



Pleasuring God (You'll Need to Ask for Faith)

Hebrews 11:6 without faith it is impossible to please [God]

The pleasure of intimacy is supposed to be two-sided: mutual intimacy, mutual pleasure. Few people would quarrel with that, at least when they think about sex. But what about intimacy with God? For most of us the pleasure of intimacy with God seems more one-sided. We of course want God to pleasure *us* (and often in our prayers suggest to Him just how to do so). But how about pleasuring *God*? Have you ever asked God how you can pleasure *Him*? Probably not.

I'd never asked that question either. But one day, while reading through the first verses of 1 Corinthians 7 I noticed that *both* the husband and wife were responsible to provide for each other's sexual pleasure. That started me thinking about how the bible parallels sex and worship and led me to ask God a question: *Lord, how can I pleasure you?* Right away Hebrews 11:6 popped into my mind: *without faith it is impossible to please Him.*

Whoa! There is a way to please God! This was something I *could do* – I could believe Him; I could have faith in Him. And I was thrilled ... until I realized that I couldn't pull it off. Faith is a gift from God, not something I can call up on my own. But there is something I *can* do: I can ask, and God will give me faith. He says He will:

Ephesians 2:8-9 ⁸*For by grace you have been saved through faith;*
and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God
⁹*not as a result of works, that no one should boast.*

The point I'm making is that faith is a gift and not our achievement. While Ephesians refers to salvation faith and Hebrews refers to faith in general, in both cases the faith comes from God and not from ourselves. Faith is, after all, a fruit from the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) – we don't get to boast.

I was pretty excited. The one-sidedness of wanting God to please me paled when compared to the startling reality that I could pleasure *Him*. I can gift the One who has so generously gifted me. Pleasuring God was something I *could* do.

How About You?

A lot of people read God's words about faith but somehow feel that it won't happen for them. They feel disqualified, almost like outsiders. Not true. Paul, in Ephesians, is not talking to an individual; He's talking to a *group*. English translations don't show it, but the original Greek text reveals that each "you" in God's promise is plural. You-plural are given faith. No one gets disqualified. No request goes unmet. The only prerequisite is asking ... and anyone is free to ask.

*God likes to pleasure us.
If we ask, He gives us the faith that lets us pleasure Him.*

Sometimes faith springs suddenly into being. At other times God first shapes circumstances to prepare us for His gift. But will you get this gift? Will faith become yours? Most definitely. Just ask.

The Best of All

Jesus tells us that giving is better than receiving (Acts 20:35). True. But best of all is having both at the same time – receiving as we give; giving as we receive. Mutual intimacy can grace many relationships – some sexual, some not. Some physical, some spiritual. Sometimes within a spouse's arms, sometimes (and this is truly exquisite) within the arms of our lover in heaven.

A Question

Do you want to have the pleasure of pleasuring God?
Then ask Him for faith.
(And know that you've touched His heart.)

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