Forty Days of Purpose Devotional

Day 8 "I was planned for God's pleasure."

A key difference between God's love and that of any man or woman is that God knows He deserves to be loved and that, unless His beloved returns His love, only suffering lies ahead. Jesus is THE way to eternal life, and we walk that path by loving Him:

> *"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to <u>those who love him</u>"* (James 1:12 [NIV]; emphasis added)

> *"Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?"* (James 2:5 [NIV]; emphasis added)

Sadly, history is largely the story of God's unrequited love for mankind. Even people who claim to "love God" may be deluded, substituting a human definition of "loving God" for the one God supplied in His Word:

> *"Jesus replied, 'If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.'"* (John 14:23 [NIV])

God longs for our worship, love and obedience because He longs to share an eternity of love with us. If we are truly in love with Him, we long to give Him this pleasure even more than we long to experience it ourselves.

- Eternity with God is for those who seek and find Him, because they love Him.
- Being in love means nothing is more important – or enjoyable – than bringing God pleasure.
- We give God pleasure by living in obedience to His Word, because that is the life that brings us to Him.

Today, ask yourself how important God's pleasure really is to you, or if you even believe that God experiences emotions such as pleasure. A great many people believe that God is far above such things, that they are in fact evidences of human weakness and sin. Allow the Scriptures to show you God's character – revealed in Jesus, a man who experienced strong emotions. Contemplate the nature of heaven, realizing that it is a place filled with the presence of God. God wants you there because He takes pleasure in you. For you, heaven can only be heaven if you take pleasure in Him. Do you?