

“HOW TO PLEASE GOD”

Romans 8:5-13

Message 1871

Every thinking person hopes and tries to please God. I believe even those persons that deny the existence of God, the God of the heavens, at the same time seek to please whatever they have set up as a final authority.

Everybody sets up some final authority. I have chosen to set up God in my life as the final authority, the God that is revealed in the Bible. Some people deny Him and at the same time they set up some final authority.

In every religion worshippers have ways they hope will bring the favor of their object of worship. Even if it is a stone or a piece of wood, they hope that the way they go about worship will be favorable to their object of worship.

We Christians long to please our God, the God of the Bible, the God of revelation, the true God. We want to please the Lord. We have instructions in the Bible on HOW TO PLEASE GOD. One such text is Romans 8:5-13.

5. *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.*

6. *For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

7. *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

8. *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

9. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

10. *And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*

11. *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

12. *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.*

13. *For it ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*

Praise God! Here are the INSTRUCTIONS the Apostle Paul gives that can help you please God.

EXAMINE THE CONDITIONS OF THE CARNAL MIND is the first instruction. You need to understand what the carnal mind is. The carnal mind is the fleshly mind, the mind that we have before we are born again. It is the mind we have as fallen, sinful human beings. We have the carnal mind with us all the time.

Let us look at the range of the carnal mind. The Apostle Paul teaches us here that “they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh.” “And to be carnally minded is death.” The range of the carnal

mind is that it is absorbed with the fleshly and leads to death.

The condition of the carnal mind in verse 7 “is enmity against God.” Now enmity means it has set itself against God. It is like a warring army, it is against God. The carnal mind has taken its position against God, it refuses to be subject to God. The Bible tells us it is impossible for those that are in the flesh to please God. They cannot please God.

The carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God. It is not subject and cannot be. Why not? Because the carnal mind is self exalting. It cannot please God.

There is the condition of the carnal mind. We should understand that the carnal mind, the fleshly mind is not able to please God. The Bible makes that absolutely clear. The first instruction is, examine the conditions of the carnal mind.

EXPERIENCE THE CONTROL OF THE INDWELLING SPIRIT is the second instruction. There is a change of directors. The flesh is no longer in control. The Spirit of God is indwelling us as stated in verse 9, “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” It becomes clear that if a person does not have the Spirit of Christ then he is none of His. But if he has the Spirit of Christ then he is no longer in the flesh but in the Spirit.

So there is a change of directors. The person now gets his instructions from the Spirit of God instead of from the carnal, fleshly mind. The indwelling Spirit directs him. That is the true test.

Now the second word in verse 10 is the little word “if” which we should understand to convey the idea of “since.” But since “Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.” That’s beyond question. When Christ is in you, as Christ is in you and since Christ is in you then, the body, the flesh, is dead. The flesh is dead because Jesus died on the cross and brought death to our sinful natures. His death made possible the killing of the flesh of sin. Then the spirit is life through the righteousness of Jesus. The spirit is alive to please God.

We should understand the indwelling Spirit will please God. So how do you please God? You have a change of directors and you experience the control of the Spirit. That is how you please God.

EXERCISE THE CONQUEST OF THE MORTAL BODY is the third instruction. I am greatly blessed by that eleventh verse, especially the last part: “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

There is a newness of life like the resurrected life of Jesus. In fact the Apostle Paul teaches us in another place that we are to walk in newness of life even as Jesus walked in newness of life after His resurrection. The Spirit life injects into us a new kind of living. It gives us a totally new understanding, a new perception, a new direction as we exercise the conquest of the mortal body.

But there is also the operation of the conquest. Notice, we are not debtors to the flesh. We do not owe the flesh anything. We owe nothing to the flesh. We rather should live after the Spirit. We are debtors to the Spirit. Notice how the Apostle puts it there in verse 12: “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.” Oh, no! We owe the Spirit, we owe ourselves, we owe our obedience to the Spirit. Flesh life leads to sure death. There is no question about that. Spirit life leads a secure life. There is no question about that.

Look at the last part of verse 13: “but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” That’s great! That’s wonderful! That’s how God provides for us. We should understand the conquest of the mortal body leads to life. For if you live after the flesh you are on the point of dying but

if through the Spirit you do put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. Praise God!

How do you please God? If you wish to please God then carefully follow these instructions: Examine the condition of the carnal mind; it is opposed to God. Experience the control of the indwelling Spirit; capitalize on the opportunity of having the Spirit. Exercise the conquest of the mortal body; be victorious in its operation.