

A SMILE ON THE FACE OF GOD

(Heb. 11:6)

Introduction:

1. If you stop and consider all the things that God has given to us it staggers the mind. When you consider the motivation behind all that giving, and the depth of that motivation, it ought to break our hearts with love and thankfulness.
2. Our greatest desire ought to be to please God, to put a smile on His face. How can we do that? There is nothing that we can give God that He lacks, nor is there any deficiency that we can correct in His perfection. The only way we can please Him is by fulfilling His will. God has three defined wills that we see in the Bible: His intentional will (that all men be saved), His conditional will (that they who conform themselves to the image of Christ will be saved); and His ultimate will (He will punish the lost and reward the saved). We can help God realize His intentional will (putting a smile on His face) by pursuing and obeying His conditional will.
3. Let us consider this morning putting a smile on God's face by being saved and by helping others to be saved.

Discussion:

I. Be Saved (Acts 2:40)!

- A. The context of Acts 2:40 begins in Gen. 1:1!!!!
 1. God had promised to send a redeemer, to save mankind from the works of Satan.
 2. Jesus had come and died for the sins of mankind, defeating Satan and death.
 3. Peter had just convinced many Jews that Jesus had been/was the Messiah and they had rejected Him.
 4. Their repentant response was to ask what they should do.
 5. Peter said, repent (being done), be baptized (remit their sin), and with many other words he testified (charged them) and exhorted them (to advise strongly) = "Be saved from this perverse generation".
- B. What He really said in v40 = "sothaite" = passive imperative of "save" = That is, save yourself.
- C. Compare what Peter told the Jews at Pentecost and what Jesus had told Peter (Luke 24:45-49; Matt. 28:18-20).
- D. Believe (all it means and keeps on meaning), repent (all it means and keeps on meaning), confess (all it means and keeps on meaning), be baptized (all it means and keeps on meaning).
 1. Problem Number One = Giving some (hearing, obeying, devotion) but not all. Seeking the minimum yet expecting the maximum.
 2. Problem Number Two = Trying to stay in the light but not walking. Christianity is not a spectator sport.
 3. Problem Number Three = Trying to serve two (or more) masters. Brown robes are not black but they are not white either.

II. Save Others (1 Tim. 4:16)!

- A. The context of 1 Tim. 4:16 is within the church, the body of Christ. All the things that Timothy was commanded (except maybe the public reading of scripture; and regarding the "gift") is illustrative of how all Christians are to be salt and light. Notice specifically the charge to "give himself entirely" to the doctrine (the teaching; cp. Matt. 28:20) and to continue to do so. Notice the result = He would be saved (have saved himself!) and he would save others around him.
- B. The same is true for us. We are commanded to not only be saved, but to help those in the body of Christ be saved also (Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 10:24-26). Do not be deceived, brethren, those who do not strive to save others are not saved themselves (Matt. 28:20 and 2 Thess. 3:6-15!!).
- C. Evangelism is inside out reality: we believe in the Light of the world, we become light ourselves, we help those (and are helped by those) closest to us to become/remain the light (ever brighter), and we help all with whom we come in contact with to see the Light of the world and seek to become light.
- D. Problem = we cannot sell what we do not own; we cannot show what we do not possess; and we cannot share what we do not have (Matt. 7:1-5; 1 Thess. 4:1-12; et al).
- E. Truth = God created man and placed him in the garden to tend it. God also placed Christians in the world to tend it (John 17; esp. vv 21, 23).

Conclusion:

1. Han Solo is a much beloved character because he is a very American character. He did not think much of those who thought themselves royalty. And, although he was a capitalist he also was willing to serve a good cause even if it meant danger to himself. Americans, historically, have been like that. Think of the Alamo. Han Solo was famous for saying, “never tell me the odds”.
2. I have good news and bad news. The bad news is the truth spoken by our Lord in Matt. 7:13, 14. The good news is that God has provided all things that are necessary for life and godliness. And we, as Americans, ought to determine to strive against that awful truth for the glory of God. Be saved! Save others! Put a smile on the face of God!
3. Invitation.

MORE ON “A SMILE ON THE FACE OF GOD”

1. Consider 2 Pet. 1:1-11 and focus on vv 8-11.
2. Consider the story Jesus told Simon the Pharisee in Luke 7:40-43.
3. Consider 2 Cor. 5:14-21 and a summary of this in Gal. 2:20.
4. Consider Luke 9:23-26 and the personal application in John 21:15-23.
5. Consider 1 John; esp. 2:3-11 (remember context of Matt. 7:12) and 4:7-21.
6. John 10:15 and Matt. 22:37-40.