

Hebrews Pt 20 “The Power of Pleasing God”

CENTRAL QUESTION:

What does it mean to live a life that pleases God?

INTRODUCTION

Key Scripture: Hebrews 13:20-21

"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 for ever and ever. Amen."

Focus Word: Pleasing (verse 21)

Main Idea: If you're a Christian who has been redeemed by Christ's blood, you should want to please God in word, in deed, and in everything you do.

I. PURSUE HOLINESS

Key Scripture: Hebrews 13:1-6

Understanding Holiness:

- **Definition:** Separation; being set apart from other things for sacred service
- **Hebrew Insight:** "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 6:3) - repetition indicates extreme importance
- **Core Concept:** Holiness describes someone or something set apart for God's will and purpose

Biblical Foundation:

- **Leviticus 11:44-45** - "You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy"
- **1 Thessalonians 4:7** - "God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness"

- **Romans 12:1** - "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable and pleasing to God"

Practical Commands (Hebrews 13:1-6):

- Let brotherly love continue
- Show hospitality to strangers
- Remember those in prison
- Honor marriage and keep it undefiled
- Keep your life free from the love of money
- Be content with what you have

Key Quote: "The horrible tragedy we have in America today is Christianity without holiness." - Leonard Ravenhill

II. HONOR YOUR LEADERS

Key Scriptures: Hebrews 13:7, 17

Verse 7:

"Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith."

Verse 17:

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you."

Application:

- Honor your pastors and spiritual leaders
- They will give an account for the souls they're leading
- Support them with joy, not complaints
- This extends to all authority (workplace, etc.)

III. CONSECRATE YOURSELF

Key Scripture: Hebrews 13:8-14

What Consecration Means:

- **Definition:** To sanctify, prepare, dedicate, be hallowed, be holy, be separate
- **Hebrew/Greek Concept:** Being set apart for a specific purpose or time

The Pattern of Christ:

Verse 12: "So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood."

Verse 13: "Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured."

Biblical Examples of Consecration:

- **Joshua** - "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you"
- **David** - Killed lions and bears in private before facing Goliath in public
- **Daniel** - Purposed in his heart not to defile himself with the king's food
- **Jesus** - Went to desolate places to pray alone (John 17:19 - "For their sake I consecrate myself")

The Private/Public Principle:

- What you do in private matters
- If you want power in public, you must pay the price in secret
- Hidden prayer births public fire
- God sees what no one claps for

The "I Must" Principle:

When you consecrate yourself and spend time with God, He gives you an "I must":

- **Luke 2:49** - Jesus: "I must be in my Father's house"
- **Acts 19:21** - Paul: "I must also visit Rome"
- **John 3:7** - Jesus: "You must be born again"
- **Luke 4:43** - Jesus: "I must preach the good news to the other cities also"

Key Insight: When you please God through consecration, He will show you not what you might do, but what you **MUST** do.

IV. COMMIT TO PRAYER

Key Scriptures: Hebrews 13:18-21; Psalm 109:4

The Writer's Request (v. 18):

"Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things."

The Writer's Benediction (vv. 20-21):

"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."

The Heart of Pleasing God:

Psalm 109:4 - "In return for my love they accuse me, but I give myself to prayer."

Key Principles About Prayer:

- No person is greater than their prayer life
- "A man is what he is on his knees before God, and nothing more" - Robert Murray M'Cheyne
- We must be dependent on God
- Jesus said: "My house shall be called a house of prayer"

The Essential Question:

When we leave church, we should ask: "Did we pray?"

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Daily Challenge:

Give yourself to prayer - This one practice fixes everything else:

- Prayer gets you into the heart of God
- God changes your desires when you're in His presence
- You become an imitator of Christ naturally
- You can't please God if you never talk to Him

The Four Commitments:

1. **Pursue holiness** - Live set apart for God's purposes
2. **Honor your leaders** - Support those watching over your souls
3. **Consecrate yourself** - Spend time with God in private
4. **Commit to prayer** - Make it your foundation

KEY TAKEAWAY:

If you want to please God, you must become a person of prayer. Everything else flows from this foundation.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- Are you pursuing holiness in your daily life?
- How are you honoring the spiritual leaders God has placed in your life?
- What would it look like to consecrate yourself - to set apart time for God alone?
- Are you giving yourself to prayer, or just praying occasionally?
- What is God showing you that you MUST do?

Scripture References for Further Study:

Hebrews 13 (entire chapter) | Isaiah 6:1-8 | Leviticus 11:44-45 | 1 Thessalonians 4:7 |
Romans 12:1 | Joshua 3:5 | Daniel 1 | John 17:19 | Luke 2:49 | Acts 19:21 | John 3:7 | Luke
4:43 | Psalm 109:4 | Psalm 139:7-10