

God Delights in This

Ezekiel 18:27-32

7/20/03

Intro

- Bill Ritchie here on July 30th.

.....
In this chapter, Ezekiel is giving a message about a proverb that had become very popular (in verse 2). The result is that the Lord says that each person will have his own personal relationship with the Lord.

He uses four examples of this throughout the chapter, but we will only at the last example, of a wicked man who turns righteous.

The key to this chapter is also understanding the Lord's heart in regards to what He delights in.

In these verses, we will see what it is that God delights in.

I. Turning from the ways of man

Vs 27 - God delights when He sees this.

A. God takes no pleasure in death

- God has emotions and He responds to the choices we make.
- In VERSES 23 and 32, He makes it plain that He hates to see death that comes from sin.

Ephesians 4:30 (not on screen), "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

- **The opposite is also true... that He delights in us as well.**

Isaiah 62:4-5 – as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride.

Zephaniah 3:17, "The LORD your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.

B. Practice justice

- It brings joy to the Lord to see us being like Him
- Practicing justice is to treat people right.
- Even if it costs you something

Illus - Many people adopt what could be called, "convenient justice," they'll do it as long as it doesn't cost them something.

C. Practice righteousness

- We know that our righteousness is a gift from God, it is the very **righteousness of Jesus Christ**.
- Here God saying that we need to put our righteousness into practice.
- **But righteousness has two parts**
 - **Avoiding sin**
 - **Being obedient to God's direction**

II. Our having life

Vs 23 – God takes pleasure in our having life.

A. Life is more than breathing

- What does it mean to be alive?
- Is it possible to be dead while living? - yes

Illus – When our soul is sick there is a deep anguish inside

B. God's intent; abundant life

- This is the very purpose that Jesus said he came.

John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; **I came** that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

- God delights, then, when he sees that we are actually experiencing the life he intended for us.

C. He also delights in helping us

- This is life to the fullest when we live in such a way as to have interaction with God. We live in His presence, looking to Him for help.

Isaiah 41:10, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

Psalms 121:1-2, "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

Illus – Mom who needed to get medicine to her baby...

III. Casting away from us

Vs 31

Illus – Watching the men cast their lines into the Columbia.

A. Because our conduct is important

➤ **There are consequences to our decisions.**

Illus - in today's world, it is far too common for people to be victims, to put the blame on others when things go wrong.

- But we are accountable to God for the things we do.

Revelation 22:12 – This is one of the last things the Lord says.

B. Make a new heart

- We know the Lord is the One who gives us a new heart, but He is saying that we have a very important part in this... **ask for a new heart!**

Ezekiel 36:26, "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

- What kind of heart? A heart after God.

C. Make a new spirit

- The new spirit He is referring to is the Holy Spirit.

Ezekiel 36:27, "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes."

- The Holy Spirit is who ignites our hearts.

Conclusion

The greatest pleasure of the Lord is that we would have life. "Repent and live," says the Lord.