Don't you know that God loves them more than you ever could and God wants them right more than you ever would? Never give up. Tenaciously, persistently, earnestly, diligently seek Him. Keep knocking.

September 12, 2021
Hebrews 11:4-6 – What Pleases God?
JD Farag

By the way, ask, seek, knock. We know that passage well, right?

Did you know in the original language it carries with it the idea of ask, keep on asking; knock, (Knocking) keep on knocking.

(Knocking) I'm not going to stop knocking.

Stop knocking.

(Knocking) No, I'm not going to stop knocking.

Seek, keep on seeking. In the original language, that's what Jesus is saying. Ask, keep on asking; you'll receive. Knock, keep on knocking; a door will be opened unto you. Seek, keep on seeking, and you will find. Just tenaciously, persist in faith because if you stop, that means you've lost faith that He's going to do it. And that displeases Him.

You want to please Him?

I want to please Him.

Do you want to be rewarded by Him?

I want to be rewarded by Him.

Well, then earnestly seek Him because that's pleasing to Him. Why don't you stand, we'll have the worship team come up? I'll close in prayer; they'll close us in song.

I hope in some way the Holy Spirit will take this and just really bless it to our hearts, especially for those that are discouraged. And man, I know things are getting rough. Isn't tomorrow the day? So if you want to eat out or work out, I have no problem with the working out because I don't work out. I don't know if you can tell or not.

But eating out; it's kind of like, oh. No, there's no eating out. It's take out! Oh, Lord I mean - yes, but God. That's a good way to end.

Father in Heaven, thank You. Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Lord, that we can please You. Thank You, Lord, for showing us and telling us how it is that we can please You, Lord. We do want to please You. We do want to walk close to You.

Lord, thank You. I pray Lord, that we would be numbered amongst those of whom it can be said like Enoch, they walked close to God knowing what was coming. Lord, we know what's coming and we want to be close to You because that day is coming too, soon, and very soon, where we, like Enoch will be no more because You will take us when that trumpet sounds and the dead in Christ rise first and we who are alive and remain are caught up to meet You the air.

Lord, can't wait. Come quickly Lord Jesus. Maranatha, in Jesus' name, amen.