

MAKE IT YOUR AIM TO BE WELL-PLEASING TO GOD
2 Corinthians 5:9-10

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How can we make a difference-while we have air to breathe? In other words, what can we do to be more distinctively Christ-like, to really represent His interests instead of being consumed with a life that doesn't make a significant difference, one that does not positively impact our community nor offer an enriching and ennobling legacy? Make it our aim to be pleasing to Christ. I believe Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 5:9 offers a way of living which should qualitatively represent our lives as believers in Jesus Christ.

I. What does it mean to make it our aim to be pleasing to God?

~ 2 Corinthians 5-9-10

⁹ Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Here is my explanation of 2 Corinthians 5:9-10:

Within the greater context of offering a contrast between our present and future dwellings [Therefore], Paul states that we are to earnestly strive [make it our aim] to totally be [whether present or absent] well-pleasing to God [qualitative mindset of life], knowing that we will one day appear before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ [vs. 10].

II. How do we make it our aim to please God?

How do you make it your aim to please the Lord? The answer to that question I believe is powerfully stated in Romans 12:1-2:

¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Here is my explanation of Romans 12:1-2:

Not merely a decision, but a lifestyle of consecration [sacrifice that is alive, holy, and pleasing]. **Not merely consecration, but separation (present tense) from the world. Not merely separation but transformation (present tense) by the renewing of the mind.**

III. How do we know if we are aiming to please the Lord as a way of life?

Below are indicators that may assist us in critically pondering whether we really are earnestly aiming our lives toward God, seeking to be well-pleasing to Him. To be sure, these indicators should be viewed as “*road signs*.” Some of these “*road signs*” are related and some are more important than others. Nevertheless, these indicators are designed to provoke critical self-evaluation which may motivate us with resolved and determination, by His enablement and our yieldedness to Him, to be sacrifices that are living, holy, and pleasing to God. Therefore, what indicators are there that we are being well-pleasing to God? Consider the following (they are in alphabetical order):

1. Attachment to the world decreased; desire to be in God’s heavenly presence increased.
2. Attraction to sin decreased; Love for God increased.
3. Burden for the salvation of others increased; sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ present.
4. Chastisement is absent; God’s ministry through your life is present.
5. Confession of sin is sincere; submission to God is clear.
6. Desiring the best for others imparted, jealousy subsided.
7. Double-mindedness is absent; harmony with the brethren is present.
8. Encouraging others is your practice; inspiring others by your actions is contagious.
9. Faithfulness is present; good deeds are evident.
10. Friends you hold dear; strangers will be few.
11. Impurity has decreased, holy living will be present.
12. Independence from God decreased; dependency upon God developed.
13. Innocence protected, purity preserved.
14. Insensitivity to the Holy Spirit decreased; Tenderness to Him increased.
15. Integrity is clear; your intentions are honorable.
16. Jesus is magnified; the testimony of Christ is witnessed.

17. Habits scrutinized, desires analyzed.
18. Your home is a haven to your family; a spiritual retreat to many.
19. Hypocrisy is minimal; disciple-making is multiplied.
20. Investment in self decreased; investment in the lives of others increased.
21. Joy of living life well is present; bitterness is absent.
22. Joy is experienced in the midst of trials; perseverance is present in tribulation.
23. Legalism rejected, God's liberating grace accepted.
24. Liberty in Christ exercised; causing others Christians to stumble will be restrained.
25. Liberation from sin is evident; freedom from guilt is present.
26. Living for the lust of the flesh decreased; living by means of the Spirit is more consistent.
27. Living *for* the will of God increased; yielding to temptation decreased.
28. Living out your theology is present; Christ's ministry in and through your life will be evident.
28. Mercy to the guilty is offered; compassion is presented.
29. Peace of God present; strife with others absent.
30. Personal ambitions released; God's purposes realized.
31. Pettiness decreased; desire for the well-being of others increased.
32. Personal rights relinquished; edification of others promoted.
33. Practicing holiness present; grieving the Holy Spirit absent.
34. Pursuit of sin decreased; pursuit of God increased.
35. Pride decreased; humility increased.
36. Promises kept; trusting in God's timing promoted.
37. Rather than being self-centered; your affections are God-centered.

38. Resentment rejected; grudges gone.
39. Retaliation for wrongs suffered decreased; forgiveness of others increased.
40. Selfishness decreased; servant-hood increased.
41. Self-sufficiency demoted; self-surrender promoted.
42. Sober thinking present; being watchful clear.
43. Stewardship of God's resources preserved; benevolence bountiful.
44. Testing God's patience diminished; redeeming your time practiced.
45. Timidity towards peer-pressure is absent; resistance toward the devil firm.
46. Toleration of immorality decreased; faithfulness to God increased.
47. Understanding of the frailty of life increased; neglect of the spiritual disciplines decreased.
48. Unity promoted; disunity dissuaded.
49. Vain pursuits of pleasure becoming infrequent; meeting the practical needs of others common.
50. Wisdom is present; Scripture is seriously studied.
51. Wise living is your pattern; fearing God is your practice.
52. Words are few; numerous are your noble actions.
53. Words are carefully spoken, the tongue is controlled.
54. Your love for the unlovely is clear; your affection for the hurting is plain.
55. Your ministry is effective; souls are being changed for the better by knowing you.