

The Pleasure of God in His Son and in You – *Matt 3:16-17, Acts 2:33*

Introduction – Pentecost Sunday, an Old Testament feast day celebrated 50 days after the Sabbath following Passover, was an annual pilgrimage and holy convocation in Jerusalem commemorating the firstfruits of the early harvest (Lev 23:15-21), and Jewish tradition added the remembrance of the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai (Josh 8:30-35). The Pentecost celebration 50 days after the resurrection of Jesus brought forth the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the church, a true firstfruits of the nations and an outpouring of God's Word declaring the wonderful works of God (Acts 2:11). This was the baptism of the body of Christ and was an overflow of the baptism of Jesus, the Head of the church. And all of us, all of you here, is an outpouring and overflow of the pleasure of God in His Son and in His people, the elect of God. Pentecost celebrates the pleasure God had and has in you. God so loved the world...

The Baptism of Jesus Christ and the Pleasure of God the Father in His Son (Matt 3:16-17) – As Jesus was baptized, the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God descended upon Him. The Spirit of God came along with these words from the Father, *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."* These two are connected, the Spirit of God and the Word of God, His words of pleasure in His Son. The pleasure of God was poured out upon the Son in the Person of the Holy Spirit.

This glorious work of the Father is the essence of fatherhood. As Jesus began His earthly ministry, the Father was present and made His presence felt by the sending of His Spirit and heard by His Words of affirmation and affection. And it was all done publicly, identifying Himself with His Son, *"this is My Son"* and His expressed love for His Son, *"this is My beloved Son."* Before Jesus had done any ministry at all, the Father already and eternally praised His Son – *"in Whom I am well pleased."* (NOTE: there is much to learn here for all earthly fathers).

Finally, that Person Who is the Pleasure of God in His Son, led Jesus into the hard work of His ministry, beginning with being tempted by the devil in the wilderness for forty days (Matt 4:1ff). And in the pleasure of God, He would be smitten by God and bruised for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:4-5).

The Baptism of the Body of Christ and the Pleasure of God the Father in His Son (Acts 2:33) – As Jesus was about to ascend to the throne of God, He promised His disciples that He would send the Holy Spirit and that they should wait in Jerusalem for Him (Acts 1:4-8). Ten days later, on the Day of Pentecost, while pilgrims from all over the known world gathered for the feast, there came a sound from heaven, tongues of fire descended and sat upon each of the disciples and they began to speak in those nation's languages the gospel of Jesus Christ, the wonderful works of God (Acts 2:1-11). This was the pleasure of God in the Person of the Holy Spirit, overflowing from Jesus upon those who were now brought into this New Creation, the body of Christ. Paul would later teach that *"the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us"* (Rom 5:5). To be baptized with the Holy Spirit is to receive the overflow of the pleasure of the Father over His Son, the Head of the church, to the body of Christ, the church. Baptism is God the Father's declaration of His pleasure in you.

In Christ, You Know the Father's Pleasure by the Holy Spirit – Jesus is the Way to the Father and the Holy Spirit is the "vehicle" that drives you on that "road" to the Father. And now, you are a child of God (1 John 3:1). The Father is doing the same thing He did with His Son. He is present with us with much blessing (Eph 1:3). The Spirit has been given to us (Eph 1:2, 13-14). Our adoption is declared (Eph 1:5), and we are called His beloved children (Eph 5:1). (NOTE: we all have imperfect earthly fathers but in Christ, you have been brought to your perfect heavenly Father).

Finally, that Person Who is the Pleasure of God in His Son given to His people, led them out into the hard work of their ministry. In just the first sermon, 3000 people were saved (Acts 2:41, note also Ex 32:28) and daily they kept being added to their number (Acts 2:46-47). That ministry was not without great temptations, trials, and persecutions (Phil 1:29, 2 Tim 3:12). This initial ministry continued for forty years, the acts of the apostles, until the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD. The gospel has been going out to the ends of the earth ever since.

Can God Have the Same Pleasure in You that He has in Christ? – Any one of us has committed so much sin that God cannot love you in yourself. There is no way to measure up (Rom 3:23, 6:23). *"You have so offended His infinite justice, that His pure and holy nature repents that He ever made you"* – Spurgeon. But according to His love, another Man has taken that just wrath upon Himself – that holy forsaking of you (Psalm 22:1, Matt 27:46). Your baptism is God's mark and declaration upon you.

It is your identity. You have been raised with Christ because you were buried with Christ (Gal 2:20). Jesus spoke for Himself and for us as He hung on the cross. He speaks with us in our praise of God for His pleasure over us as well - *"I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You"* (Psalm 22:22, Heb 2:12). Not only that, we find in this worship service that God is singing and delighting over us as well (Zeph 3:17). There are amazing things going on in the midst of this assembly. And it is the work of the Holy Spirit, the Person Who is the *"grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"* (Eph 1:2, Phil 1:2, Col 1:2, etc.).

Spurgeon says to those yet unconverted - *"My dear friend, if you are one of the Lord's chosen, you are already in Christ in God's eternal purpose; but the way in which you must experimentally get into Christ is by true faith in Him. To trust in Jesus is to be in Jesus."* Another way to say this is to have faith in Jesus Christ is to believe in God's infinite pleasure in His Son, overflowing the Son to all who are in the Son, in which we now overflow with the work of the Spirit in us.

The Fruit of the Spirit is the Overflow of the Pleasure of God Working through You - Your baptism marks you as a Christian, a man or a woman recreated, re-identified, reborn. Now, walking in that Spirit that marked you, you can finally put off the deeds of the flesh (Gal 5:16). What is walking in the Spirit? It is walking in a Person not you. It is walking in a Person who has remade you. It is walking in a Person Who is the Pleasure of God in His Son. You could say it is walking in the delight, the joy, the happiness, of God. And that delight, that joy, that happiness that God has is directed firmly at and in you, for you are the beloved in whom He is well pleased. This is all grace appropriated by faith alone and no works (Eph 2:8-9).

But how does someone live whose father acknowledges, appreciates, shows affection and approval, and is present in words and deeds? Works follow. Courage and confidence follow. Faithfulness to the father follows. And what follows from our Father's delight and pleasure in us? The fruit of that pleasure, the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). This fruit comes forth from us because the Spirit is in us, but they are not for us. They are our faithfulness to the Father. They describe the good works that we are now able to do unto God and others. It is not that love, joy, peace, etc., are hanging on us, making us have feelings of love, joy and peace. The fruit re-orient us away from ourselves (just like the Spirit Himself). We love God. We love our neighbor. We rejoice in Christ. We rejoice over, with and for others. We have peace with God and we are the peacemakers of the world. And all because of the pleasure of God in His Son and in you. Happy Pentecost!