

Love and Pleasure

✖ We can't do one thing to make God love us any more than He already loves us, and we can't do anything to make Him love us any less. However, we are responsible for how pleased God is with us.

If you have children, it might be easier to understand. Your love for them is inexhaustible but they determine by their actions, attitudes and behavior how pleased you are with them, right?

Lisa and I have put challenges before our four sons with the promise of nice rewards for their labor. It delights us when they rise to the occasion and we're thrilled to reward them. But when they don't fulfill the tasks, we can't reward their work. We want to, but when you reward children when they don't deserve or earn it, you take away incentive—and incentive is a good thing.

God's pleasure in us is no different—it is based on our choices in life. This is why Paul writes, "We make it our *aim* to be *well pleasing* to Him" (2 Corinthians 5:9, NIV). We should be passionate in our pursuit to be fully pleasing to Him. Nothing else should take preeminence over this purpose. If we live with this supreme goal as our life standard, then two things will occur: *abounding joy* and *complete fulfillment*.

Our primary motive for pleasing God is driven by our love for Him. We adore Him because He first loved us and filled our hearts with His love! As a true child of God, your greatest satisfaction comes when you know *God is pleased with me*. If we walk in this knowledge, nothing can overpower that joy.

The second benefit of pursuing this supreme goal is that we'll be rewarded greatly. Earning a great reward is the exact reason Paul exhorts us to please God, and he elaborates on this in the next verse. "Therefore we make it our aim, whether

present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:9–10).

We are advised to please God because someday He will judge us. You may ask, “But I thought Jesus had saved me from that?” Yes, He is your Savior, but one day you’ll stand before Him as Judge. Many are unaware that on some future day every believer will stand individually before Christ’s judgment seat and rewards will be given based on what was done in our short time on earth. Today’s English Version states, “We will each receive what we deserve” (vs. 10).

Our sins will not be judged, for the blood of Jesus eradicated the eternal punishment ascribed to sin. Rather, we will be rewarded, or suffer loss, for our labor as believers in Jesus Christ.

And it’s not just a reward God desires us to possess, but a full reward! “Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully” (2 John 1:8, NIV).

*Marked by boldness and passion, **John Bevere** delivers uncompromising truth through his award-winning curriculum and best-selling books now available in over sixty languages. His newest book is Extraordinary: The Life You’re Meant to Live. More information is available at .*