

[What must I do to please God? - Printer Friendly \(compellingtruth.org\)](http://compellingtruth.org)

### **What must I do to please God?**

Because God is all-powerful and perfect, the thought of attempting to please Him can be scary. How can a sinful, imperfect human being ever please a Holy God? Add to that the long list of laws in the Old Testament, and the standards for righteous behavior in the New Testament, and one might be tempted to give up before ever making an attempt. However, this fear is unfounded. Pleasing God is not difficult, because He gives us everything we need to please Him. What is needed to please God?

The first thing that is necessary is to be "in the Spirit" rather than "in the flesh" because people who are living in the flesh cannot please God (Romans 8:8). What does it mean to be in the flesh? When a person is in the flesh, they are trying to please God in their own strength. The person who realizes that this is impossible will come to the end of trying to please God in their own strength, and will turn to God and cry out for help. God provides help in the person of Jesus Christ, who was the only man ever capable of living a life fully and perfectly pleasing to God—He could do that because He was God! (John 1:1). He did not come to us to judge us, but to provide that help and salvation (John 3:16-17).

The next thing which is needed to please God is faith. Without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). Specifically, faith means to believe that God exists, and believe that He rewards those who seek Him. This kind of faith is the opposite of the fear that seeks to please God with rituals and rule-keeping. The writer of Hebrews does not say that faith is to "believe that God rewards those who serve him" or "believe that God rewards those who are perfect." It says faith is to "believe that [God] exists and that he rewards those who seek him." Seeking God is pleasing Him. He wants to be sought, pursued, and loved. He provided us a way through Jesus Christ so that we could have a relationship with Him (Hebrews 10:19-22). Faith is having "confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19).

We are still commanded to live lives pleasing to God—throughout Scripture there are many verses which outline the sort of life Christians are to live. But those commands are not meant to be a burden. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandment. And his commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3). His commandments are not burdensome because He gives us everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3), He has perfected us by Jesus' sacrifice (Hebrews 10:14), and He has given us the Holy Spirit, who is like living water flowing out of us (John 7:38). The point is that once we are in Christ, pleasing God is inevitable, because God will make it happen. We are saved by His grace, through faith, and it is all a gift, including the good works that we will eventually come to learn to do (Ephesians 2:8-10). Believers should never worry, thinking that they will not be pleasing to God. As we seek Him, and love Him, He will produce fruit in us that pleases God (John 15:4-5).