



Our congregation has talked a lot about “Let’s Pray” and “Let’s Do Difficult.” We have a new invitation before us this summer: Let’s Please God. Let’s determine to make a commitment, in this season, to please God. This is something tangible we can do, in the face of the brazen expressions of evil that target our children, our communities, and the people around us in countless ways. We can determine to make our focus on pleasing God. *Let’s please God.* We don’t need a majority or political opinion. This is a decision that can start in our hearts today. If we will make our great passion pleasing God, then God will address anything and anyone that opposes His purposes and His people. On the other hand, if we’re ambivalent about pleasing God, no amount of effort on our part will bring victory over those who oppose Him. We are not going to out-plan evil—we *need* the help and power of God. The reality is we don’t have the power to overcome evil, but God does. So, here’s the assignment: LET’S PLEASE GOD!

PLEASING GOD IS A BETTER WAY

1 Corinthians 1:21–25 ²¹ *For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, **God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.*** ²² *Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom,* ²³ *but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,* ²⁴ *but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.* ²⁵ *For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength.*

Luke 12:29–34 ²⁹ *“And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it.* ³⁰ *For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them.* ³¹ *But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.* ³² *Do not be afraid, little flock, **for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.*** ³³ *Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.* ³⁴ *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

1 Corinthians 10:3–11 ³ *They all ate the same spiritual food* ⁴ *and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.* ⁵ *Nevertheless, **God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert.*** ⁶ *Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.* ⁷ *Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry.”* ⁸ *We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died.* ⁹ *We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes.* ¹⁰ *And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.* ¹¹ *These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.*

1. In what ways are people in our culture giving their time and energy to things that displease God?

Hebrews 11:5 *By faith **Enoch** was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as **one who pleased God.***

Hebrews 13:16 *And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for **with such sacrifices God is pleased.***

Matthew 7:21–23 ²¹ *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*** ²² *Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’*

²³ *Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”*

2. Pleasing God is not always a pleasant experience. Share a time in your life where you felt you sacrificed something to please God.

A. Pleased with Jesus

Matthew 3:17 *And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”*

Matthew 17:1–8 ¹ *After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.* ² *There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.* ³ *Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.*

⁴ Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” ⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and **a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”** ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” ⁸ When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

Philippians 2:9–11 ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

3. How can people change their current behavior and move from just “going to church” to seeking the Lord with their whole hearts and pleasing Him?

B. God and Anger

Jeremiah 10:10 *But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. **When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath.***

1 Kings 11:9–11 ⁹ **The Lord became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.** ¹⁰ Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the Lord’s command. ¹¹ So the Lord said to Solomon, “Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates.”

Psalms 95:10 **For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, “They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways.”**

4. We know that evil always leads to destruction. Why is it important to call out the evil happening around us? How can you encourage other Christians to stop remaining silent on issues where evil has increased?

C. Please or Oppose

Mark 3:2–6 ² Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. ³ Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, “Stand up in front of everyone.” ⁴ Then Jesus asked them, “Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they remained silent.

⁵ **He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.”** He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. ⁶ Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

5. When you think of duty, honor, and responsibility, is there an area of your life where you may need to be more diligent about pleasing God? How can you encourage others to direct their efforts toward pleasing God?

PRAYER

Father, thank You for Your Word—for its truth, power, and authority. Thank You for the honor of bearing Jesus’ name. In Your great love for us, You called us out of darkness. Lord Jesus, thank You for the sacrifice You made so we could participate in Your Kingdom. You have given us breath, life, and days under the sun. **Our commitment in Your presence today is a desire to please You.** We ask You to give us wisdom, courage, and discernment. Holy Spirit, we ask for Your help to clearly see where we are currently displeasing to You, and help us so we might change. May we not excuse or tolerate it. Thank You for Your tangible responses and the evidence of God’s glory. Father, we thank You for the great honor of serving You. May the joy of the Lord fill our hearts. May we be more aware of Your presence than any threat we could perceive. In Jesus’ name, amen.