

In all the world, only Noah made God smile. What can we learn from Noah?

We Give God Pleasure...

1. When we Love Him above everything else

(God) *"I don't want your sacrifices... **I want your love!** I don't want your offerings... I want you to **know me!**"* Hosea 6:6 (LB)

God wants a relationship with us, which is why He chose Noah. Noah walked with God when no one else did.

*"Noah consistently followed God's will and **enjoyed a close relationship with him.**"* Gen 6:9b (NLT)

Our capacity to know and love God personally is what sets us apart from the rest of creation.

*God's unchanging plan has always been to **adopt us into his own family** by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure."* Eph 1:5 (NLT)

Having been made in the image of God, it's not difficult to comprehend that God wants a family as much as we do. We were made to be part of God's family forever.

The purpose of life is to enable us to discover and choose whether or not we want to take our place in God's family. If we don't want God, we won't have God – He respects our choice.

Q When was the last time someone told you that they loved you? How did it make you feel? When was the last time you told God you loved Him?

2. When we Trust Him completely

*"The Lord takes pleasure in those who honour him and **trust** in his constant love."* Ps 147:11 (GN)

Another word for trust is faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God i.e. to make Him smile. Noah had an incredible faith.

*"By **faith** Noah built a ship in the middle of dry land. He was warned about something he couldn't see, and he acted on what he was told... **His act of faith** drew a sharp line between the evil of the unbelieving world and the rightness of the believing world. As a result, **Noah became intimate with God.**"* Heb. 11:7 (Msg.)

Three major challenges for Noah

1. **It had never seen rain.** God watered the earth with streams that come up from the ground and mist. See Gen 2:6.
2. **He lived far from the ocean.** He trusted that God would bring the water to him.
3. **He had no control over the animals God wanted to save.**

But Noah didn't argue or complain. He set about a task that would take him many, many decades to complete.

Q. The Christian life is God's call to those who would follow Christ - 'a long obedience in the same direction'. How's it going for you?

(God) *"I want you to trust me in your times of trouble, so I can rescue you and you can give me glory."* Ps 50:14 (LB)

3. When we obey Him wholeheartedly

*"We please God by **what we do** and **not only** by what we believe."* James 2:24 (CEV)

James is not talking about earning a place in God's family but acting in a way consistent with our belonging to God's family.

None of us earned the right to be born physically but as we grew, we learned appropriate and legitimate ways of bringing pleasure to our parents. Most children learn that being obedient to their parents' wishes is an important part of belonging.

Noah is a wonderful example of wholehearted obedience to God.

"Noah obeyed and built a boat." Heb. 11:7

*"Noah did **everything** exactly as God commanded him."* Gen 6:22 (NLT)

- i. **Without reservation** i.e. no holding back
- ii. **Without procrastination** i.e. no putting off

*"Just tell me what to do and I will do it, Lord. As long as I live, I'll **wholeheartedly** obey."* Ps 119:22 (LB)

Only complete obedience brings a smile to the face of God.

"Those who live by their natural inclinations can never be pleasing to God." Rom 8:8 (NJB)

Q: Paul said that although the desire to please God was a strongly held value, his natural inclination was to be selfish. See Rom 7:21-24. Do you identify with Paul? What is the solution? See Rom 8:1-2.

4. When we fulfil His Purpose

“Then God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.’” Gen 9:1 (KJV)

After the flood God told Noah and his family to do the things he created people to do - to love, create and enjoy the good things of life.

“God has graciously given us all things for our enjoyment.” 1 Tim 6:17b

Q. Eric Liddell, (Chariots of Fire) said, “When I run, I feel God’s pleasure.” Do you ever feel God’s pleasure in the things that excite you?

*“The steps of a good man are directed by the Lord. **He delights in every detail of their lives.**” Ps 37:23 (NLT)*

All of life can be lived as an act of worship. Everything we do can be done in a way that brings glory and pleasure to God, if we do it with the right attitude.

*“God takes pleasure in **acts** of worship – a different kind of ‘sacrifice’ – that which takes place in the kitchen, the workplace and on the streets.” Heb.13:16b (Msg.)*

In Noah’s day, people were more interested in pleasing themselves than their Creator – I guess nothing much has changed.

“This is the crisis we’re in: God’s light streamed into the world, but men and women everywhere ran for the darkness because they were not really interested in pleasing God.” Jn. 3:19 (Msg.)

God is on the lookout for 21st century Noah’s who want to live their life to please God.

*“The Lord looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who are wise, **who want to please God.**” Ps 14:2 (LB)*

Q. Will you be that person committed to living your life in a way that pleases God?

Remember. *“Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally and intimately, the One who invited us to God.” 2 Pet 1:13 (Msg.)*

Honouring God – Through Worship

Gen 6:5-22

The most fundamental questions we can ask in life relate to our purpose - Why am I here? The Word of God is very clear about the answer.

*“You (God) created everything, and **it is for your pleasure that they exist and were created.**” Rev 4:11b (NLT)*

We were created for the glory and pleasure to God i.e. to make God smile.

*“The Lord **takes pleasure** in His people.” Ps 149:4 (GN)*

Q. When do your children bring you the most pleasure?

The word God uses to describe what it means to bring pleasure to God is ‘**worship**’.

Worship: Living a life that is pleasing to God

*“Because of God’s great mercy... **offer yourselves** as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and **pleasing to him.** This is the true worship that you should offer.” Rom 12:1 (GN)*

Worship is not just what we utter with our lips - it is what we do with our life.

Paul says that if you want your life to count for something that will last forever *“find out what pleases God.” Eph 5:10*

Q. Why does our worship belong exclusively to God? What happens when we begin to worship something or someone other than God? The Bible calls this, ‘idol worship’ and it is expressly forbidden. Exodus 20:5. Discuss.

The Bible says of Noah that he *“was a pleasure”* to God. See Gen 6:8 (LB). What did Noah do that caused God to smile?

In Genesis chapter one, we are told that when God created the world He was pleased with what He had made. When he created ‘man’ in His own image He was very pleased.

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.” Gen 1:31 (NIV)

By the time Noah was born the world had taken a major turn for the worse and people began to worship God’s creation more than its Creator.

God said, *“I am sorry I made them.” Gen 6:7 (LB)*