

God Delights in You

Radical changes occur in our emotions when we learn that God enjoys us.

As Christians we often have vague, even contradictory ideas about God's personality. Our ideas generally are founded on relationships we have had with earthly authority figures, particularly our parents. Also important are teachers and sometimes athletic coaches, tutors or piano instructors—anyone we have looked up to and admired.

Our experiences with these authority figures affect us emotionally in a very dramatic way. They may prevent us from being able to see God as He really is and to fully receive His love and acceptance. They may make it almost impossible for us to believe He delights in us just as we are.

If one of the following descriptions paints a picture of your earthly father, you probably have some wrong ideas about God.

The passive father. The passive or emotionally distant father expresses his affections in a minimal way or not at all. He loves his children but rarely says so. And they are never sure if he feels their pain or shares their joy.

The authoritarian father. The authoritarian father intervenes to stop what his children are doing wrong. He hands out a list of dos and don'ts. This kind of father does not honor individuality. He is interested only in his own goals and desires and wants only to be obeyed.

The abusive father. Abusive fathers purposefully inflict pain on their children, hurting them emotionally, mentally, physically and sometimes sexually.

The absent father. The absent father is totally unavailable to his children. He may have died, be employed in a job that consumes all his time or find other ways to occupy himself, but he simply is never there. His children feel abandoned and neglected.

The accusing father. The accusing father proclaims to love his children with his whole heart but judges them at every failure. He believes he is motivating them to try harder and do right by pointing out their mistakes. He rarely shows any affection or affirms them.

No matter what kind of father you had, he is not a true picture of God. Neither are any of your other earthly authority figures. God tells us in His Word, “‘You thought that I was altogether like you...[but] ‘My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways’” (Ps. 50:21; Is. 55:8-9, NKJV).

As the heavens are higher than the earth, so God’s affections are higher than man’s. The greatest father on Earth falls infinitely short of expressing the emotions of God. There is no adequate human model to give a picture of God’s heart.

When I was introduced by the Holy Spirit to a smiling God, it changed my life. I began to look up and think of God with a big grin on His face when He looked at me. Then I heard Him say: “Oh, I love you. I enjoy you! You fill Me with such

pleasure.”

I responded: “Who, me? Do You have the right person? Don’t You see my sin and failure?”

But the Father lovingly answered: “I see the sincerity in your heart. You look at the outward man, but I see the cry in your heart to please Me. I feel great delight and pleasure over you!”

Radical changes occur in our emotions when we begin to grasp that we serve a God who actually enjoys us as we are maturing spiritually.

My earthly father was imperfect in many ways. However, he did communicate his enjoyment of me. This was one of his greatest gifts, and it profoundly affected my image of the personality of God. It helped me realize that my Father God likes me just as my earthly father did.

Your earthly father may not have given you this gift. But your heavenly Father is waiting to show you how very much He delights in you. He is a Father who is for you—available, concerned and supportive. He will not hurt or condemn you. Why not take a moment to look up and see Him smiling at you today?

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