

Sermon Outline

BAPTIZED NATION

ENJOYING LIFE: BAPTIZED PLEASURES (1 TIMOTHY 6:17)

I. _____ Pleasures

- A. Our question: **What is the place of pleasure in the Baptized Life?**
- B. Why the value of pleasure is not taught so much in the Church.
 - 1. Pleasure is not as important as other Biblical doctrines.
—It would be a mistake to emphasize earthly pleasure more than it merits.
 - 2. There are times our Father talks about pleasures in a negative light.
 - a. He talks about sinful pleasures (Heb 11:25).
 - b. He talks about the sin of pleasure-worship (Tit 3:3; 2 Tim 3:4).
 - 3. We tend to think of pleasure with guilt—“*guilty* pleasures.”
- C. But there are also positive words from our Father about pleasure that we ignore.
 - 1. Psalm 16:11: “...at your right hand are pleasures forevermore”
 - 2. Deuteronomy 14:22-26: “...spend the money for whatever you desire...whatever your appetite craves”
 - 3. Matthew 11:18-19: “...The Son of Man came eating and drinking...”
- D. Based on Scripture, there clearly is a serious place for pleasure in the Christian Life.
- E. But why else do we even need to address this topic?
 - 1. Because we live in an age that worships pleasure (2 Tim 3:4).
—We need to educate unbelievers in the right use of pleasure.
 - 2. Because we all seek pleasure at some level and to some degree.
 - 3. Because we throw away a godly use of pleasure to our own detriment.

II. A Brief Word on the Place of 6:17 in 1 Timothy

III. Rich Christians Must Not Worship Their Wealth (1 Timothy 6:17a)

- A. Paul addresses rich Christians.
- B. Rich Christians must...
 - 1. ...“not be haughty.”
 - 2. ...not “set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches.”
 - 3. ...set their hopes on “God.”

IV. God Is Our Hope (1 Timothy 6:17b)

- A. Who is the God on whom we set our hope?
 - 1. He is YHWH, the God of Israel.
 - 2. He is YHWH, the God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ.
 - 3. He is the God “who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.”
- B. Why does Paul bring up pleasures right after he has urged people not to worship their wealth?
 - 1. Paul does not see any contradiction between (a) rejecting pride in our possessions and (b) still finding enjoyment in our possessions.
 - 2. The One who balances all things is our Lord God.
- C. After calling us back to God, Paul gives us a new way of coming back to our things—it is the way of *enjoyment!*
 - 1. The word for “enjoyment” here is *apolausis*, which can also refer to sensual pleasure (pleasure that affects our physical senses).
 - 2. This is the same word in “pleasures of sin” in Hebrews 11:25.
 - 3. God has given us all (good) things for our enjoyment.

V. Implications of the Existence of Such God-Given Pleasures

- A. Although we live in a God-centered universe, we do not live in a God-only universe.
—God has no problem sharing the universe with other delightful things. In fact, he made them!
- B. If God made all things for us to enjoy, God obviously did not make creation primarily to tempt us to sin or to distract us from him (!!)

VI. Enjoying Life—to the Glory of God

Now that we are God's Baptized people—forgiven and clothed in God's own Name, destined for his glory and called to be his priests in the world—the role of God-given pleasures is to support us in our service to God. God gives us earthly pleasures to help us function as his holy people in a wicked and hurting world-order. Let us humbly receive God's pleasurable gifts and intentionally use them for our good and his glory.

- A. God uses pleasures to sweeten life for us (Ps 104:14-15).
 - 1. A Christian life based solely on duty will not be as strong as it can be.
 - 2. Overly-busy and overly-serious Christians neglect pleasure to their own detriment (burnout, bitterness, grumpiness, general unfriendliness, isolation etc).
- B. God uses pleasures to help us teach the Gospel to others (Mt 11:18-19).

C. God uses pleasures to reveal himself to us (1 Tim 6:17; Ps 16:11).

Examples:

1. Consistent physical exercise gives us a “feel” of God’s eternal vitality.
2. Good food helps us “taste” that the Lord is good.
3. Excellent music and art offer us “sneak peeks” into God’s own perfection.
4. Good novels help us better appreciate the Greatest Story of All.
5. Our beautiful Singapore skyline reminds us of the New Jerusalem.
6. Healthy relationships “channel” God’s love toward us.