WHICH KIND OF PLEASURE?

(Luke 8:11-15)

I. God’s pleasure.
   a. The Bible describes several things from which God either derives pleasure or does not.
   b. Generally, when speaking of God, pleasure is used to describe approval or disapproval.
   c. God has pleasure in uprightness (1 Chronicles 29:17).
      i. This has to do with being equitable or impartial.
      ii. One who is even in all his dealings with others.
   d. God takes no pleasure in wickedness (Psalm 5:4).
   e. God has pleasure in the prosperity of His servants (Psalm 35:27).
      i. This word has to do with being at peace with God.
      ii. One is at peace with God when he is in a right relationship with God.
   f. God takes pleasure in those who fear Him (Psalm 147:11).
      i. The last phrase describes what this means.
      ii. God takes pleasure in those who seek out His mercy.
   g. God takes pleasure in His people (Psalm 149:4).
   h. God has no pleasure in the death of the sinful (Ezekiel 18:23; 33:11).
      i. God has pleasure in giving man the kingdom (Luke 12:32).
      j. God has pleasure when we are obedient to Him (Philippians 2:13).
   k. So we see that there are things that bring pleasure to God and things that bring displeasure to Him as well.

II. Things approved by God that bring us pleasure.
   a. As we mentioned, God designed us to seek out pleasure over pain, so there must be things that are pleasurable that God approves for us.
   b. There are things in life that naturally bring us pleasure so we can naturally assume that He knew this and approves of them.
   c. Most people, worldwide, take pleasure in their families.
      i. God made us this way.
      ii. Already today, you have may have gotten joy from something a family did or said to you.
      iii. We derive pleasure from intimate relationships with our spouse (Genesis 18:12).
   d. Remember Peter’s words given by inspiration (1 Peter 3:10)?
      i. Good days are pleasurable aren’t they?
      ii. Enjoying good meals, or good company.
   e. We can take pleasure in our country (Psalm 102:13-14).
   f. We can find pleasure in the beauty of God’s creation (Psalm 111:2).
      i. We find pleasure in the beauty of a sunrise or sunset.
ii. We find pleasure in the beauty of nature all around us.
g. There is even pleasure found in suffering for Christ (2 Corinthians 12:10).
h. Don’t you think Jesus found pleasure in the company of His friends or when little children came up to Him (Matthew 19:13-15)?
i. We talk about the pleasure of a job well-done.
j. These are things that bring us pleasure that are approved of by God.

III. Things that are sinful that bring pleasure.
a. Probably the greatest bait in Satan’s traps is pleasure (Hebrews 11:25-26).
b. The devil knows that we enjoy pleasure so he offers it as a reward if we will sin.
c. The word translated pleasure in Luke 11 is the Greek word from which we get our English word “hedonism”.
   i. This is defined as “the doctrine that pleasure or happiness is the highest good; devotion to pleasure as a way of life”.
   ii. This Greek word is found 5 times in the New Testament and is never used in a good way and, it’s also translated “lust” twice in James 4:1, 3.
d. The thinking of hedonism is that what gives us pleasure is good and what gives us pain is bad.
   i. This thinking goes back a long ways, but was put in writing and teaching by a man named Aristippus, a student of Socrates.
   ii. He believed that pleasure is the highest good.
e. What a hedonist would teach us is that we are to pursue that which gives us pleasure as long as it doesn’t hurt anyone else.
f. It is really the philosophy of “If it feels good, do it”.
g. People find pleasure in all manner of sinful things.
   i. Pornography, lying, stealing, cursing, drug use and other sinful acts all bring pleasure to some in some way.
   ii. However, just because you derive pleasure from something does not mean it should be done.
   iii. Also, just because it brings pleasure does not mean it is harmless for a person or to someone else.
   iv. 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12.
h. In fact, this idea is completely opposite of what Jesus taught (Luke 9:23-25).
i. Everything that is sinful that is also pleasurable should be avoided at all costs because each of these are potentially addictive.
j. In Galatians 5:19-21, Paul gives a list of sins that will keep one out of the kingdom of God.
   i. He did not end that list with “unless it brings you pleasure”.
   ii. Those that indulge the flesh will lose their souls for eternity.
k. Paul told Timothy… (2 Timothy 3:4-5).
l. We don’t want our brethren to turn from us so we must avoid all those sinful things that bring pleasure.
IV. Things that aren’t wrong but become wrong that bring us pleasure.

a. There are things in life that are good, in and of themselves, but become bad when we don’t use proper control.

b. When we spend so much time pursuing good pleasure that we neglect our Lord and His church, we sin.

c. A person, or family, may enjoy travel.
   i. We do as family.
   ii. But, if any were to travel so much that worship and study is neglected, then we are in sin.

d. A person may be so good at his or her job that they end up neglecting the family or neglecting worship.
   i. We must work or we shouldn’t eat.
   ii. We ought to be good at our jobs.
   iii. However, when we are pursuing our jobs that we enjoy over spiritual things then we are in sin.

e. As parents, there are so many things for our children to do and in which they can become involved, sports, music, theatre, other extracurricular activities, we can allow us and our children to lose contact with the church, which means we lose contact with Christ.

f. Pleasure becomes sinful when we live for it.
   i. 1 Timothy 5:6.
   ii. This verse warns that we can sin when we feel that pleasure is how we define happiness.
   iii. Pleasure is really not even the path to happiness, biblically speaking.
   iv. A person who lives for pleasure instead of happiness will end up with neither.

g. Pleasure becomes wrong when we love it too much.
   ii. We often get pleasure out of something new don’t we?
   iii. Pleasure doesn’t last, just like newness doesn’t last.
   iv. As the newness of something or some activity wears off, we look for something else or it takes more to bring pleasure.
   v. Think of how many worldly famous people, who we would think had everything and a great life, commit suicide.
   vi. Or, they have died from some type of addiction.
   vii. We wonder how could someone who has so much be depressed.
   viii. Pleasure only lasts for a little time and if it is valued over happiness, a crash awaits

h. Pleasure becomes wrong when I make it my goal.
   i. Ecclesiastes 2:10.
   ii. Money can buy pleasure but it can’t buy happiness.
iii. Gambling brings the gambler pleasure until he loses all on the toss of the dice or the flip of the cards.

Sermon outline from an unknown source