

Week Nine: “**What Makes God Smile?**”

Day One: “**Examples of Purpose-Driven Life**”

Read: Genesis 6:1-8 (Freedom in Christ Bible p. 11)

Read: *Purpose-Driven Life* pp. 69-70

Reflect: When does God smile in fatherly delight upon your life?

Dig: In one sentence, tell how God’s favor rested upon the people in these Bible passages. All page numbers are for Freedom in Christ Bible.

Exodus 20:5 (p. 85)

Deuteronomy 32:36 (p. 228)

I John 4:16-18 (p. 1470)

I Kings 10:6-9 (p. 380)

Psalms 103:13-14 (p. 659)

Psalms 37:23-24 (p. 617)

Apply: Ask God to help you pray for the audience of one today; to live for his praise only.

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Day Two: “Trust and Obey”

Read: Hebrews 11:7 (Freedom in Christ Bible p. 1432)

Psalm 34:8-14 (Freedom in Christ Bible p. 614)

Read: *Purpose-Driven Life* sections entitled “God smiles when we trust him completely” and “God smiles when we obey him wholeheartedly.” (pp. 70-72)

Reflect: How are obedience and trust related to each other?

How are they related in your relationship to God?

Dig: Scholars believe that Psalm 34:8-14 forms a section of this Psalm which hangs together nicely with verse 11 in the exact middle of this section and the mid-point in the Psalm.

In one or two words, summarize the teaching of verses 6-10:

In one or two words, summarize the teaching of verses 12-14:

Where else in the Psalm does the word “fear” show up?

List the benefits that came to those who fear God:

Apply: In what area of your life do you need to grow in trust and obedience? Ask God to help you.

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Day Three: **“God Smiles When We Praise and Thank Him Continually”**

Read: Psalm 69: 30-31 (Freedom in Christ Bible p. 637)

Read: *Purpose- Driven Life* section entitled “God smiles when we praise and thank him continually.” (p. 73)

Reflect: When have you received from someone you love a gift so that your gratitude and thoughtfulness increase the joy in both the giving and the receiving?

Dig: According to Psalm 69:30, what pleases God?

What might a contemporary example be of an offering of an ox or bull? See verse 31.

What does Psalm 50:9-14 (Freedom in Christ Bible p. 625) add to your understanding of this concept of praise pleasing God?

Is it legitimate, in view of all the calls to expressive praise, for someone to claim to be “just not like that” when invited to vigorously give expression to God?

See 2 Samuel 6:12-23 (Freedom in Christ Bible p. 340) for a biblical picture of praise.

Apply: How might God be calling you to take a further step in boldly proclaiming thanks to him?

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Day Four: **“God Smiles When We Use Our Abilities”**

Read: Romans 9:19-21 (Freedom in Christ Bible p. 1291)

Read: *Purpose -Driven Life* section entitled “God Smiles When We Use Our Abilities.” (pp. 74-76)

Reflect: What do you think of this statement: “There are no unspiritual abilities, just misused ones”?

Dig: What does Romans 9:19-21 teach us about accepting ourselves as we are?

Read 1 Peter 4:10-12 (Freedom in Christ Bible p. 1454). What does this passage add to your understanding of how using our gifts gives God pleasure?

Does every Christian have at least one spiritual gift? See 1 Peter 4:10.

Apply: Since God knows what is best and loves to see us use our created abilities, in what areas of your life do you need to trust him most?

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Day Five: **“Thinking About My Purpose”**

Using the “Lectio Divina” method of Bible study (see page 3 of this booklet), **meditate on this scripture:**

“The Lord is pleased with those who worship him and trust his love.”
Psalm 147:11 (CEV)

Lectio divina (a Latin expression which means Sacred reading) is done in three stages:

- reading: you read the passage slowly and reverentially, allowing the words to sink into your consciousness: after you have memorized the text, write down one word which strikes you and draws your attention and note why you chose that word.
- meditation: you allow the passage to stir up memories within you, so that you recognize in it your own experience or that of people who have touched your life: write down memories of events or conversations or other scripture passages.
- prayer: you allow the meditation to lead you to prayer – thanksgiving, humility and petition. Write out a prayer based on the passage.