

HOW TO PLEASE GOD
Follow Christ
Banská Štiavnica, 31st May 2020 (Pentecost)

מסיר אָזינוּ משִׁמְעֵ תוֹרָה גַּם־תִּפְלְתִי תוֹעֵבָה	Pro 28:9 If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.
ὁ ἂν αἰτῶμεν λαμβάνομεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, ὅτι τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ τηροῦμεν καὶ τὰ ἀρεστὰ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ποιοῦμεν	1John 3:22 ...whatever we ask we <u>receive</u> from him, because we keep his commandments and <u>do what pleases him</u>
οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἁμαρτωλῶν ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἀκούει, ἀλλ' ἂν τις θεοσεβῆς ἦ καὶ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιῆ τούτου ἀκούει	John 9:31 We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God <u>listens</u> to him.
זָבַח רְשָׁעִים תוֹעֵבַת יְהוָה וְתִפְלַת יְשָׁרִים רְצוֹנוֹ	Pro 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but <u>the prayer of the upright is acceptable</u> to him

OUTLINE

0. INTRODUCTION

- 0.1. THE LIFE AIM OF JESUS
- 0.2. THE SCIENCE/ART OF PERSUASION
- 0.3. LEAVING OUT GOD?!

1. PLEASING WHOM / WHAT?

- 1.1. PEOPLE (POPULARITY)
- 1.2. NORMS (FORMALISM)
- 1.3. SELF (INDEPENDENCE)

2. WHAT PLEASES GOD

- 2.1. SPIRITUAL WORSHIP
- 2.2. SACRIFICIAL LOVE
- 2.3. JOYFUL SPIRIT

3. PLEASING PEOPLE(?)

- 3.1. SERVING ALL
- 3.2. DIVISION

4. TO REMEMBER

0. INTRODUCTION

- Pentecost: (1) prayer **Jude 1:20** But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith; **pray** in the Holy Spirit; (2) witness: **Acts 1:8** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.
- pleasing others and *acceptance* (→ rejection); guilt feelings; inferiority;

0.1. THE LIFE AIM OF JESUS

- **John 8:29** And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him. (καὶ ὁ πέμψας με μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐστίν· οὐκ ἀφήκεν με μόνον, ὅτι ἐγὼ τὰ ἀρεστὰ αὐτῷ ποιῶ πάντοτε)

0.2. THE SCIENCE/ART OF PERSUASION

• ADVERTISING

- → offering freedom; happiness; love; significance; safety;...
- → threatening with old age; sickness; loneliness; early death...
- CARNEGIE: *How to Win Friends and Influence People* → How to please people
 - EIGHT THINGS THIS BOOK WILL HELP YOU ACHIEVE

- ...3. Increase your popularity.
- 4. Win people to your way of thinking.
- 5. Increase your influence, your prestige, your ability to get things done....

How to Win Friends and Influence People was first published in 1937 in an edition of only five thousand copies. Neither Dale Carnegie nor the publishers, Simon and Schuster, anticipated more than this modest sale. To their amazement, the book became an overnight sensation, and edition after edition rolled off the presses to keep up with the increasing public demand. Now *How to Win Friends and Influence People* took its place in publishing history as one of the all-time international best-sellers. It touched a nerve and filled a human need that was more than a faddish phenomenon of post-Depression days, as evidenced by its continued and uninterrupted sales into the eighties, almost half a century later. [CARNEGIE *How to Win Friends and Influence People*]

- The Secret Language of Business; Silent Messages; Handbook of Persuasive Tactics; Powerphrases The Perfect Words; Psychology of Success;
- REACTION → Assert yourself!

0.3. LEAVING OUT GOD?!

- “Just Do It” (Nike)
- The most important event in your future is MEETING GOD! **Amos 4:12** ...prepare to meet your God, O Israel! (הֲבִינָה לִקְרַאת־אֱלֹהֵיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל)
- What should I seek / pursue / desire in my life? → **Mt 6:33 Seek first the Kingdom of God!**
 - [CARNEGIE Dale *How To Stop Worrying And Start Living*] "Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand." → **Luke 12:20** 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you,...

1. PLEASING WHOM / WHAT?

- LIFE MEANING: → *pleasing* self and *pleasing* others

1.1. PEOPLE (POPULARITY)

- **Mt 6:1** Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them...
- **Col 3:22** Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service (ὀφθαλμοδουλίᾳ), as people-pleasers (ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι), but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord
- **Gal 1:10** ...If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ (εἰ ἔτι ἀνθρώποις ἤρεσκον, Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἦμην)

1.2. NORMS (FORMALISM)

- **Mk 7:6-7** This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; ⁷ in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men (μάτην δὲ σέβονται με διδάσκοντες διδασκαλίας ἐντάλματα ἀνθρώπων).
- **Mt 23:25** "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence

1.3. SELF (INDEPENDENCE)

- → modern **selfism**
- **Rom 15:1-2** We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up (Ὁφείλομεν δὲ ἡμεῖς οἱ δυνατοὶ τὰ ἀσθενήματα τῶν ἀδυνάτων βαστάζειν καὶ μὴ ἑαυτοῖς ἀρέσκειν. ² ἕκαστος ἡμῶν τῷ πλησίον ἀρεσκέτω εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς οἰκοδομήν).

2. WHAT PLEASES GOD

- **Mic 6:8** He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice (צִדְקָה), and to love kindness (רַחֲמִים), and to walk humbly (הִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת) with your God (אֱלֹהֵי־עַמְּךָ)?

2.1. SPIRITUAL WORSHIP

- **John 4:23** But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. (ἀλλὰ ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστίν, ὅτε οἱ ἀληθινοὶ

προσκυνηταὶ προσκυνήσουσιν τῷ πατρὶ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ· καὶ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ τοιούτους ζητεῖ τοὺς προσκυνούντας αὐτόν. ²⁴ πνεῦμα ὁ θεός, καὶ τοὺς προσκυνούντας αὐτόν ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ δεῖ προσκυνεῖν)

- **Rom 8:8-9** Those who **are in the flesh cannot please God**. ⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. (οἱ δὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ὄντες θεῷ ἀρέσαι οὐ δύνανται. ⁹ ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ἀλλὰ ἐν πνεύματι, εἶπερ πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. εἰ δέ τις πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ οὐκ ἔχει, οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ)
- **Eph 2:18** For through him [Christ] we both have **access in one Spirit** to the Father (δι' αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφοτέροι ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα)

2.2. SACRIFICIAL LOVE

- **Rom 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as **a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God (εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ), which is your spiritual worship (τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν)
- **Ex 29:18** ...burn the whole ram on the altar. It is a **burnt offering** to the LORD. It is a **pleasing aroma** (חִיטְהַיְחִי), a food offering to the LORD.
- **1 Peter 2:5** ...you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a **spiritual** house (οἶκος πνευματικὸς), to be a holy priesthood, to offer **spiritual** sacrifices (πνευματικὰς θυσίας) acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

2.3. JOYFUL SPIRIT

- **Ps 104:34** May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD. (הִתְחַיְחִי מַחְשָׁבִי כִּי יִשְׂחַי יְיָ וְיִרְעֵךְ)
- **Phil 4:4** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. (Χαίρετε ἐν κυρίῳ πάντοτε· πάλιν ἐρῶ, χαίρετε)

3. PLEASING PEOPLE(?)

3.1. SERVING ALL

- **Gal 6:10** So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to **everyone**, and especially to those who are of the household of faith ("Αρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκειοὺς τῆς πίστεως)
- **Phil 4:5** Let your **reasonableness** (τὸ ἐπιεικὲς ὑμῶν) be known to **everyone**. The Lord is at hand.

3.2. DIVISION

- **John 12:42-43** Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they **did not confess it**, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ **for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God** (ἠγάπησαν γὰρ τὴν δόξαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων μᾶλλον ἢπερ τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ).
- **Lk 6:26** "Woe to you, when **all people speak well of you**, for so their fathers did to the false prophets. (οὐαὶ ὅταν ὑμᾶς καλῶς εἴπωσιν πάντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι· κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ γὰρ ἐποίουν τοῖς ψευδοπροφήταις οἱ πατέρες αὐτῶν)
- **2Cor 2:15-16** For we are **the aroma of Christ** to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one **a fragrance from death to death**, to the other **a fragrance from life to life**. Who is sufficient for these things? (ὅτι Χριστοῦ εὐωδία ἔσμεν τῷ θεῷ ἐν τοῖς σωζομένοις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, ¹⁶ οἷς μὲν ὁσμή ἐκ θανάτου εἰς θάνατον, οἷς δὲ ὁσμή ἐκ ζωῆς εἰς ζωὴν. καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα τίς ἰκανός)

4. TO REMEMBER

- There is nothing more important in life than to please God. It is one of the conditions of answered prayer.
- To please God we have to let Him be the one and only God of our most inward thoughts, emotions and decisions.
- Pleasing God is the fulfillment of our deepest longings and our highest aspirations.