

God Abhors Much of What Men Adore

by Chaplain Frank Wm Nagy

God Abhors the Excellence of Jacob

Amos 6:8 The Lord GOD has sworn by himself, says the LORD the God of hosts, **I abhor the excellence of Jacob**, and hate his palaces, so will I deliver up the city with all that is in it.

Matthew Henry comments on Amos 6:8:

God will abhor and abandon them, and that implies misery enough, all misery: *I abhor the excellence of Jacob*, **all that which they are proud of, and value themselves upon, and for which they call and count themselves the chief of nations**. Their visible church-membership, and the privileges of that, their temple, altar, and priesthood, these were, more than any thing, the excellencies of Jacob; but, when **these were profaned and polluted by sin**, God abhorred them; He hated and despised them, "I hate, I despise your feast days (Amos 5:21)". Note, God abhors that form of godliness which hypocrites keep up, while they abhor the power of it. And if He abhors their temple, for the iniquity of that, no marvel that He hates their palaces, for the injustices and oppression He finds there.

In Amos 6:8 God's abhorrence of what Jacob considers excellent finds an echo in Jesus' statement regarding what men value as praiseworthy. It is the very thing God abhors:

Luke 16:9 [Jesus spoke to his disciples:] I say unto you, Make friends for yourselves using the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. :10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. :11 If you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? :12 And if you have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you what is your own? :13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon.**

:14 The Pharisees, who were **covetous**, also heard all these things, so they derided him.

:15 And he said unto them, You are of those who justify yourselves before men; but God knows your hearts: **for what is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.**

Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Jeremiah 4:22 For My people is foolish, they have not known Me. They are silly children, with no understanding. They are wise to do evil, but do not know how to do what is good.

Matthew 23:24 You blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. :25 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. :26 *You* blind Pharisee, cleanse first what *is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. :27 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like whitened sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness within. :28 Even so you also **outwardly appear righteous unto men**, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Know This is Impossible to Fix without God's Intervention

Jeremiah 13:23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may you also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.

Matthew 7:17 Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. :18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Matthew 12:34 O generation of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. :35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

Mark 10:26 And they were astonished beyond measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? :27 And Jesus looking upon them said, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Solutions to

Psalms 34:11 Come, you children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD. :12 What man is he that desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good? Psa 34:13 Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile. :14 Depart from evil, do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

:15 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

:16 The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

:17 The righteous cry, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.

:18 The LORD is near those of a broken heart; and saves such as are of a contrite spirit.

:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

:20 He keeps all his bones: not one of them is broken.

:21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and those that hate the righteous shall be desolate. :22 The LORD redeems the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

Psalms 37:27 Depart from evil, do good and dwell forevermore.

Amos 5:14 Seek good, and not evil, that you may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as you have spoken. :15 Hate the evil, and love the good, and

establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

Romans 12:9 Let love be without dissimulation. **Abhor what is evil**; cleave to what is good.

Learn to value what God values.

What God Calls Valuable

God Values Righteousness

Psalms 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and *He delights in his way*. :24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholds him with his hand. 25 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the *righteous* forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. 26 He is ever merciful, and lends; and his seed is blessed. 27 Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell forevermore.

To better understand *all that God calls valuable* take a closer look at 1 Corinthians 3:

1 Corinthians 3:10 According to the grace of God given to me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let every man take heed how he builds upon it. 11 For no other foundation can a man lay than what is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation *gold, silver, precious stones*, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire. Fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work which he has built on the foundation remain, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet as by fire.

Why would anyone in their right mind build with wood, hay or stubble? It didn't work for two of the three little pigs in our nursery story, why would anyone think it would work for us? Obviously, spiritual wood, hay and stubble must not be clearly identified with flammable danger signs.

What is precious and able to last for eternity The correct answer to this question is not as easy to come by, as we might think! A modern parable pokes some fun at man's faulty ideas in this realm and edges us closer to God's truth:

One day a rich Christian, knowing he was going to die soon, asked the Lord for a special favor: "Lord, I know Job said we can't take anything with us, but could you make an exception? I'd like to bring my gold with me."

When the day came, St. Peter came to heaven's gate to inspect this man's baggage. At seeing it, he convulsed with laughter. "Why ever..." he asked the man, "would you want to bring road-paving materials with you?"

Since gold is “heaven’s asphalt,” what does God consider *truly precious*? Don’t you think we better seek God’s direction? *What does God value most*? With what care should we build for heaven? *In whom shall we invest and to whose benefit*?

Invest Yourself in What God Values, So You Do Not Lose Out

Jesus’ parable of the sheep and goats message shouts *God’s concerns*:

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of man comes in his glory with all the holy angels, He shall sit upon the throne of his glory ³² All nations shall be gathered before him. He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 He shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

³⁴ Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, “Come, you blessed of my Father. *Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*: ³⁵ For I was hungry, and you gave me meat: I was thirsty, and you gave me drink: I was a stranger and you took me in. ³⁶ Naked, you clothed me: I was sick, and you visited me: I was in prison and you came to me.”

³⁷ Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry, and fed You? or thirsty, and gave You drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger, and took You in? or naked, and clothed You? ³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and came unto You?”

⁴⁰ The King shall answer them, “Verily I say unto you, In as much, as *you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren*, you have done it unto me.”

If you will remember the parable of the sheep and goats, both sheep and goats were at a loss to know *what the Lord found valuable*, until He revealed what they had done for his people had pleased him.

Watch How God Acts and You Will See What He Values

Clearly God considers his *people most valuable* above all:

Isaiah 43:7 Every *one* called by my Name: I have created *him* for my glory. I have formed *him*. Yes, I have made *him*.

x

John 15:16 Jesus told his disciples, “You have not chosen me, but *I have chosen you*, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain...”

What God Devalues and Discards

John 15 gives us a picture of what the Lord *discounts*. He is not pleased when we seek another source other than him. The Vine provides nutrients to the branches to make them bear good fruit. When we reach out to serve ourselves, we seek other sources to gain our fruitfulness. God provides what each of us need. Much of our life is spent like the grape plant sprouting more leaves to feed itself. See what God does in response to our foolish branches’ best attempts:

John 15:1 I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away: and every branch that bears fruit, he prunes it, so it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now you are [pruned] clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches: He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit. For without me you can do nothing. 6 If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and withers. Men gather them, cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done for you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be my disciples.

God is looking for much **good fruit**. Vitality flows from the Vine making well-pruned branches bear more fruit. Those branches sprouting only a lot of leaves seek out the sun's energy for themselves, rather than relying on the Vine as their source. These branches do not cooperate with the Vine and his Vinedresser. It's the Vinedresser's plan to produce fruit whatever the cost to the individual branches.* As this wild growth of added leaves actually hinders fruitfulness, God, our Vinedresser, cuts away and discards those **worthless, selfish** branches lacking fruit.

He who has ears, let him hear.

* Whatever the cost to the individual branches.* See **Dedicated....**