

HOW TO PLEASE GOD

There are “many infallible proofs” that the Bible is the Word of God, God’s written revelation to mankind. One of these proofs is the element of prophecy.

Only God knows what shall be, and His prophetic clock has always been right on time. The present futile attempts of world leaders to establish lasting peace is but another confirmation of the many Bible predictions that this age of Christ’s rejection would be marked by “wars and rumors of wars” and that lasting peace will not be established until the “Prince of Peace” returns to take the throne (Isa. 2:4; 11:1-5; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 14:1-4; Matt. 24:3-7,27; Acts 1:9-11; Rev. 1:7).

But if we could advance proof after proof to back the unbeliever into a corner; if we could tie him up in knots with our arguments until he cried: “I give up! You are right and I am wrong!” would this save his soul or gain him acceptance before God?

Indeed not, for God wants to be *believed* and salvation is a gift to be *received by faith*. Thus the Bible declares that “*without faith it is impossible to please Him*” (Heb. 11:6).

There is nothing in all the world that will haunt a man like the fear that God may be displeased with him, nor is there any joy comparable to the assurance that He is pleased.

It is foolish, however, to suppose that we can please God with the things we *think* He desires. We must give Him what *He says* He desires, and He tells us again and again in His Word that it is *faith* He desires most of all. He wants us to *trust* Him, to take Him at His Word.

The Bible tells us at length how God loved us and came to this world as God the Son to die on Calvary’s cross for our sins, but, alas, instead of taking Him at His Word, thousands turn away from His gracious offer, “going about to establish their own righteousness” (Rom. 10:1-4). They do “good works” and make great sacrifices, thinking that a God of love will surely accept their efforts and overlook their sins. But this is presumption, not faith. How can a just God overlook sin? We should thank Him that in His matchless grace He Himself *paid* for our sins so that we might be free, and that salvation can now be received by faith as “the gift of God” (Rom. 6:23).

Let us beware of confusing faith with presumption. Cain *presumed* that God would accept his attractive sacrifice instead of the prescribed one, but God refused both him and his offering (Gen. 4:3-5). Pharaoh *presumed* that he could take his armies through the Red Sea as Moses had done, but he led them all to destruction for presuming upon God (Heb. 11:29). Naaman the leper, refused God’s

way of cleansing, saying: *"I thought..."* but the great general remained a leper until he humbled himself and took God at His Word (II Kings 5:1-14).

And now, what about *you*? Are you still going about to establish your own righteousness; still trying to make yourself acceptable to God? Then I know something about you: You do *not* have the assurance or joy of salvation. How can you, for there will always be the fear that you are not doing well enough to please God, and the greater dread that in justice *"God requireth that which is past"* and will call you to account for your past sins.

Why not please and honor God by *believing* His Word and trusting in Christ as your Savior?

"For by grace are ye saved, through faith...it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8,9).

"Christ died for our sins" (I Cor. 15:3).

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

—C. R. Stam

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PO Box 756, Germantown, WI 53022

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