

## GOD'S PLEASURE IN HIS SON

*"This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."* - Matthew 17:5, 2 Peter 1:17.

*"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief, when Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."* - Isaiah 53:10.

The Father's pronouncement of His pleasure in His Son is a demonstration of unspeakable glory, *'his face shone as the sun.. and his raiment was white and glistering'*. It caused the watching disciples to fall on their faces. It was not that humans should fall before such glory, it was God, the Father, taking pleasure in the radiance of His Son. He reveals Him in blinding light and says 'This is my pleasure'.

In measure, as humans, we can understand this revealing of God in His Son, in a scene of resplendent glory. What we find quite beyond us is an explanation of the Prophet Isaiah's word, *"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him"*! Where do we start in an attempt to interpret the Lord's heart? In his book THE PLEASURES OF GOD, John Piper refers to the 'Great tension of the ages'. The harmonising of two opposites:

On the one hand 'God's passion to promote His pleasure and His glory and on the other, God's electing love for sinners that scorned that glory.'

Seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, we are given the answer to the great question of how sinful humanity can be reconciled to a holy and righteous God. It was by the bruising and putting to death of His Son. And the staggering thing is that God took pleasure in it! He was not slain by man in an uncontrollable frenzy, He was, as the Apostle Peter states, *"delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God"* - Acts 2:23.

We might ask, Why did God do this? He did it to accomplish the task that would bring Him the ULTIMATE PLEASURE! That we, sinners of a fallen race, might be reconciled to Him! This is the ultimate glory spoken of by the Apostle John in his Gospel, *"Father, I will that them whom thou hast given me, be with*

*me where I am that they may behold my glory" - John 17:24.* Why could our sin not be ignored and a merciful God overlook it? Because God loves the honour of His Name. He cannot act as though sin, which belittles His glory, doesn't matter. So heinous in the sight of God is man's sin and human guilt that it demanded the death of God Incarnate. What an awesome thought! In Proverbs 17:15, we read *"He who justifies the wicked is an abomination to the Lord"*. In our day, we are enraged when guilty men go free, yet at the heart of the Christian Gospel is the doctrine that God justifies the ungodly and acquits the guilty! But how can He do that and remain righteous? Again He Himself gives us the answer through His apostle, *"...justified, freely, by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" - Romans 3:24.* Everything the Lord Jesus suffered He suffered for God's pleasure and glory. He cannot and will not under any circumstances fail Him. He speaks with authority, *"I do always those things that please him (the Father)" - John 8:29.* He also said, referring to His death, *"Now is the Son of man glorified and God is glorified in him" - John 13:31.* All the pain, the shame, the humiliation, the dishonour, would bring glory to His Father. He was determined that through suffering and death, Satan and all hosts, that had brought unimaginable pain and death into His creation, would be defeated and ensure that God's righteous character would not be tarnished. God would justify sinners and retain His glory because He Himself (in the person of His Son) became answerable for our iniquity. This is the Gospel God's good news! And Ephesians 5:2 tells us that the sacrifice of Christ was *"an odour of a sweet smell" - a fragrant aroma to God.*

Our text goes on to say; *"He shall see his seed and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand"*. Here was an additional way that God would derive pleasure, that despite being *"cut off out of the land of the living"*, unmarried and without offspring, he would *"see the travail of his soul and be satisfied "*. In other words, as Hebrews 2:10 puts it, *"For it became him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain (pioneer) of their salvation perfect through suffering"* and again in 2:13 *"...behold I and the children which God hath given me" - THE PIONEER:*

He tackles the seemingly impossible.

He does what no one has done before.

He triumphs over every difficult  
circumstance.

And now finally, we need to ask; Is this justification automatic? We return again to Romans 3:22 "*...through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe*". The Apostle goes on to say that there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile "*for all have sinned and come short (missed the mark) of the glory of God*". There we have it again, "the GLORY OF GOD". This is the beginning and end of the matter. It is this that we are declaring when we preach the Gospel. In its proclamation let us carefully and prayerfully interpret the Word remembering that God's honour and glory is at stake.

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