



MAKING GOD SMILE !



Sometimes something you read opens your mind up to see something in a new way. It can just be a word sometimes, or a short phrase, that gives you a burst of a new insight, a sort of “AHA” moment. That occurred to me when I read Chapter 9 of Rick Warren’s *Purpose Driven Life*, “What Makes God Smile?” I hadn’t really thought much about that, that we can make God smile. The first sentence of the chapter jumped out at me “The smile of God is the goal of your life.” That really made me think! Is that really true?

In the last sermon I gave we were talking about the purpose of life, and we summed it up that the goal and purpose of our life is to be in God’s family Kingdom inheriting the whole universe forever. That’s going to be a wonderful time of joy and happiness for us, but it is also going to put a smile on God’s face!

The reason He created us was that He wants to have a family, and when that family is ultimately realised in the spirit realm, He will be very happy! There is joy in the presence of the angels when a sinner repents – think of how much joy it gives God Himself! God does have joy and happiness, and it is possible to give Him pleasure and make Him smile (even though He does love us unconditionally whatever we do). When people don’t follow His ways He dearly loves them, but they don’t make Him smile and have joy.

We see that in Genesis 6:6-8 ⁶“The LORD regretted that He had made human beings on the earth, and His heart was deeply troubled. ⁷ So the LORD said, “I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.” ⁸ But Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD.”

Mankind as a whole gave God lots of grief, but Noah gave Him pleasure. (LB: Noah was a pleasure to the Lord.) Why was this? Verse 9 “This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God.” The New Living Translation says “Noah consistently followed God’s will and enjoyed a close relationship with Him.” (A good way of saying, “walked with God.”)

Psalms 147:11 “the LORD delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His unfailing love.” The KJV says He “takes pleasure in those who honour Him.” Notice this again over the page in Psalms 149:4 (NIV) “For the LORD takes delight in His people; He crowns the humble with victory.” Verse 5 We should “rejoice in this honour and sing for joy on our beds!”

God delights in us, He smiles and is happy and full of joy when we follow Him. This should be a great source of joy to us, to realise this! When we give God enjoyment, our own hearts are filled with joy.

Notice Psalms 45:11 “Let the king be enthralled by your beauty; honour Him, for He is your lord.” This is clearly talking of us, the Church, the bride of Christ our Lord. We can give Him pleasure! We can make God smile! He is enthralled by our beauty! It’s hard for us to understand this, but that is how God looks on us! He really **loves** His people as a husband loves His bride, but much more than that! The Message translation says “the King is wild about you! Since He’s your Lord, adore Him.”

Is that overstating it? Well, one of the main reasons the Song of Solomon is in the Bible is to describe God's tremendous love for us! It is a song of love between a simple Jewish maiden (the Shulamite woman) and her lover, Solomon the King. But it has two levels of meaning – a spiritual application as well as a physical. It applies to the love between God and Israel (who were married) but more especially, God and the Church, the bride of Christ, as we are often shown to be.

Song 4:1-16 is a section that shows how God feels towards the Church

Verses 1-2 isn't exactly the language we would use to describe our love today, but you can see the force of the love behind these thoughts.

"How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are doves. Your hair is like a flock of goats descending from the hills of Gilead. ²Your teeth are like a flock of sheep just shorn, coming up from the washing. Each has its twin; not one of them is alone."

Verse 7 "You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you."

God doesn't see any flaws in us because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. That is how He looks on us. "There is no condemnation for those in Christ." (Rom 8:1)

Verse 9 "You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace."

We have stolen God's heart with our beauty, He is the one who gave us our clothes, He gave us our lives, but this is how He looks on us! We didn't earn or deserve it of ourselves in any way.

Song of Solomon 6:2-3 ²"My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, to browse in the gardens and to gather lilies. ³I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine; he browses among the lilies."

In Ezekiel 16, God describes how He dressed Israel with jewellery, beautiful clothes and a crown, and how He loved her, before she went astray. He looks on His people of Spiritual Israel with even more favour – He absolutely revels in us!

The story of the Prodigal Son shows God's feeling toward us, as a Father. The Message Bible says, after the sinning son returns home: "When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. His heart pounding, he ran out, embraced him and kissed him." That describes the way God feels about us!

Psalms 37:23 (NIV) "The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in Him;"

(NLT) "The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives."

We can delight God, we can bring a smile to His face, when we are godly, obedient, when we want to please Him.

Hebrews 11:6: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." This means that with faith we do please Him. "He that comes to God must believe that He exists, and that He wants to reward those who diligently seek Him." i.e. this will please Him.

So if we have faith in God and try to follow His ways, we will give tremendous pleasure to God. He really loves us and is thrilled to see us following Him and He just wants to put His arms around us and give us a big hug.

We really make Him smile. Just in case you still don't believe God smiles, there are a couple of verses that show He does:

Numbers 6:22-26 (MSG) ²²⁻²³ "GOD spoke to Moses: "Tell Aaron and his sons, This is how you are to bless the People of Israel. Say to them, ²⁴ GOD bless you and keep you, ²⁵ GOD smile on you and gift you, ²⁶ GOD look you full in the face and make you prosper."

NLT ²²Then the LORD said to Moses, ²³"Tell Aaron and his sons to bless the people of Israel with this special blessing: ²⁴'May the LORD bless you and protect you. ²⁵May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. ²⁶May the LORD show you His favour and give you his peace.'

This is what God told them to pray. That's how the MSG and NLT put it. That He would "make His face to shine on them." If that isn't a smile, what is it? We don't talk these days about a shining face, but about a **beaming** face – a smile.

And the Message version translates Psalm 119:135 "Smile on me, your servant, teach me the right way to live."

Do you want God to smile on you? Do you want Him to take pleasure in you—to delight in you?

Then the key is to believe Him (if we have faith we will please Him), and to obey Him (as Noah obeyed Him and was a pleasure to Him.) "Trust and obey" as the song says.

Psalm 147:11 (CEV) "The Lord is pleased with those who worship Him and trust His love." And this is really the purpose of our lives. As Rick Warren put it "The smile of God is the goal of your life."

In Revelation 4:11(KJV) we see why God created the world.

"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created." (or by your will – but His will is His pleasure.)

The reason He created the universe was to have a family to share it with—something that gives Him great pleasure.

We've see many Scriptures showing how much pleasure He takes in His people. He really loves us with a passion! He wants to see us do well in life, and follow Him and His ways, and He really looks forward to crowning us with glory and honour in His Kingdom!

Psalm 14:2 says "The Lord looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who are wise, who want to please God."

Col. 1:10 (NIV) "so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God"

We can ask the question "How much pleasure am I getting out of life?" or we can ask "How much pleasure is God getting out of my life?" That's a good way of looking at it, and in fact if we look at it that way, concentrating on how much pleasure we can give God, we will end up getting the maximum of pleasure ourselves!

Let's live in a way that will give God pleasure and bring a smile to His face!