

That Which Pleases God

An Examination of What God Delights In

2 - God's Delight in His Son- Part 1

January 12, 2014

Isaiah 42:1-4

1 “Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one *in whom* My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations.

2 “He will not cry out or raise *His voice*, Nor make His voice heard in the street.

3 “A bruised reed He will not break And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.

4 “He will not be disheartened or crushed Until He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands will wait expectantly for His law.”

Matthew 3:17

and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

To the Glory of God

Now last week I told you that I do not believe that lost people are truly happy. I do not believe that unsaved people know joy in any meaningful way. I do not believe that unregenerate people are satisfied and so they simply *endure* through this life and they really don't do that very well, either.

And that is why people drink and take drugs and commit adultery and drive fast and want to make lots and lots of money and buy lots and lots of things- because down deep- in the very core of their being- the darkness that they live in, the emptiness of their soul, the vacuum of their existence does not and cannot make them truly happy. Their actions prove that they are spiritually dead. The way they live their lives and the things that they gravitate toward only verifies that they are indeed fallen, and completely and utterly and totally separated from God.

Conversely, I believe that God is the Happiest Being in the Universe. I believe that the Joy and the Pleasure and the Delight and the Satisfaction that God experiences on a second by second basis in Himself is so far above ours and so full and so real and so lasting and so deep and so true and so glorious that unless we receive a new glorious and immortal body- if we were to be exposed to that Joy for just a moment- we would literally burst apart and explode.

I believe that it is hard for us to even imagine being as happy as God is, and that what we call "fun" and what we call "joy" is so far beneath God and so base as to be called ridiculous.

And I believe that it is the fact that God desires for us to be as happy as He is as to what Salvation is really all about- to forever rescue us from the tyrannical power of sin that dominated our lives, and that is the cause of the unspeakable Wrath of God that is against us, and that is the cause of why we are so filled with sorrow and pain and misery and fear and hopelessness- and that is why Jesus made a strange statement like this in **John 15:11**:

These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.

In other words- Jesus says here that the things that He said while He was on the earth were spoken to cause us to arrive at a particular end- that the Joy that He has might be in us, and when His Joy is in us- Jesus said our joy would be full. So that begs the question:

What Joy does Jesus have? What is the Joy of God? What is it that God takes Pleasure in?

Jesus said He wants *my joy* to be full, but He wants my joy to be full *after* His Joy is in me. So what is His Joy? What does God take delight in? What pleases God? What does God enjoy? What brings happiness to God? And that is the subject that I want to explore as we begin this new year, and as is my custom- I will take a short "vacation" from our "Journey Through Luke" to explore a subject that I think will transform the way you look at God this year and that is:

"That Which Pleases God"

Now last week we found out several important Biblical Truths that are not just theological points of interest, but are immensely practical and ones that will help us in our daily walk with Jesus Christ –especially when things get rough. Last week we discovered a very important aspect of Biblical Truth found in **Psalm 63:3**:

Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You

.. in other words the *catalyst* or the *cause* for *why* the psalmist is praising God with his lips is because he realizes that God's Lovingkindness is better than life.

So all that is in the world- the green grass and the blue skies and birds that chirp and laughter among friends and the sweetness that is in a child's eyes, and food to eat that is prepared in a thousand different ways with different sensations and tastes, and beautiful music that is played in a thousand different ways, and athletics and business and cars and technology and medicine and science and beautiful houses and mountains and immense galaxies and subatomic particles- all of life is a merciful and gracious gift from a Good and Wise and Powerful God.

And yet the psalmist told us last week that God's Lovingkindness, God's steadfast Love is *better* than all of that. And what that means is that if all of that was to be taken away, if all of that was to cease to exist up to and including life itself, and all you had left was God's Lovingkindness- you wouldn't just *survive*- but you would actually be *better off*- because God's Lovingkindness - which by the way has given you all that other stuff- doesn't just *replace* all that other stuff- but is *better* than all that other stuff. But even though that would make a good bumper sticker- I am not convinced that many of us really believe that.

And that was my introduction to this series last week, and now this morning I want to go even deeper into this concept and I want us to hear Jesus standing by the grave of his friend Lazarus and confronting Mary- Lazarus' grieving sister with a breathtaking Truth found in **John 11:25&26**

25 ... “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

... you will never die! Never! You won't die- Jesus said so. He who lives and believes in Jesus will never die. Or **John 6** that says:

John 6:35

I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

... and

John 6:47-51

47 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

48 I am the bread of life.

49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

50 This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.

51 I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever... "

So have you eaten? If you have eaten- if you have come to Jesus and fallen upon His Mercy, and tasted and seen that the Lord is Good, and believed that He is God, and believed that he died and rose again – if you have trusted in Him- if you have come to Jesus to eat- as the satisfaction of your soul- the very delight of your life- you will never die. Jesus said you will never be "dead". Or **John 8**:

John 8:51

Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death."

... you will never see death- ever! And these Truths are not simply good preaching material for Sunday Morning in Church- but they are the root of love or the foundation of courage that began and that will finish the Great Commission which will be completed at the cost of our lives. The Apostle Paul said in **Philippians 1**:

Philippians 1:20&21

20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but *that* with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

So the Apostle says here that to die is not “death”- but because he has eaten of Jesus Christ- for him to die is “**Gain**”! Last week- the psalmist said:

Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You

And this week we find:

I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. He who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever... I will not be put to shame in anything, but *that* with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

So when you die in Jesus- you will not be dead- but you will be in gain. And then Paul went on to say:

Philippians 1:22&23

22 But if *I am* to live *on* in the flesh, this *will mean* fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose.

23 But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is very much better;

Paul said it was “**far better**” or “**very much better**” for him to not live anymore on this earth in his amazingly fruitful ministry- but to be with Christ because he knew he wasn’t going to be dead when he dies- he knew he was going to be far better. Paul understood and Paul believed what the psalmist said:

Your lovingkindness is better than life

So no Christian dies. Ever. So to genuine believers- death is not a room into which you walk- it is not a dark field of the unknown- no, death is a door that is so thin- so micro-thin- that it has no physical dimension. And all true believers in Jesus pass through that door faster than a millisecond- and you will move from this life into a far better life- with no time in between. 1,000 years before Jesus was born- God the Holy Spirit moved upon King David to describe how different it is for those who will be in Jesus when they die and he wrote:

Psalms 16:10&11

10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

11 You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

... those are the two things that the Bible says are on the other side to genuine believers who have eaten of Jesus Christ:

1. Fullness of Joy
2. Pleasures Forever

... and these two things await genuine believers because these two things were true about Jesus Christ Himself according to what the Apostle Peter said in **The Acts 2**:

The Acts 2:29-36

29 "Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

30 And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT *one* OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE,

31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.

32 This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

34 For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,

35 UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'"

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified."

So now put these two concepts together:

- ✓ **Your Lovingkindness is better than Life**
- ✓ **Whoever believes in Jesus shall never die... whoever believes shall pass from death into life -that is much better**

... Therefore we are correct to say that the greatest manifestation of God's Lovingkindness is- Jesus Christ- in Whom we have both life and the fullness of joy. And the reason why we can find such joy and delight in Jesus Christ is because God finds His Delight and His Satisfaction and His Joy in Jesus Christ. Now turn quickly with me to read what Paul wrote to this young pastor of the Church at Ephesus in **1Timothy 1:11**:

according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

Now the word that was translated into English here as **"blessed"** is the Greek word *makarios*, which literally means: *happy or filled with joy and contentment; to be delighted*. So with that information- let's read that verse again:

according to the glorious gospel of the *happy* God...

or

according to the glorious gospel of the *joyful and contented* God

or

according to the gospel of the *delighted* God.

So a great part of God's Glory is His Happiness. It was inconceivable to the Apostle Paul that God could be denied infinite Joy and still be all-Glorious. To be infinitely Glorious was to be infinitely Happy. So Paul used the phrase, **“the glory of the happy God,”** because it is a glorious thing for God to be as Happy as “He is”. God's Glory consists much in the fact that He is Happy beyond our wildest imagination.

As the great eighteenth-century preacher, Jonathan Edwards, said,

“Part of God's fullness which he communicates, is his *happiness*. This happiness consists in enjoying and rejoicing in himself; so does also the creature's happiness.”

And Paul said that this is the *Gospel*:

“The gospel of the glory of the happy God.”

So it is “good news” indeed for us that our God is gloriously Happy. No one would want to spend eternity with an *unhappy* God. If God is unhappy as is the “god” of the Hindus and the Buddhists and the Muslims- then the goal of the Gospel would not be a happy goal and that means it would not be good news at all. But, in fact, Jesus invites us to spend all of eternity with a happy God when He says,

Matthew 25:23

“Enter into the *joy* of your master”

Jesus lived and died that *His Own Personal Joy*—God's Joy— the Joy of the Lord- might be in us, and then our joy will be full (**John 15:11; 17:13**). Therefore the Gospel is

“the gospel of the glory of the happy God.”

Now what I want to try to show you today is that the Happiness of God is first and foremost a Happiness in His Son- a pure and infinite Delight in Jesus Christ. So when you and I share in the Happiness of God- we share in the very Pleasure that the Father has in the Son. And

this is why Jesus made the Father known to us. At the end of His great Prayer in **John 17** Jesus said to his Father,

John 17:26

and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

... Jesus made God known to us so that God's Delight and Pleasure in His Son (Love) might be in us and become our pleasure and delight (love).

Imagine us being able to enjoy God- Who is the most enjoyable Being in the Universe. And then imagine enjoying God with unbounded energy and passion. And then try to imagine enjoying God- Who is the most enjoyable Being in the Universe with unbounded energy and passion- forever! That is not an experience that we have now. And three things stand in the way of our complete satisfaction in this world:

- A. Nothing that we know about or possess in this life has a personal worth great enough to meet the deepest longings of our hearts
- B. We lack the strength to savor the best Treasure (God) to His maximum Worth in this life
- C. All of our joys here in this life come to an end. Nothing lasts.

... which is why when we as believers die- we don't experience death- we begin to live in much gain because in Heaven- with a new body- we will be able to enjoy God fully. So when by God's Grace- Jesus' Prayer in **John 17:26** comes to pass- and God's infinite Delight in His Son becomes our delight- then the *Object* of our delight- Jesus Christ- will be inexhaustible in Personal Worth. And at that moment- Jesus will never become boring or disappointing or frustrating.

So the very first thing we need to understand is that there is no greater Treasure that can be conceived than the Son of God. And God's gift to us in Salvation is that our ability to savor and relish this inexhaustible Treasure will not be limited by our own human weaknesses. Salvation gives us the ability and the power to enjoy the Son of God with the very Delight of His Father. So as **1John 4:19** says and we love God with the gift of Love that He has given us for Himself-

so, too, we will enjoy Jesus with the gift of Delight that God has for His Own Son.

God's Delight in His Son will be in us and it will be ours. And this will never end, because neither the Father nor the Son ever ends. Their Love and Enjoyment of each other will be our love and enjoyment for Them, and, therefore, our loving them and delighting in them will never die.

So God's Pleasure is first and foremost a Pleasure in his Son. And the Bible describes the way that God takes Pleasure in Jesus in two seemingly opposite ways:

1. Through the Majesty of Christ's Glory
2. Through the Beauty of Christ's Meekness

Let's examine these together:

1. God Delights in Jesus Through the Majesty of Christ's Glory

The Bible reveals this to us while showing us the Face of Jesus shining like the sun. In **Matthew 17** Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up on a high mountain. When they are all alone something utterly astonishing happens. Suddenly God pulls back the curtain of the Incarnation and lets the Kingly Glory of the Son of God shine through.

Matthew 17:2

He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.

... and Peter and the others were just stunned. And so near the end of his life- Peter wrote that he had seen the Majestic Glory on the holy mountain, and that he had heard a Voice from heaven saying,

2Peter 1:17b

... "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased" —

Now when God openly declares that He loves and delights in His Son, God the Father gives a visual demonstration of God the Son's unimaginable Glory. At that moment on that mountain- Jesus' Face

shown like the sun, his garments became translucent with light, and the result was:

Matthew 17:6b

... [the disciples] **fell face down to the ground and were terrified.**

And the point is not merely that humans should stand in awe of such a Glory- but that God Himself takes full Pleasure in the Radiance of His Son. So God reveals the Son in blinding Light, and then says for all to hear,

“This is my delight!”

A memory is fresh in my mind that makes the Radiance of God's Son very real. My oldest daughter was dying with Leukemia and was being treated at the University medical Center in Jackson, Mississippi, during the mid- to late 1980's, and early one morning- things were very difficult for Rhonda and me, and I got in my car and went West on I-20 and took the turn toward Vicksburg and as I was driving- over to my left- the sun was not yet up, but there was light.

And I was trying to make sense of everything that was going on in context with what I knew the Bible said about God being Good and I was thinking about **Psalms 3:3** that says:

You, O LORD, are a shield about me, My glory, and the One who lifts my head.

...and as I pondered this, the red pinpoint of the sun pierced the horizon to my left and it startled me, and I watched for a moment as the pinpoint became a fingernail of fire. Then I remembered the first part of verse 7 that says:

Arise, O LORD...

... and I looked up to see the whole red-ball blazing over the horizon. Within mere moments- there was no way to continue looking at it without going blind. And the higher it rose- the brighter it got.

Immediately, I thought about John's vision of Jesus in **The Revelation 1:16:**

... His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

Now my glimpse that morning lasted only a few minutes before the strength of the rising sun forced me to turn my face away. What human can look upon the sun shining in *full* strength? No one can do that without going blind. But God looks full face into the radiant brilliance of His Son and God delights in what He sees. So the fullness of the radiance of the Face of Jesus Christ shines first and foremost for the enjoyment of His Father.

And I thought to myself, surely this is one thing implied in **John 17:26**—that the day is coming when I will have the capacity to fully delight in the Son the way the Father does now. God will Sovereignly take my weak and frail and sinful eyes and replace them with eyes that have the blessing of being able to take in the fullness of the Glory of the Son shining in His full strength just the way the Father does now. And at that moment- the Delight that God has in His Son will become my own pleasure- and I will not be consumed by the Glory of Christ- but I will relish in it forever. That is what Jesus prayed.

2. God Delights in Jesus Through the Beauty of Christ's Meekness

Remember at Jesus' baptism- the Spirit of God descended like a dove while the Father says from heaven,

Matthew 3:17b

... "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

But the image here is very different from what we just saw on that Mount of Transfiguration. Here by the River Jordan- there was no flaming sun of intolerable brightness. Instead, we see a soft, quiet, vulnerable dove- the kind of animal that poor people offered for sacrifices in the Temple. So from that we know that God's Pleasure in His Son comes not only from the brightness of His Majesty, but also from the Beauty of His Meekness.

700 years before Jesus was born of a virgin- the Prophet Isaiah wrote this in **Isaiah 42:1a**:

Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one *in whom* My soul delights...

And around 20 years after The Resurrection of Jesus- Levi quotes this very Old Testament testimony of the Father's Joy and connects it with both the Power of the Holy Spirit and the Meekness of Jesus' Ministry.

Matthew 12:18-21

18 "BEHOLD, MY SERVANT WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN; MY BELOVED IN WHOM MY SOUL is WELL-PLEASED; I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM, AND HE SHALL PROCLAIM JUSTICE TO THE GENTILES.

19 "HE WILL NOT QUARREL, NOR CRY OUT; NOR WILL ANYONE HEAR HIS VOICE IN THE STREETS.

20 "A BATTERED REED HE WILL NOT BREAK OFF, AND A SMOLDERING WICK HE WILL NOT PUT OUT, UNTIL HE LEADS JUSTICE TO VICTORY.

21 "AND IN HIS NAME THE GENTILES WILL HOPE."

So Levi tells us here that the Father's very Soul exults with Joy over the servant-like Meekness and Compassion of His Son. So with Jesus- when a reed is bent and about to break by the trials of life- God's Favored Servant will tenderly hold that reed upright until it can heal. When a wick is smoldering and has scarcely any heat left and the light of that candle is about to go out- God's Meek Servant will not pinch it off- but gently cup His hand and blow on it until it burns bright again. And it is because of this that the Father cries,

"Behold, my Servant in whom my soul delights!"

But we need to understand that the Worth and Beauty of the Son come not just from His Glorious Majesty, nor only from His Servant-like Meekness- but from the way these two seemingly divergent Divine Concepts mingle in perfect proportion.

For example- when the angel cried out in **The Revelation 5:2,**

"Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?"

... the answer came back,

The Revelation 5:5

"Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals."

So we see that God loves the unquenchable Strength of the Lion of Judah. And this is why Jesus is worthy in God's Eyes to open the scrolls of history and unfold the last days. But this picture is not complete until we ponder something else. Just *how* did the Lion conquer? The very next verse describes His Appearance:

The Revelation 5:6

And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.

So Jesus is worthy of the Father's Delight not only as the Lion of Judah- but also as the slain Lamb.

One of the sermons of Jonathan Edwards that God used to kindle the Great Awakening in New England in 1734–1735 was titled "*The Excellency of Christ*." In that Sermon- Edwards unfolds the Glory of God's Son by describing

“the admirable conjunction of diverse excellencies in Christ.”

And his text was **The Revelation 5:5&6**, and Edwards unfolded the union of these “diverse excellencies” in Jesus Who is both Lion and Lamb. He showed how the Glory of Christ is the combining of different Attributes that would seem to be utterly incompatible in one Person. Edwards said,

“In Jesus Christ meet infinite highness and infinite condescension; infinite justice and infinite grace; infinite glory and lowest humility; infinite majesty and transcendent meekness; deepest reverence toward God and equality with God; worthiness of good and the greatest patience under the suffering of evil; a great spirit of obedience and supreme dominion over heaven and earth; absolute sovereignty and perfect resignation; self-sufficiency and an entire trust and reliance on God.”

Now we must understand that even though it is true that the qualities of Lowliness and Meekness were not manifest in Jesus until His Incarnation- they were nevertheless part of the Son's Character from all eternity. We need to know that Jesus did *not* undergo a conversion before He submitted to the Father's Will that He die for sinners. This is why the Love that the Father has for the Son goes back way before Creation.

John 17:24a,c

Father... You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

... so there never was a single second when the Father was denied the Pleasure of delighting in the Glory of His Son.

For example- God loved His Son *in* the very act of creating the universe. He enjoyed His Son as His Own Word of Wisdom and Creative Power in the Act of Creation.

John 1:1-3

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

God the Son was the Wisdom of God creating, with God the Father- all that is not God. And, as the Proverb says,

Proverbs 10:1

... A wise son makes a father glad...

So God was glad in the Wisdom of His creative Son. In fact, the Proverbs are even more specific concerning God's Wisdom. **Proverbs 8** personifies Wisdom at the beginning of creation as a Master Workman delighting the heart of God.

Proverbs 8:27a, 30

When He [God] established the heavens, I [Wisdom] was there ... I was beside him, like a Master Workman; and I was daily His Delight, rejoicing always before him.

The Son of God was the Father's Delight as He rejoiced with the Father in the awesome Work of making a million worlds. I have often wondered if there was a resemblance of this "Creative Union" between God the Father and God the Son when Joseph and Jesus worked together in the carpenter's shop in Nazareth. I picture Jesus about fifteen years old, humming as He worked. The plank is cut with masterful strokes, carved with three small posts protruding in their appointed places, and then fitted perfectly into the joining board to make a solid bench. Jesus smiles as He smacks the wood with pleasure. All the while Joseph has been standing at the door watching the hands of His Son busy at work. Joseph sees the image of his own workmanship and his own life to some extent in Jesus. The skill of Joseph's son is the evidence of the father's skill. The humming of his son is the endorsement of the father's joy. And when they put their energy together to lift a finished table for the synagogue- their eyes meet with a flash of delight that says, *"You are a treasure to me, and I love you with all my heart."*

I have two sons. And I have seen them make A's in school and memorize long portions of Scripture and slay dragons with plastic swords. And when I see their skill- I think of all the hours we have played and prayed and thought and fought (the dragons!) together over the years. And my heart fills with a sense of wonder that I am creating things through my sons. And when they rejoice in this, and when they smile at me on the sidelines or in the audience- they are a pleasure to me almost as great as anything in the world.

Perhaps we may be allowed to see in this- a faint echo of the "Shout of Joy" the Father had in the Son when together they created the universe out of nothing. Just imagine the look of "Pure Delight" they gave each other when a million galaxies stood forth at their Command.

No other relationship comes close to this one. It is utterly unique. The Son is absolutely unique in His Affections for His Father. He is the

“only begotten” (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1John 4:9). He is *the* Son, by eternal generation, and we are other “sons” by adoption.

Galatians 4:4-5

4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,
5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

And only in us “eating” (trusting) Jesus as *the* Son are we then empowered to become **“children of God” (John 1:12).**

Jesus often referred to God as **“my Father”** and **“the Father,”** but He never referred to God as **“our Father”** except once- when teaching the disciples how *they* should pray (**Matthew 6:9**). Once Jesus used the remarkable expression, **“my Father and your Father ... my God and your God” (John 20:17).** So the relationship between God the Father and His eternal Son is utterly unique.

Their intimacy and communion are incomparable. Jesus said,

Matthew 11:27b

... no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

Jesus spoke with such unprecedented endearment and intimacy concerning the Father that His enemies sought to kill Him

John 5:18

For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

Imagine that! The Father’s Intimacy with the Son was such that he opened all his heart to him. And that made Jesus the target of these people’s hatred.

John 5:20

"For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and *the Father* will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.

The Father withholds no blessing from the Son, but pours out his Spirit on him without measure. **“He whom God has sent utters the words of God, for it is *not by measure* that he gives the Spirit; the Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand” (John 3:34&35).**

And as the Son carries out the Redeeming Plan of the Father, the Father’s Heart abounds with increasingly intense expressions of Love for the Son.

John 10:17

"For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.

And this overflowing Esteem that the Father has for His Only Son spills over onto all who serve the Son:

John 12:26

"If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

Thus the Father seeks every means possible to manifest His infinite Delight in the Son of His Love—including judging those who do not.

Hebrews 10:29

How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

The Son of God is worthy of all the worship that the hosts of heaven can give- not to mention ours. But God will not be excluded from the celebration of the Son Himself. The Father is thrilled over the greatness and the goodness and the triumph of the Son. And He gives His Son a name which is above every name (**Philippians 2:9**); He crowns His Son with honor (**Hebrews 2:9**); and the Father joyfully glorifies the Son in His Own Presence with the Glory that He had before the world was ever made (**John 17:5**).

I tell you that it is impossible for us to overstate the greatness of the Fatherly Affection that God has for His One and Only Son. We see this unbounded affection behind the logic of **Romans 8:32**:

“He who did not spare *his own Son*, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?”

The point of this unspeakably precious verse is that if God was willing to do the hardest thing for us (give up his cherished Son to misery and death), then surely that which looks hard (giving Christians all the blessings that heaven can hold) will not be too hard for God.

And what makes this verse work is the immensity of the Father's Affection for the Son. Paul's assumption is that “not sparing his own Son” was the hardest thing imaginable for God to do. Jesus is, as Paul put it simply in **Colossians 1:13**,

“the Son of His Love.” or “His Beloved Son”

So if there ever was a Passion of Love in the Heart of God- it is a Passion for His Son. A. W. Tozer once said,

“God never changes moods or cools off in his affections or loses enthusiasm.”

And if there is any enthusiasm in God of which this is true- it is the Father's Enthusiasm for the Son. It will never change; it will never cool off. It burns with unimaginable fervency and zeal. Therefore, I affirm with Jonathan Edwards,

“The infinite happiness of the Father consists in the enjoyment of His Son.”

So when we say that God loves His Son, we are not talking about a love that is self-denying, sacrificial, or merciful. We are talking about a love of pure Delight and total Pleasure. God is not stooping to pity the undeserving when He loves His Son. That is how God loves *us*. But it is *not* how He loves His Son. God is well-pleased with His Son in every way, and He is well pleased- all the time. God's very Soul delights in the Son! When the Father looks at His Son- He fully enjoys and admires

and cherishes and prizes and relishes what He sees. So the very first great Pleasure of God is His Pleasure in the Son. And I pray it will become our pleasure as well.

Amen. Let's pray.